**Mobile Phone/Electronic Devices Policy**

**Introductory Statement**

This policy was drawn up in response to technological advances which have seen a significant increase in hand held electronic ‘devices’ amongst the school population over recent years. It was drawn up in consultation with the staff, student council, parent policy group and Board of Management.

**Rationale**

* Mobile phones, Tablets, PSP’s D.S.’s etc. are intrusive and distracting in a school environment.
* Some electronic devices may be harmful due to frequent use
* Mobile phones may be used to conduct bullying campaigns/activities.

**Relationship to School Ethos**

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices contravenes the provision of a safe and secure school environment **conducive** to learning, a provision which is central to the mission statement and ethos of Newtown National School.

**Internal School Procedures:**

The following are the guidelines for mobile phone / electronic device usage in the school**:**

**Children:**

* The Board of Management **strongly** **discourages** pupils from bringing mobile phones / electronic devices to school or on out of school activities e.g. tours, football etc. Children who need to contact home during school hours/or on tour etc. may do so through the   school secretary/teacher using the school landline phone or the school mobile phone.
* Any pupil who uses a mobile phone or electronic devices in school will have it confiscated. It may be collected by the pupil’s parent at the end of the school day. A record is kept of the incident in the incident book. (see Code of Behaviour)
* On the **rare occasion** where a pupil requires a mobile phone/electronic devices after school hours (e.g. usually an emergency situation or child staying over where parents live separate and apart), a written request must be made by the parent(s) to the Principal outlining the reason for bringing a mobile to school. The phone must remain off when on the school grounds, have a label clearly stating the name and will be stored in a locked area by the class teacher. The mobile phone may be collected at the end of the school day.

**Parents:**

* Parents are advised that Newtown N.S. accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones/devices which are brought into the school or school grounds.
* Should parents need to contact pupils, or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures: via the school office. (tel no. 046 9053322)
* Parents are encouraged to talk to their child about who is entitled to use his/her mobile number, as text messages can often be used to bully pupils. (ref: Anti-Bullying Policy)
* Parents are encouraged to “switch off” or put their own phones on “silent” or “discreet” mode when in the school grounds or in meetings.

**Staff:**

* During teaching time, while on playground duty and during meetings, teachers are encouraged to have mobile phones “switched off” or put on ‘silent’ or ‘discreet’ mode, and out of view.
* Staff personal calls are encouraged to be confined to break times.
* Staff members have access to the school landline/school mobile phone if urgent calls need to be made to parents.
* If a class teacher has to contact or receive phone calls from professionals or outside agencies classroom supervision can be organised.
* Staff are only to use the school camera to take photographs of pupils.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

All staff members, parents and pupils are responsible for the co-ordination and implementation of this policy.

**Evaluation and Review:**

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis and reviewed as and when the need arises.

**Ratification and Communication.**

This policy will be posted on the school website and a sign on entrance doors encouraging people to switch off mobile phones when on school grounds.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in June 2016.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_