

**KILDARE PLACE SCHOOL  
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY 2013**

It is now recognized that social media devices including tablets, lap-tops, mobile phones and any other device with internet connectivity, can be intrusive and distracting in many situations including in schools. It is also noted that the debate continues on the potential harmful effects of the frequent use of mobile phones on our pupils who could be particularly vulnerable to such harm.

Kildare Place School regards the use of internet enabled devices in the school premises as unnecessary and disruptive and therefore the use of such devices in the school or on the school grounds by pupils is expressly prohibited. (except in the case where pupils with Special Educational needs equipment that has been approved by the Principal) School is taken to include the provision of school related activities. A notice to this effect is displayed in the school entrance hall.

In cases where pupils need to contact a parent during school hours, this may be done in the school office with the consent of their teacher or another member of staff. Likewise should a parent wish to contact a pupil, this should also be done through the school office. It should be noted that if any pupil wishes to use a device within the school grounds, outside of school hours, permission must be sought from a staff member.

The use of mobile phones by staff or by student teachers on placement for essential calls should be kept to a minimum and should be made if possible in an open area or in an area where pupils are not present. Teachers on school outings or trips may use a mobile phone provided by the school which can also be used for pupils and or parents to contact each other during a school outing.

**Sanctions.**

If a pupil uses a mobile phone/internet enabled device during school hours or school related activities in contravention of this School Policy, the device will be confiscated immediately and retained in the school office until the end of the school day where it may be collected by the parent/guardian of the pupil. Frequent infringement of this policy will result in further sanctions as outlined in the School Code of Behaviour.

**Use of Social Media.**

Kildare Place School regards the use of Social Media Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and text messaging in the confines of school or school related activities as inappropriate and intrusive. The use of social media for the purposes of bullying other pupils **during and out of school hours** is condemned in the strongest possible terms. Any transgressions of this prohibition will be treated with the utmost seriousness and will result in an immediate application of the Code of Behaviour. All necessary sanctions from the Major Incidents section will be implemented to put an end to any offending behaviour.

In accordance with Department of Education and Skills guidelines, the School network is “firewalled” and therefore access to various social media websites is not possible using school computer equipment. Pupils are encouraged to report any incidences of cyber or text bullying to a trusted adult or member of staff in confidence that the matter will be dealt with immediately. Likewise any parent or guardian who has concerns may speak in confidence with the school Principal or designated Child Protection Officers.

The use of social media by members of staff or other members of the school community outside school hours in a personal capacity should not be used to bring the reputation of the school into disrepute or negative association.

Kildare Place School recognises that the use of photography and or video footage on websites, publications or any other forms of social media poses both direct and indirect risks to children and young people. Whilst the school cannot police the use of such media by members of the school community they would urge respect for privacy at all times and ask all to be mindful of Child Protection Guidelines.

Kildare Place School Board of Management

Ratified on: 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013.