



Electronic Device Policy

1. Introduction:

Loreto College Foxrock is a fee-charging girls' secondary day school in Dublin under the trusteeship of the Loreto Education Trust. While Loreto College Foxrock accepts that it is a student's right to have an electronic device the following policy aims to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all members of the school community are preserved. This policy was developed in partnership with staff, students and parents/guardians.

2. Rationale:

The Loreto College Foxrock Mission Statement states "In the Spirit of Mary Ward, Loreto College Foxrock is a caring, enabling, learning community where staff and students work together with mutual respect to fulfil their God-given potential with integrity, compassion, and a sense of humour in the generous pursuit of a just world". This Electronic Device Policy aims to present to students, staff and Parents/Guardians the norms of behaviour in relation to electronic devices. These norms protect the rights of all students to work together in "a caring and enabling, learning community" where the wellbeing of all members is paramount and where "mutual respect" is shown to all members of the school community.

This policy is directly related to and should be read in reference to the school's Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, Acceptable Use Policy and the Child Safeguarding Statement, Digital Framework 2019, Looking at our Schools 22: A Quality Framework for Post Primary (DES, 2022) and the Mary Ward Compass Document for Loreto Schools.

3. Aims:

The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure that effective teaching and learning can take place without electronic digital devices being a distraction.
- Ensure the use of digital learning devices are maximised, educational opportunities are expanded, technological skills are developed.
- Protect the school community from potential harassment or bullying through misuse of electronic digital devices.
- Increase face-to-face social interaction between students.

4. Scope:

This policy applies to all students, while they are in class, while they are on the school premises, when attending off-campus school activities/trips and at all times when in school uniform. It applies to all situations: non-timetabled time, class activities, co-curricular activities and extra-curricular activities. The school's Code of Behaviour applies without exception.

For the purpose of this policy: a **digital learning device** will refer to digital learning devices such as a laptop/surface pro or computer, whether school or personally owned and a **communication device** will refer to a smart phone, smart watch and/or any other similar communication device. These lists of examples are not exhaustive.

5. Digital Learning Device:

5.1 Digital Learning Device Main Rules

It is compulsory for each student to purchase a digital learning device through a school nominated provider. This device is configured for each student and connected to the school IT system. The following rules apply to these digital learning devices:

- Use the device only when instructed by class teacher
- The device must be charged before the beginning of each school day
- It is expected that a student has her device with her in school each day
- Sending messages during class or during the school day is not permitted
- Accessing and using games/Apps not related to teaching and learning is not permitted
- Using the device during break, lunch or on the corridors is not permitted unless a student is requested to do so by a member of staff
- Students are requested to use appropriate screensaver/usernames
- The use of camera and voice recorder is not permitted unless specifically requested by the teacher. Any such photos / recordings should be in line with the teacher's instructions
- Processing, recirculating, or looking up inappropriate material is not permitted
- Sending offensive messages and/or calls is prohibited
- Composing or publishing on any online forum a photograph/digital image, recording or written material that is disrespectful to any member of the school community is forbidden
- Interfering with another students' device is strictly prohibited
- Devices must be available for random inspection by staff members

5.2. Digital Learning Device Sanctions

Students must use their electronic devices responsibly in line with the rules/procedures above. Failure to adhere to these rules/procedures will be seen as a breach of the school's Code of Behaviour, and dealt with accordingly.

6. Communication Device:

6.1 Communication Device Main Rules

- Communication devices must be switched off, unseen and unheard, once students enter the school grounds until they exit the school grounds at the end of the day.
- Where a student brings a communication device (phone, watch etc.) to school, the device must be kept switched off and stored in her locked locker/phone away box.
- This device may not be kept on her person or in her school bag.

- It may not be used for any personal purpose on the school premises or grounds, especially in the toilet and the changing room areas.

6.2 Communication Device Sanctions

A student who is found using her communication device without permission or who has not stored her device as stated in this policy, is required to comply with the following procedure:

- Turn off the device.
- Give the device (including SIM card) to the staff member
- The device will be placed in a sealed envelope with details of the event recorded on the envelope.
- The device will be retained in the school for the remainder of that day and returned to the student at the end of the school day.
- Should the breach occur outside of the school day or away from the school premises, the student will be asked to give the device to the supervising member of staff. The device will be returned to the student at the end of the activity.
- In the event of a breach of this policy, the relevant Year Head will be informed.
- A behaviour point will be added to the student's chronicle on the schools VSware system and a period of detention will apply.
- Repeated offences will be dealt with in line with the schools Code of Behaviour
- If a student refuses to co-operate with the procedures as outlined, it will be considered an incident of serious misbehaviour and will be dealt with in line with the schools Code of Behaviour.

