Mobile Phone
POLICY AUDIT

SAFER
SCHOOLS NI

Educating, empowering and protecting the NI school community

Contents

Action		Has this been fulfilled? (Yes/No/ Unsure)	Which policy(ies) does this affect?	Does this require further action? (Yes/No)	Activity Record (Persons responsible, dates, actions)	Complete / Ongoing / Incomplete
1	Has the Board of Governors complied with their wider legal duty to develop and keep under review 'general principles' about positive pupil behaviour?[1]					
2	Has the Board of Governors consulted with the principal, registered pupils and parents regarding a written statement of 'general principles' about positive pupil behaviour? (If not currently in existence, this should be developed).					
3	Has the principal demonstrated regard to these general principles in their duty in determining their school's stance on pupil use of personal mobile devices?					
4	Has the Board of Governors, along with the principal and school leaders, reviewed their current approach and policies for pupil personal mobile device use in school?					
5	Has the school considered whether their approach best suits their own school's context and phase of education?					

1 - The Board of Governors has a legal duty, under Article 17 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, to safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils at the school when the pupils are on school premises or in the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff.   16. Policies and procedures on pupils' use of personal mobile devices within schools falls within the wider legal responsibilities of Boards of Governors and principals in relation to pupil behaviour and discipline (Articles 3-6 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998)' (Circular 2024-14 - Use of Personal Mobile Phones).

6	Is the school's approach to restricting the use of mobile devices included within the school's wider behaviour policies or as a standalone document?				
	If developed as a standalone policy, has it been integrated within the school's existing policies as appropriate? e.g. online safety, behaviour, and anti-bullying policies.				
7	Has the school considered liability and insurance when reviewing, revising or developing a new policy?				
	Has the school considered practicalities such as: • Does the school's insurance cover taking devices? • Does the school's insurance cover damage or breakage to pupil devices if in the school's possession?				
8	Does the school's approach aim to foster a healthy culture towards the use of personal mobile devices in a school environment?				
9	Does the school's approach utilise the 'Positives' and 'Potential Issues' table located within Appendix 1 of the Department's guidance when considering which approach to enforce and how to overcome barriers to implementing it?				

	Action	Has this been fulfilled? (Yes/No/ Unsure)	Which policy(ies) does this affect?	Does this require further action? (Yes/No)	Activity Record (Persons responsible, dates, actions)	Complete / Ongoing / Incomplete
1	Is the school's policy on restricting the use of mobile phones included either within the school's wider behaviour policies or as a standalone document?					
2	Does the school's approach take steps to restrict the use of personal mobile devices and other similar devices throughout the day? (Inclusive of lunch and recreational periods.)					
3	Does the school's approach cover restrictions on personal mobile device use at social events associated with the school and on school outings?					
4	Has the school's approach encompassed one or more of the following practical measures? • No pupil personal mobile devices allowed on school premises. • Pupil's personal mobile devices handed in on arrival. • Pupil's personal mobile devices kept in a secure location. • Never used, seen or heard. • Use of device-free solutions, for example, pouches which restrict mobile device use.					

5	Have consequences and sanctions for breaches of the school policy on pupil's personal mobile devices been agreed and put in place? These should detail clear expectations. See below for further items to consider.					
	Do the consequences outline what appropriate compliance consists of?					
	Do the consequences outline the school's position on returning mobile phones? (e.g. If the school has a confiscation system in place if a pupil fails to comply with policy).					
	If confiscation is a proposed measure, is there a clear position on returning pupil mobile devices and timelines in place for return?					
6	Is the school's position on responsibility/liability for mobile devices in terms of loss, theft or damage/breakage clearly stated within the policy(ies)? Does it detail explicitly what is covered under the school's insurance?					
7	Are there clear procedures in place for reporting breaches of policy within the school?					
8	Is there support in place in school for staff, children and young people subject to harassment via the use of mobile devices?					
9	Have situations been considered where mobile devices may be used by those in years 13 and 14?					

