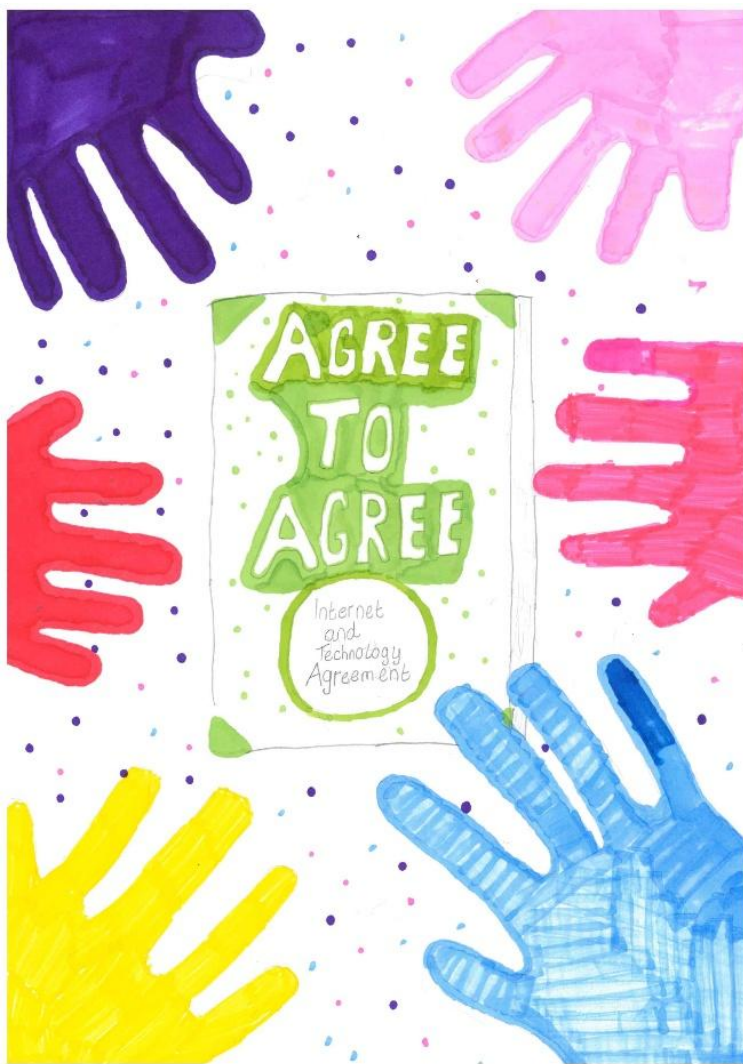


Agree to Agree

Internet and Technology

Use Agreement



Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire Naofa
Kiltale N.S.,

Kiltale, Dunsany, Co. Meath, C15 XF86.

Charity No. 20131357 Roll No. 17742P

(046) 9025619

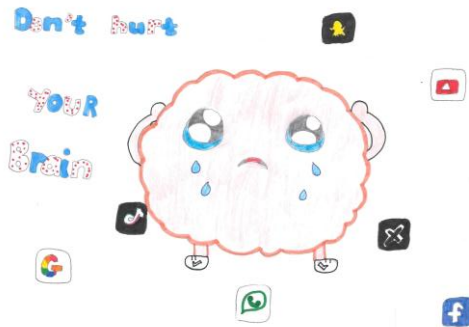
office@kiltalens.ie principal@kiltalens.ie





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Principal's Letter Colin McElroy Principal



Childhood is a time for curiosity, imagination, and meaningful connection. In these formative years, children learn best through play, conversation, exploration, the creation of meaningful relationships and shared experiences with others.

In today's digital world, technology offers many opportunities, but it also presents challenges, particularly for young children. For this reason, our school strongly values the importance of protecting childhood from unnecessary digital pressures. Delaying personal smartphone use allows children to develop essential skills such as attention, communication, creativity, engagement and resilience.

