



Mercy Secondary School Kilbeggan

Mobile Phone Policy September 2025

The following policy recognises that technology is a part of students' lives, but aims to manage its presence within our school environment to minimise distraction and maximise engagement while maintaining a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and the rights of all members of the school community are preserved in line with our school's Mission Statement.

This policy is intended to;

- improving the learning environment in our school by reducing distractions.
- reduce the risk of cyberbullying and access to inappropriate content during school hours.
- increase traditional social interactions between students during break times and school activities.

Policy Arrangements:

Students are not permitted to use their mobile phone for any purpose during the course of the school day while on the premises or while participating in school related activities (e.g., Study, Extra- Curricular Activities and Day Trips). Students may access their phones during overnight trips where contact with home is desirable and necessary.

Where a student brings a mobile phone to school, they must be switched off for the duration of the day. This will include any time spent away from the campus to participate in extra-curricular activities, such as travelling to inter-school games.

All student communication with parents/ guardians must be made through the school office.

A student, who wishes to go home for any reason during the school day, must arrange to do so through the school office and not independently by mobile phone. This ensures that correct procedures for leaving school before the end of the day are observed.

Responsibility cannot be taken by school authorities for students who arrange independently to go home without following proper procedure. Any such arrangement is a breach of our Code of Behaviour and will incur sanctions.

In order to assist the school in implementing this policy, parents/guardians should not arrange to contact students by mobile phone at any time during the school day. Contact with the school may be made through the school office on **(0)57 933 2292** or via email at **info@mercykilbeggan.ie**.

Sanctions for Misuse of Mobile Phones

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with under the school's Code of Behaviour for Students.

Any student who is found with or using a mobile phone will have their phone confiscated by any member of staff. The device will be securely stored in the office until **the end of the following school day**. It will then be returned to the student or a parent/guardian. **E.g.** A phone confiscated at 10am on Tuesday morning will be returned at 3.55pm on Wednesday.

In situations where there is no school on the following day, parents / guardians may collect the confiscated phone from the office at their own discretion. It is important to note that a parent/guardian may collect the device at any stage – if they choose to do so. The cooperation of all school families with regard to this sanction is vital and appreciated.

The school has the right to ensure in so far as is practicable, that the phone contains no images or information which would compromise any member of the school community. The student will be required to remove any school related images after which the device will be returned.

Incidents where students use mobile phones/digital devices to bully other students or send offensive messages or calls will be investigated under the school's *Bi Cinealta* (Anti-Bulling Policy). It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone/digital device to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve An Garda Síochána in such incidents.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones/digital devices. The safety and security of mobile phones/digital devices is wholly a matter for students and their parents/guardians.

It is strongly advised that students mark their mobile phones with their names and use passwords to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their device. Each student is responsible for all communication from their phone and any image or recording on their mobile phone.

The taking of photographs or the use of any recording equipment is strictly forbidden and a range of sanctions, up to and including expulsion, will apply.

School staff will never ask students to use their own mobile phones for any classroom-based activities.

Possible exemptions that may apply

Exemptions will only allow students to access their mobile phones for a specific reason outlined and not for general use.

The following examples are some of the possible reasons where exemptions are justified. These may include but are not limited to:

- **Diabetes blood glucose monitor and/or insulin delivery mechanism**
- **Blood pressure monitoring**
- **Seizure conditions where monitoring via a mobile phone app is needed**
- **Completion of Senior Cycle Projects under the guidance of their teacher**

This is not an exhaustive list and due consideration will be given on a case-by-case basis.

Signed: **Paul Daly**
Chairperson of the Board of Management
Date: **11th September 2025**

Signed: **Garrett Farrell**
Principal
Date : **11th September 2025**