

# Boher National School

## Mobile phone policy

### 2025



## 1. Introduction

In June 2025, the Department of Education and Youth published **Circular 0044/2025, “Banning the use of and access to personal mobile phones by pupils during the school day.”** In line with this circular, **Boher N.S.** is committed to implementing a clear and effective Mobile Phone Policy. This review supports best practice and seeks to enhance the learning environment by minimising distractions, reduce the risk of cyberbullying and exposure to inappropriate content during school hours, and encourage greater face-to-face social interaction among pupils during break times.

## 2. Scope of the Policy

- This policy specifically addresses the use of **mobile phone devices** within the school by **pupils and staff**. It outlines the rules, expectations, and procedures relating to mobile phone possession, access, and use during the school day.
- The use and possession of **other personal electronic devices** by students, such as smart watches or wearable technologies capable of audio or visual recording, as well as the use of **school-owned digital technologies** including laptops and tablets, is covered separately in the school’s **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)**.

## 3. Policy Statement

- Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones, smart devices (such as smart watches) or electronic devices to school, to school-related events in school or to-off site school-related activities.
- Only under exceptional circumstances that will be further elaborated below, may a student have mobile phone in their possession in school and/or during school activities

## 4. Rationale

This policy is intended to support students’ learning and welfare by:

- Improving the learning environment in schools by reducing distraction
- Reducing the risk of cyberbullying and access to inappropriate content during school hours
- Increasing opportunities for traditional social interactions between students at school break times.

## 5. School Procedures

- During the school day, and during all school-related activities such as sports matches and school tours etc, parents and guardians have access to **Aladdin Connect** and the **school telephone number** should an urgent need arise to communicate with their child. These channels provide a reliable and appropriate means of contact.
- Similarly, in situations where a pupil needs to communicate with home. The Aladdin system and the school telephone provide fully adequate and appropriate methods for facilitating any necessary communication.
- In exceptional circumstances, parents may request permission for their child to bring a mobile phone to school. For **one-off situations**, parents should contact the Principal in advance; if approved, arrangements will be put in place for that day. For **ongoing exceptional circumstances**, parents must apply in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Management, outlining when and why the device is required. If approved, agreed procedures will be established with the parent, class teacher, and Principal.
- Exceptional circumstances may include, but are not limited to: **medical needs** (e.g., using a mobile phone to monitor blood sugar levels), **mental health-related needs**, or **specific learning needs**. All applications will be considered on a **case-by-case basis**.

## 6. Breaches of the Policy

- A child who ignores this policy and brings a mobile phone or an electronic device to school, whether he/she uses it or not, will be required to hand over such a device to a member of staff. The mobile phone will be given to the Principal and can only be collected by a parent/guardian.
- If the mobile phone policy is breached more than once by a pupil, the school will refer to its Code of Behaviour and will impose sanctions, up to and including suspension. Parents will be required to attend a meeting with the Principal in such instances.
- Any instance of a pupil using a mobile phone to record or take photographs of pupils or staff will be treated as a **serious breach** of school policy. Such actions pose significant risks to **child safeguarding, privacy**, and to the **dignity and safety** of pupils and staff. They may also constitute breaches of the school's **Child Protection Policy, Data Protection legislation**, and the **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)**.

- Such breaches may result in sanctions **up to and including suspension or expulsion**, in line with the school's Code of Behaviour, and may require the involvement of external agencies such as **Tusla** or **An Garda Síochána**, where appropriate.

## 7. Staff use of mobile phones

- Teachers and Special Needs Assistants are working professionals who may need to be contactable by phone for a variety of legitimate reasons, including personal or family matters. Mobile phones also serve as an important professional tool for staff, supporting access to **Aladdin**, enabling communication across the school grounds, and facilitating the monitoring of pupils with medical needs.
- Staff use of mobile phones is permitted for **professional purposes** and for **necessary personal contact**, provided that phones are kept on **silent or vibrate** and do not cause distraction or disrupt teaching, learning, or supervision. Personal calls or messages should be managed discreetly and, where possible, taken outside of class time.

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The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Boher N.S. on 3-12-2025

Signed: Patrick C. O'Shea  
Chairperson, Board of Management