In Ireland, the policy to limit access to smartphones is promoted by the Department of Education and Youth (DOEY) in their recent publication Keeping Childhood Smartphone Free (DOEY, 2023). The same document cites the following concerns and potential negative consequences of giving young people access to smartphones:

- ▶ US Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy indicated in a recent advisory that “children are exposed to harmful content on social media, ranging from violent and sexual content, to bullying and harassment. And for too many children, social media use is compromising their sleep and valuable in-person time with family and friends. We are in the middle of a national youth mental health crisis, and I am concerned that social media is an important driver of that crisis - one that we must urgently address.”
- ▶ The recent Global Education Monitoring report funded by UNESCO warned that “the use of technology is associated with negative impacts on physical and mental well-being and increased susceptibility to online risks and harms, which affect academic performance in the long term” (cited in DOEY, 2023, p.4).

A smartphone-free childhood is not about rejecting technology. Rather, it is about introducing it thoughtfully and at the right stage of development. By first nurturing strong social, emotional, and intellectual foundations, we better prepare young people to use technology in a balanced and responsible way.

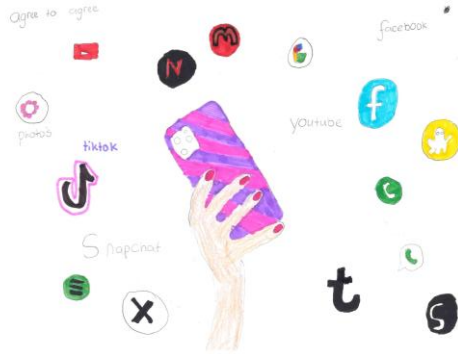
Digital wellbeing is a lifelong skill. As a school community, we encourage healthy habits that prioritise presence, learning, engagement and real-world relationships and interactions.

By working together—pupils, parents and teachers—we can ensure that childhood remains a time of growth, discovery, curiosity and wellbeing, laying the foundations for thoughtful and balanced digital lives in the future.



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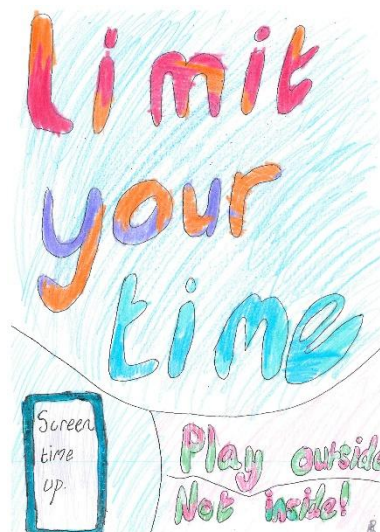
Letter from the Parents' Association



Claire Doherty

Chairperson of Parent's Association

- ▶ In today's digital world, our children have more access to the internet than ever before, which comes with both opportunities and risks. Navigating the online world and responsible screen time is something that all parents need support with and this is the main aim of this agreement.
- ▶ We would hope that in time parents themselves might be able to reflect on their own online use and maybe create healthier habits regarding screen time. We invite all parents to join us in this initiative to create a safer online environment for our children.





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Internet and Technology Use
Agreement



Our Findings

The Pupils

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <p>Hard things about being online: 57% Strangers 46% Brain Rot 42% Being Hacked</p> | <p>Feelings when online: 26% Worried</p> | <p>52% disagree that parents should be able to see what children are doing online</p> | <p>46% agree there should be a time limit for screens</p> | <p>73% agree that devices should not be in bedrooms at night</p> |
|---|--|---|---|--|

The Parents

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <p>55% say they are under pressure to purchase a device</p> | <p>46% think 13 is appropriate age for a phone</p> | <p>15% have no rules around screen time</p> | <p>72% of their children use some form of social media</p> | <p>80% would like support from school</p> |
|---|--|---|--|---|

The Staff

| | | | | |
|---|------------------|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <p>Reduced attention span / concentration</p> | <p>Tiredness</p> | <p>Disengagement in classroom discussions</p> | <p>Poor emotional regulation</p> | <p>Poor social skills</p> |
|---|------------------|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------|