7. General Rules for Electronic Devices:

7.1 Labelling

The school does not accept responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged electronic devices. The safety and security of electronic devices is wholly a matter for students and their parents/guardians. It is recommended that students personalise their communication/digital device in such a way that it is identifiable. It is also recommended that appropriate passwords are enabled to ensure additional security of communication/digital devices.

7.2 Students wishing to go home during the school day

A student who wishes to go home for any reason during the school day must arrange to do so through the school office only and not independently by electronic device. This ensures that correct procedures for leaving school are observed. The school is in loco parentis during the school day therefore, a student may not make independent arrangements to go home without following correct procedures. Any such arrangement is a breach of the Code of Behaviour and will incur sanctions. Responsibility cannot be taken by the school authorities for students who arrange independently to go home without following proper procedure.

7.3 Parental contact with students during the school day

To assist the school in implementing this policy, Parents/Guardians are respectfully asked not to contact students on electronic devices at any time during the school day and or during school related activities. Contact with the school may be made through the school office at (01)2895637 between

8.50 am & 4.30 pm, Monday - Friday. Students may use, with permission, the office phone in emergencies.

7.4 Exams

Communication devices must not be taken into house or state examinations. Exceptions may be made for students who need communication devices for medical reasons.

7.5 Exceptional Circumstances

It is only in very exceptional circumstances that communication devices can be used as a learning aid and permission must be given explicitly by the staff member present.

7.6 Study Arrangements

The school has a regular evening study programme and from time-to-time study is organised at weekends and during school closures. This section covers any such arrangement. Students are allowed use their school Digital Learning Devices.

Communication Device usage is not permitted. Students are encouraged to engage fully with their studies without distraction. Any use of a communication device that hinders students' learning will lead to the device being confiscated by the supervisor and returned at the end of the study session. For regular evening study, communication between parents/guardians and school can be made through the evening study email which is made available to all participants.

7.7 School Trips

For short excursions that begin and end comfortably within the school day, the organising staff member can determine whether students have their communication device with them. On such excursions the school wishes to maximise the learning and social benefits for students and minimise distractions caused by communication devices.

In the case of trips that involve a significant journey, students may be allowed to take their communication device with them. In this regard communication devices should only be used when necessary and as directed by a teacher/supervisor. Students may be permitted to use their communications device to take photos for educational or social benefit at the discretion of the staff present. Social networking is not permitted on a school trip. Students are expected to interact fully with fellow students, staff members and facilitators in order to maximise the educational benefit of the trip. A contact name and number will be made available to parents/guardians to ensure their daughter can be contacted if necessary.

7.8 Co-curricular and Extra-curricular Activities

Students are expected to interact fully with fellow students, staff members and facilitators while representing Loreto College Foxrock, therefore, communication device usage should be minimised. If the use of a communication device is deemed appropriate, permission to use the device will be given by the staff member supervising the activity.

7.9 Photographs and Videos

No student is permitted to use an electronic device to take a photograph/recording (audio/visual) in the school or at any school event without the express permission of a staff member. Students are not permitted to upload to the internet or online storage e.g. cloud/drive, or transfer by text or social media photographs/recordings (audio/visual)/digital images:

- (a) of other members of the school community without their permission,
- (b) of a student, without the permission of the Parents/Guardians of that student,

- (c) of a student wearing the school uniform without the permission of school management,
- (d) that identify the school building, the school community or any of its members,
- (e) that reflect negatively on the school.

7.10 Bullying

Possible bullying behaviour involving electronic digital devices will be investigated under the Anti-Bullying Policy. Where a bullying incident is deemed to have occurred using an electronic device it will be treated as a serious breach of the school's Code of Behaviour. Students are reminded that it is a criminal offence to use a communication/digital device to menace, harass or offend another individual. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí in such incidents.

7.11 Hot Spotting

Students may not use another student's digital learning device in order to access the internet or school provided WiFi.

8. Roles and Responsibilities:

8.1 Students

- Read the policy with your Parents/Guardians
- Be familiar with, comply with and support the policy

8.2 Parents/Guardians

- Read the policy with your daughter and ensure she is aware of her responsibility in relation to this policy
- Do not contact your daughter in school via an electronic device, do so via the school office
- Be aware of striking a healthy balance regarding your daughter's screen time. Technology is used for a wide variety of purposes, many of which may be educational and interactive, but it is important to be aware of the time spent on electronic devices
- Comply with and support the school's Electronic Device Policy

8.3 Any staff member in a supervisory capacity

- Implement the school's Electronic Device Policy
- Implement the sanctions in cases where there is a breach of the policy

9. Date Adopted:

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on the date noted below.

10. Review:

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department of Education.

This Policy was ratified by the Board on the date noted below.

Signed:
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date:

Signed:
(Principal)

Date: