



## EEB3 | Mobile Devices Policy

### Whole School Approach

#### 1. Introduction

A school is a place where community life and face to face social interactions need to be prioritized and given space to develop. EEB3 recognizes that mobile devices<sup>1</sup> are an important part of our lives and culture and can have considerable value if used effectively. EEB3 also recognizes that technology has an important part to play in our teaching and learning practices. We are aware that educating our pupils about digital competences is one of our many responsibilities as a school.

Digital skills are one of the 8 key competences to acquire in our school system and we focus within our school on a holistic approach/concept of learning media and to prepare pupils for reasoned and responsible use of the advantages and of the dangers of mobile devices in general and smartphones in particular.

It is indisputable that mobile devices have a wide base of applications within the classroom and during free time, but allowing pupils to use these devices freely carries risks ranging from gaming and screen addiction to exposure to inappropriate or harmful online content to cyberbullying.

While recognizing the validity and relevance of technology, as a school we are also aware of the negative effects of such devices if used inappropriately. Therefore, it is important to have rules about the use of mobile devices at school so that we prevent disruption and encourage good learning habits.

The use of mobile devices not for pedagogical reasons should be reduced as much as possible in a school setting. This means that also during free periods and breaks too, pupils should avoid being on social media, playing video games and do their best to limit their screen time. Only reasonable use of a mobile device by certain levels in the secondary cycle will be allowed in school.

While this policy is for the whole school, it needs to be pointed out that for the nursery and primary school Parents are strongly advised **not to** give their child a mobile device for school.

Mobile devices are **not allowed** to be used by nursery and primary pupils.

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<sup>1</sup> Mobile device refers to any portable gadget including mobile phones, smartphones, smartwatches, video games, video or electronic game consoles, personal tablets, MP3 or MP4 players etc. This definition may be amended from time to time.



Starting from school year 2024-2025, mobile devices are also not allowed for pupils in **S1, S2 and S3**. If for some exceptional and valid reason Parents decide to give their child a mobile device, it needs to be kept switched off and in the school bag during school hours. If a mobile device is used by a pupil in the above-mentioned levels, consequences will be put in place as explained in section 9.

If a parent decides to place a mobile device in an S1, S2 or S3 pupil's bag, this device can only be switched on at the end of the school day, once the pupil is outside the school buildings and in the school grounds to check if an important message has been sent. Extensive use of such devices is still not allowed on school premises.

Therefore, the main scope of this policy document will be applicable to S4 to S7 secondary cycle pupils, however, it is important that the whole school community is aware of our approach and practice in dealing with this important topic.

**Starting from school year 2024-2025**, the decision is to allow **S6 and S7** pupils use of mobile devices. We believe they have the maturity to manage such devices well within the designated areas and established school rules, as defined below.

Provisional permission is being given to S4 and S5 pupils. They are also obliged to follow the school rules established in this policy. An evaluation of mobile device policy will be carried out at the end of school year 2024-2025 and decisions will be taken accordingly as we plan for school year 2025-2026.

This policy will be implemented as of the start of school year 2024-2025 and the school is committed to communicating this policy document with all stakeholders, as well as, enforcing this document with the aim of improving the well-being of our pupils.

## 2. Aim of the Mobile Devices Code of Conduct

The aim of this policy document is to inform the school community about the use of mobile devices at EEB3 and this document is part of a broader policy about promoting good behaviour in school.

- ▶ The [Good Behaviour Policy \(Nursery and Primary Cycle\)](#)
- ▶ The [Good Behaviour Policy \(Secondary Cycle\)](#)
- ▶ The Secondary Cycle also has a [Living Together Rules of Procedure document](#)
- ▶ EEB3 also has an [ICT Charter for Pupils](#) which should be consulted. In the primary cycle the rules for the use of ICT resources are also available in the pupil's agenda and can be consulted by pupils, teachers, or Parents/Legal representatives.

### 3. Pupils' Responsibility

If Parents/Legal representatives allow pupils to bring a mobile device to school for a valid reason, it is to be clear that the following rules must be followed.