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Agreement

The Agreement



| | Priority Area 1 | Priority Area 2 |
|---------|---------------------|---|
| 2026/27 | Age of First Device | Individual Family Agreement - Agreed Screen Time Rules with your Child and all family members |
| 2027/28 | TBD | TBD |
| 2028/29 | TBD | TBD |

TBD : To be decided

This list is not exhaustive and will be regularly reviewed



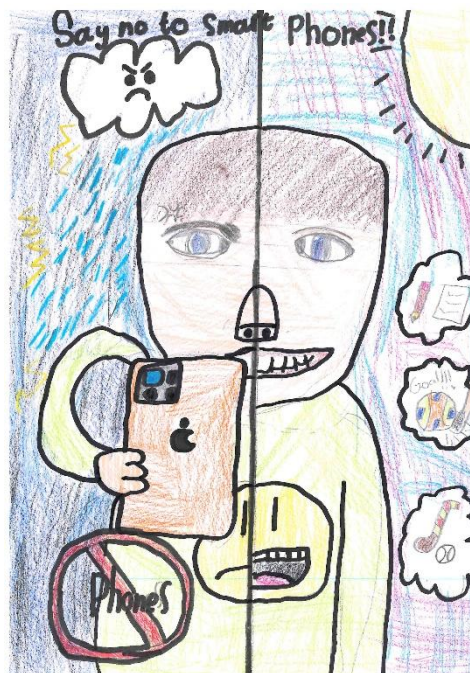
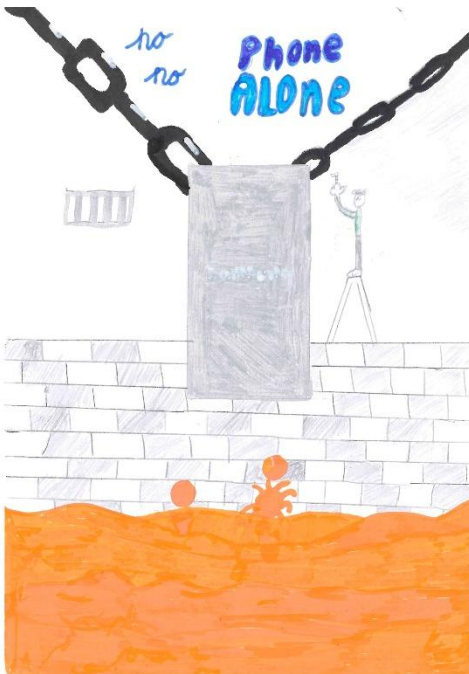


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Age of First Device

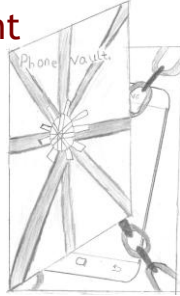
It is recommended by experts in this field that children should not own their own device until the age of 14 and children are not exposed to social media until they are 16.



- The vast majority of parents feel that the most appropriate age for a mobile phone is 13 (or the summer before secondary school) and most feel under pressure to buy a device before this. For this reason, our school has decided to make this our first priority area. This will bring us closer to the recommended best practise which will benefit children, but also parents.

