

St. Brendan's College, Belmullet, Co. Mayo

Policy on Mobile Phones/ Personal Media Devices

Mobile phones and personal media devices are a significant part of today's world. They can play an important role in our day to day lives. However, they can also have negative influences.

This is certainly the case in a school environment setting, where these devices can disrupt teaching and learning, and inhibit social interaction among students.

Our aim in St. Brendan's College is to provide the best conditions possible for teaching and learning in our school, and to create an environment where student wellbeing can flourish.

This is the rationale for our mobile phone/personal media device policy. It is also in keeping with the directive from the Minister of Education, which was sent to all schools in September 2024, that schools nationwide should be mobile phone free. Furthermore, our policy is in line with the ethos and core values of Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim ETB. These values of Excellence in Education, Care, Respect, Community and Equality are embedded in our school culture.

Our Mobile Phone Policy was updated through consultation with our students, involving the Student Council, our parents and our teachers.

Policy:

- Students are not permitted to use their phones, or personal media devices at any stage during the school day. This includes all breaks and at lunchtime. Also, mobile phones may not be used on school trips, or outings, as these are considered to be part of the school day.
- Students may bring their phones to school each day, but these phones should be powered off and placed in students' lockers when they arrive in school. These phones can be collected by students when they are leaving St. Brendan's College at the end of the school day.
- Use of a mobile phone during the school day will be viewed as a serious breach of St. Brendan's College Code of Behaviour.
- In circumstances where a student is found using a mobile phone as a camera, this will be viewed as gross misconduct, under the Code of Behaviour, as it infringes on the privacy of the school community and poses significant security risks.
- Breaches of our mobile phone policy will be dealt with under the St. Brendan's College Code of Behaviour Policy.
- Where a member of staff finds a student using a mobile phone during the school day, they will ask the student to hand over this phone. The student is required to comply with such an instruction from a member of staff. The phone will then be held securely until a parent/guardian can collect that phone from the school office.
- If a student needs to contact home, they can do this through the school office. Similarly, if a parent or guardian wishes to

contact their son, or daughter, they can do so through the school office.

Our School Mission Statement expresses our commitment to providing the highest possible standards in education for our students, in promoting social integration, personal development and student wellbeing. In this spirit, we are very happy to follow the directive from the Department of Education in relation to mobile phone use. It is our firm belief that the above policy can only enhance our students' experience during their time in St. Brendan's College.