- ▶ **Nursery, primary, S1, S2 or S3** pupils cannot use a mobile device anywhere in school. These pupils are always encouraged to participate in the numerous projects, initiatives and actions organized by the school. Free play during break time and socializing with friends is also an important learning experience.
- ▶ All EEB3 pupils should have a book in their bag so that free reading can occur when pupils are not occupied in class or any other educational project.
- ▶ In exceptional certified medical circumstances, the school may consider allowing a pupil to have a device. This will be a management decision once there is a written request made by the Parents/Legal representatives.

#### S4, S5, S6 and S7 pupils' responsibility regarding mobile devices

- ▶ S4, S5, S6 or S7 pupils should be aware of where they can and cannot use a mobile device.
- ▶ These pupils should also be aware that in class, a mobile device can be used only if the teacher instructs pupils to do so for a pedagogical reason. Pupils are responsible for their mobile devices. In accordance with Article 34 of the General Rules of the European schools, the school is not responsible for any objects brought to school by pupils. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen, or damaged mobile devices.
- ▶ Pupils are not allowed to use mobile devices in class (e.g., for checking the time, texting, calculator, etc), unless for pedagogical reasons with the approval of their teacher.
- ▶ If Parents/Legal representatives allow a pupil to have a phone and/or other mobile devices, the pupil is expected to switch them off and keep them in their bag during lessons and in other areas where mobile devices are not allowed.
- ▶ Pupils will not use mobile devices in any of the school buildings (including classrooms, corridors, staircases, toilets, laboratories, canteen, etc) except in the designated areas as indicated in section 6.
- ▶ Pupils need to make sure that any file stored in their mobile device does not contain violent, degrading, or offensive images. They are also informed that such images also cannot be streamed or disseminated while on school premises. Mobile devices cannot be used to spread hate, commit bullying acts, mock, or harass other persons in and out of school. The transmission of some images/information may be a criminal offence and will be dealt with as such by the school.
- ▶ Pupils need to be aware that EEB3 has a zero tolerance to bullying and this includes cyberbullying. Cases of cyberbullying will be considered as serious offences and disciplinary procedures will be taken.
- ▶ Pupils are expected to follow the EEB3 Good Behaviour Policy and its Anti-Bullying Policy.
- ▶ Pupils are not allowed to make a recording, visual or otherwise, with mobile devices when they are on school premises unless they are instructed by their teacher/s for pedagogical

reasons (for example to make a recording of their pronunciation or to take a photo of notes written on the Smartboard in exceptional and valid cases).

- ▶ Pupils are not allowed to take any photograph or video of any person (adult or child) who is on school premises or at a school related event without their consent. There may be a pedagogical reason for a teacher to ask a pupil to take a photo or video and this is then allowed.
- ▶ Pupils are not to wear headphones, earphones, or air pods, during or between lessons, for reasons of safety and courtesy.
- ▶ Pupils are to be aware of the EEB3 ICT Charter for pupils.
- ▶ Pupils are to be aware that any EEB3 member of staff is authorized to ask for a mobile device to be turned off and put it away or to confiscate it if it is not being used in accordance with this policy.

#### 4. Staff Responsibility

While teachers and other educators are cognizant that digital devices are one of the educational tools used in teaching and learning, we are also cognizant that excessive use of mobile devices will have a negative effect on pupils' well-being and academic success. It is with this in mind that teachers will continue to develop professional ways of including ICT in lessons but will also do their utmost to enforce the decisions taken in this policy document. The responsibility to enforce this policy falls on all EEB3 employees.

Since this new policy document will come into effect as from the beginning of school year 2024-2025, during the first few weeks of school there must be extra effort for implementation and in the secondary cycle this will be led by the management, educational advisors, and supervisors. However, as stated, any member of staff is obliged to take the necessary action if a pupil is breaking the rule.

Teachers of S1 to S3 pupils will make use of different teaching methodologies in class and the integration of ICT is one of these. The use of the school's trolleys of laptops and iPads are always at the disposal of teachers. Teachers of these year groups should also keep in mind that the pupils will not have a mobile device they can use at school and so they do not have access to SMS or Teams during school hours.

