LAGAN COLLEGE BELFAST

Mobile Phone Policy

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Whilst it is acknowledged that the mobile phone and other telecommunications such as Ipads are very much a part of every-day life, we believe that there is no need for our students to have their mobile phones and other digital devices switched on during the school day at Lagan College.

Teachers and students have a right to teach and to learn in a school environment that is safe and free from interruptions or distractions from mobile phones and other telecommunication devices not used for educational purposes.

Consequently, the use of mobile phones is not permitted during the school day. Mobile Phones must be switched off during school hours between 9.00am and 3.30pm.
Silent or discreet settings are not acceptable.

Mobile Phones must not be in sight or used during the school day under any circumstances, otherwise the mobile phone will be removed from the student by a member of staff and sent to the main office. The item can be signed out by the student on not more than 2 occasions at the end of the school day at 3.30pm.

Staff will request that students leaving their classroom to use the toilet leave their mobile phone on the teacher's desk, with the face down.

On the 3rd occasion that your child's phone is confiscated, it will be returned to the student's parent/carer only and will need to be collected from the Principal or Vice Principal at a time that is convenient to them.

Lagan College accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are brought into the College and undertakes no responsibility to investigate their misplacement, damage, loss or theft. Furthermore, Lagan College accepts no responsibility for the health effects (potential or actual) resulting from mobile phone use.

It should be noted that the usage of mobile phones includes the sending and receiving of text messages, images and data. If it is brought to the school's attention that a student has been engaged in sending an inappropriate text message(s)/ voice message(s), video recording(s), e-mail(s) or image(s) or recording an event during the school day that may bring the College's name into disrepute and cause harm, he/she will experience appropriate disciplinary action. A breach of the College expectations by a student will result in a sanction and serious and/ or persistent breaches, will lead to a suspension.

Please be warned that during internal and external examinations students are not permitted to bring a mobile phone into the examination centre, hall or room under any circumstances. A student discovered with a mobile phone in an external examination, could have his/her paper annulled and be awarded a zero mark.

Arrangements will be in place for communication with the school and /or home in the case of emergency. Students may access the use of a phone via their Form Teacher, Head of Year and/or the General Office. The staff will continue to contact parents/ carers directly in the event of an emergency/ sickness.

Students may not use mobile phones during field trips, excursion or other associated activities except during recreational time. Lagan College accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that have been brought on such trips, excursions or activities and undertakes no responsibility to investigate their misplacement, damage, loss or theft.

These clear measures are being implemented to safeguard student welfare and enable staff and students to focus on learning rather than the staff spending an extortionate amount of time following up on a range of pastoral and bullying matters linked to the inappropriate use of mobile phones, IPads and other telecommunications during the school day.

Advice to students as stated below is printed in their Student Learning Planner.

1. All students should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, is still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation. It is never considered acceptable behaviour for staff or students to reference school business, policy, practice or members of the school community via any social media unless through an officially created and maintained account.

2. Students will be sanctioned if their activities online bring the College's reputation into disrepute or cause harm to others.

3. The school accepts no responsibility for any privately owned devices brought into school. Pupils/staff are solely responsible for the safety (including content) of devices on their way to school, during school and on the return from school. It is the responsibility of pupils/staff to look after their own personal devices and therefore they should keep the devices with them at all times. The school is in no way responsible for personal devices that are broken, lost or stolen while at school or during school activities.

Unsupervised use of digital devices is not allowed between 9 am and 3-30 pm. If they are used without permission, they will be confiscated and sent to the main office. Items will be returned to students at the end of the day.
On the 3rd occasion that your phone is confiscated, it will only be returned to your parent/carer. The item will need to be collected from the Principal or Vice Principal at a time that is convenient to them

5. Inappropriate use of digital devices or social media networks will result in a sanction.

6. Use of mobile phones, IPads or other music devices are not allowed between 9 am and 3-30 pm

The mobile phone policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it reflects the school's ethos, values and focus on learning.