10	Does the school's approach detail clear procedures on what a child should do in an emergency? Further points to consider are outlined below.					
	Does a child know who to contact in school in the case of an emergency?					
	Does the school's approach also account for students travelling to/from school in the event an emergency should occur whilst travelling?					
11	Does the school's approach clarify its position on reasonable adjustments to allow for exceptional circumstances? See below for some considerations.					
	Does the school's approach include additional information for pupils with medical conditions? Such as, pupils with Diabetes who may be required to use their device to monitor blood glucose levels.					
	Does the school's approach include additional information for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)?					
	Does the school's approach include additional information for pupils with safeguarding responsibilities, such as Young Carers?					
	Does the school's approach include additional information for pupils who may be suffering from ill mental health?					

#	Question				
12	Does the school have a clear complaints procedure for both pupils and parents to formally report an issue regarding the policy and staff adherence?				
	Does the complaints procedure address issues pupils and parents are having regarding staff enforcement of the policy? E.g. A child may feel that they are being treated unfairly.				
	Is the complaints procedure be signposted to within the school's policy(ies) on pupil mobile device use?				
13	Has the school also produced a mechanism for suggested improvements?				
	Has the school considered creating a survey for pupils, parents and staff to more routinely issue feedback?				
14	Has the school's approach taken into consideration the need to balance the removal of distraction with the potential use of mobile technology to support teaching and learning?				
15	Does the school's approach include educating children and young people on how to use technology effectively, appropriately and safely?				
16	Does the school's approach consider what digital literacy online safety resources they use?				
	Resources the school could consider signposting to include: • 'SMART' resources developed by SSNI • SSNI App • Teach Hub • SBNI Online Safety Hub				

17	Does the school's approach highlight that smartphone use can elevate exposure to violent and sexual content and cyberbullying, and signpost to relevant resources for support?				
18	Does the school's approach focus on the positive aspects of why this policy is in place and the benefits it will have?				
19	Has the school considered creating contracts for pupils and parents to demonstrate that they agree with the school's approach to pupil use of mobile devices?				
	Do these contracts illustrate the school's approach to pupil use of mobile devices?				
	Has the school considered how this would be perceived by parents?				
	Has the school scheduled review and renewal dates of these contracts to ensure they are up to date?				

SAFER SCHOOLS NI

	Action	Has this been fulfilled? (Yes/No/ Unsure)	Which policy(ies) does this affect?	Does this require further action? (Yes/No)	Activity Record (Persons responsible, dates, actions)	Complete / Ongoing / Incomplete
1	Has the school considered how best to engage with stakeholders about their opinion on the school's approach to pupil's use of mobile devices?					
2	Has the school considered the development of pupil, staff and parent surveys to capture their views to ensure their voices are heard at each stage of the development process?					
3	Has the school reviewed the results and drawn conclusions from each stakeholder group?					
4	Has the school utilised the results from its consultation to consider any further adaptations or alterations to their approach on pupil personal mobile device use in school?					

Action		Has this been fulfilled? (Yes/No/ Unsure)	Which policy(ies) does this affect?	Does this require further action? (Yes/No)	Activity Record (Persons responsible, dates, actions)	Complete / Ongoing / Incomplete
1	Has the school considered the range of ways it will share these policies with its stakeholders? For example, within the school prospectus, through parental correspondence or through the school's website.					
2	Has the school ensured this information is or will be accessible in a variety of formats?					
3	Has the school considered the practicalities of what they wish to enforce and managed their expectations of this? See below points to be considered.					
	Do staff have time to implement the suggested approach? (Eg. To collect devices and redistribute.)					
	Does the school have the money required to fund the chosen approach? (Eg. Pouches).					
	Does the school have an adequate insurance policy to cover the chosen approach?					
	Does the chosen approach seem realistically enforceable within the school community? This will include consideration of parents and carers, pupils and staff.					

Further Considerations

	Action	Has this been fulfilled? (Yes/No/ Unsure)	Which policy(ies) does this affect?	Does this require further action? (Yes/No)	Activity Record (Persons responsible, dates, actions)	Complete / Ongoing / Incomplete
1	Has the school considered housing their policy(ies) regarding pupil mobile device use in the SSNI App?					
2	Has the school considered housing their complaints procedure and suggestions for improvement in the SSNI App? (This could take the form of a form/survey which would collate feedback in one space)					

SAFER
SCHOOLS NI