The negative effect of excessive screen time is applicable to all individuals including adults. EEB3 staff should try and set an example as much as possible and the use of mobile devices should be controlled. In class use of a mobile device should be for very exceptional cases.

## 5. Parental Responsibility

The school relies on a significant commitment from Parents/Legal representatives to ensure the success of this policy. Parents/Legal representatives are strongly encouraged to assess their child's ability and maturity to use a mobile device effectively and wisely before its purchase. Once the Parents/Legal representatives have taken the decision to purchase a mobile device for their child, it is imperative that measures of monitoring are put in place. A significant part of educating a child on how to use their mobile device can be done at home in the context of their family. It is imperative that pupils understand that the school and the Parents/Legal representatives are working together for good of the pupil.

As stated, it is primarily the Parents/Legal representatives/Legal representatives' decision whether to provide a mobile phone or other device to their child. When making this decision, Parents/Legal representatives/Legal representatives are encouraged to reflect on the pros and cons of this decision and need to be aware that they are responsible for their child's behaviour when using such devices. The school is not responsible for valuables which are brought to school (Article 9 of the [EEB3 Living Together](#) Document and Article 34 of the [General Rules of the European Schools](#)).

Parents are encouraged to discuss at home the use of mobile devices in a school setting and review together with their child the content of mobile devices with particular attention to games and their content, apps, and social media. Parents are also reminded that they are responsible for checking the minimum legal age of access to this material. The legal age is set for a reason and Parents should ensure that their child's does not have access to apps that are not suitable for their age.

Parents/Legal representatives are also reminded that calling with their child on a mobile phone (or other device) during school hours is not allowed. In case of emergency the school's telephone numbers can be used.

If the school confiscates the pupil's device (as explained in section 9) and the Parents are informed, the Parents have an obligation to go and pick up the device.

The school will carry its responsibility of dealing with issues that arise in school. However, Parents are reminded that the school cannot continuously address issues that are related to misuse of mobile devices after school hours or problems that arise from underage (under the set age limit) pupils' having access to apps. The school will deal with issues where the misbehaviour is clearly committed during school time, on school premises or on a school activity and is having a negative effect on a pupil's sense of well-being.

Parents are also invited to consider and evaluate the research and data that is available about the effect of screen time on the well-being and academic success of children. A lot of research is available on the negative effects of extensive exposure to screen time on digital devices.

## 6. Where are mobile devices allowed and prohibited for S4, 5, 6 and 7 pupils?

(Nursery, primary and S1, 2 and 3 pupils **cannot** have mobile devices on school premises or on school outings)

LOCATION	FORBIDDEN	ALLOWED
In class	X	
In laboratories	X	
School playgrounds and outside areas within the school campus.		X
Gym/Changing Rooms	X	
Corridors	X	
Library		X (for study purposes)
Canteen	X	
Cervantes (Study Room)		X (for study purposes)
Cafeteria		X
Study Room (Etude) S4 to S7		X (for study purposes)

In places where the use of mobile devices is prohibited, they should be turned off or put into silent mode in the pupil's bag or locker.

It is strictly always forbidden to film, take, distribute, share, or stream pictures and/or videos on school premises or in activities linked to the school such as school trips and outings.

## 7. Use of Mobile Devices including phones during Examinations

Mobile phones and other mobile devices are **not** permitted during the examinations. Article 23 of the EEB3 Living Together Document states:

“It is strictly forbidden to be in possession of a mobile phone (including Smartphone), and/or other devices during the examination or test. Failure to comply with this condition will automatically result in the cancellation of the examination or test and consequently a zero mark.”

Pupils must leave their coats, bags, pencil cases, mobile phones, smart watches and other devices, and objects of value outside the examination center. Such items fall under the responsibility of the pupil. The school strongly advises not to bring valuable items to school.

## 8. In case of emergency or illness

- ▶ If there is an emergency which requires communication with home, pupils must speak to a member of staff who will deal with the matter.
- ▶ In an emergency Parents/legal representative should phone the cycle secretariat and a message will be taken immediately to the pupil. This ensures that a pupil is given support and privacy in dealing with a potentially difficult situation.
- ▶ Pupils who feel unwell must report to their teacher and/or Educational Advisor who will send the pupil to the infirmary. If needs be, contact with Parents/Legal representatives will be made. Pupils are not permitted to use their mobile phones or other devices to make such calls. This allows support and supervision and prevents pupils leaving the school grounds without a record being made.

## 9. Failure to respect the rules regarding mobile phone/device use in school

If an employee sees a pupil with a mobile device and this pupil (nursery, primary, S1, S2 and S3) should not have this, then it should be taken immediately, given to the Assistant Deputy Director. It will be placed in a bag with the pupil's name and class. The same will apply to any S4, S5, S6 or S7 pupil who makes use of a mobile device in an area where it is not allowed.

The following sanctions will be put in place:

Action	Consequence/Sanction
<b>First offence</b> of using a mobile device where it is not allowed.	Confiscation of mobile device which is taken to the Assistant Deputy Director Secondary's office (ADDS). It is to be picked up by the pupil at the end of the same day. The end of day means at 16.15.
<b>Second offence</b> of using a mobile device where it is not allowed.	Confiscation of mobile device which is taken to the Assistant Deputy Director Secondary's office (ADDS). For a whole week from the day of confiscation, it is to be dropped off in the morning and picked up at the end of the day by the pupil from the ADDS office. The end of day means at 16.15.
<b>Third offence</b> of using a mobile device where it is not allowed.	Confiscation of mobile device which is taken to the Assistant Deputy Director Secondary's office (ADDS). The pupil's Parents are informed, and they need to agree a time with the ADDS or delegate when to come and pick up the phone.
<b>Repetitive use</b> of mobile device (more than three offences)	Implementation of Good Behaviour Policy as this is considered a serious infringement of the school rules.



Confiscated mobile devices are placed in a labelled bag and held in the ADDS office.

If a pupil is in breach of school rules and is asked to handover a mobile device by an EEB3 member of staff, and refuses to do so, this is considered to be a serious infringement. The school's Good Behaviour Policy will be implemented in such cases.

In cases of repeated infringements, the school reserves the right to inform Parents/Legal representatives that their child cannot bring a mobile device to school.

## 10. Advice to Pupils on the Safe Use of Mobile Phones and other Devices

- ▶ Using mobile devices is convenient and practical but one needs to observe some common-sense ground rules to protect oneself from potential abuse or danger.
- ▶ Pupils should not give out their number or friends' numbers to people they don't know, especially in Instant Messenger or Chat rooms.
- ▶ Remember that the school has an ICT charter for pupils, and all are expected to act accordingly. Consult the [ICT Charter](#).
- ▶ Keep the security code or PIN number of the device private. Remember that no one is allowed to manipulate and/or send pictures, videos, or audios of others.
- ▶ Remember if it's on the internet it's everywhere.
- ▶ Remember that the school offers many activities that are enjoyable during the break time and pupils can have fun with friends without using a mobile device.
- ▶ If a pupil receives a message which upsets them, don't reply but keep a record and tell an adult you trust.
- ▶ If a pupil receives an inappropriate image or text about someone don't forward it to others. Distributing explicit (e.g. nude, sexual) images or other types of content of other pupils is considered harassment and illegal. If you receive something like this, tell an adult immediately.
- ▶ A pupil's school email address should not be used for personal matters as this increases the risk of phishing or being hacked.

## 11. Air Tags

It is to be noted that pupils cannot be given air tags to take with them on school outings or school trips. The tracking of pupils who are with a group of other pupils and colleagues is prohibited.

Such outings and trips are organized by our staff on a basis of trust in their professional competences and responsibility.





## 12. Conclusion

Excessive use of mobile devices can be detrimental to one's mental health and has an impact on one's achievements. Therefore, it is important that as a school we have a set of rules that are followed by all stakeholders; pupils, school employees and Parents/Legal representatives and everyone carries part of the responsibility to ensure a healthy atmosphere where all can thrive.

A large part of this work falls on the pupils themselves who must take responsibility.

However, Parents/Legal representatives are also called upon to join the school's efforts in applying the new rules and sanctions. As a school community, we are all committed to having the best environment for learning to take place so that all pupils can develop to their full potential in a serene, safe, and stimulating environment.