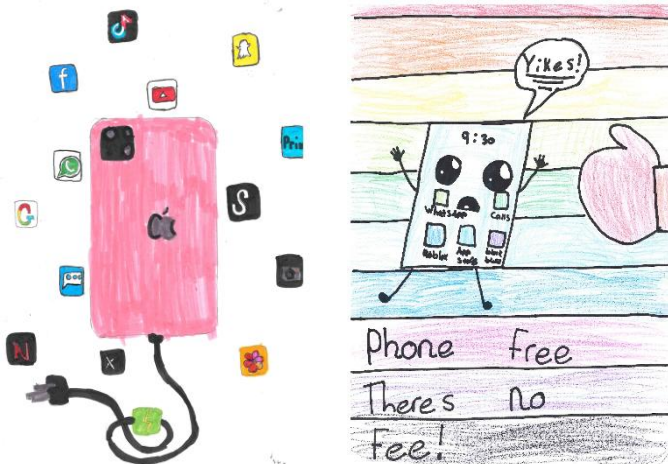


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Recommendations for parents

- ▶ Limit age of first smartphone until the summer before secondary school.
- ▶ Parents should co-own all internet devices before 14., so children understand that they do not have full responsibility of the device. Then, if there's an issue they will be more likely to share this with adults.
- ▶ If a child for whatever reason requires a phone to make calls, consider a family phone to be used by the child, which is not internet-enabled.
- ▶ The use of group chats on social media forms are not supported or supervised by the school, in cases where your child is part of a group chat, it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that these chats are appropriate, monitored and do not affect the well-being of other students in the school.





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SCREEN TIME

Evidence indicates that if children spend a large amount of time in front of screens in early childhood, they may be more susceptible to sleep difficulties, obesity, language and cognitive skills difficulties. Screens can be smart phones, gaming consoles, e-readers, laptops, televisions, computers .



When you are focused on
your phone
you
miss the magic of
the moment



- ▶ The WHO and the HSE recommend the following:
 - ▶ children under the age of 18 months, avoid the use of screen media.
 - ▶ 18-24 months should choose a high quality programming with parental involvement.
 - ▶ 2-5 years screen media should be limited to 1 hour per day with parental involvement.
 - ▶ 6+ consistent limits should be placed on the time spent using screens to ensure that screens do not take the place of adequate sleep or physical activity.

Not all screen time is equal so what your child is doing online is as important as how long they are spending.



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Recommendations for parents

- ▶ Create screen free zones (i.e. bedrooms) and screen free times (meal times)
- ▶ Agree on a set of rules with your child on screen time in the home. Activate parental controls on all devices so that parents can monitor and limit the screen time.
- ▶ Parents should lead by example. Try to put phones away when not in use and model only using one device at a time.
- ▶ Set aside special times in the week for family activities that are screen free.
- ▶ Do not use screens an hour before bedtime.
- ▶ Encourage children to use online productively.
- ▶ Parents should be involved in their children's screen time and be close enough to monitor what their child is doing.
- ▶ The Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) today appeared before the [Joint Oireachtas Committee on Children and Equality](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/oireachtas-tv/video-on-demand/joint-committee-on-children-and-equality/2026-03-05/) on March 5th 2026 to discuss the growing impact of online harm and social media on children and school communities. - [oireachtas.ie/en/oireachtas-tv/video-on-demand/joint-committee-on-children-and-equality/2026-03-05/](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/oireachtas-tv/video-on-demand/joint-committee-on-children-and-equality/2026-03-05/)
 - ▶ INTO President Anne Horan stated:
 - ▶ Primary teachers across the country are increasingly dealing with the real-world consequences of online harm in their classrooms. Issues that originate outside the school gate are affecting children's behaviour, learning, relationships and overall wellbeing. What we are witnessing is not a developing issue - it is a clear and escalating risk to children, and decisive action is now required.



when you are
focused on your phone you
miss the magic of
the moment

Phone

no





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Resources For Parents

Activate




Activate parental controls

Balance



Balance screen time

Check



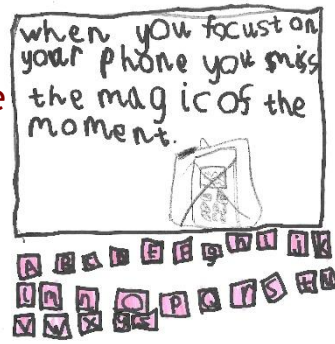
Check and chat

- ▶ Several Irish websites dedicated to supporting parents with their children’s online internet safety, including guidelines on parental controls for smartphones - <https://smartphonefree.ie/help-for-parents/> (good weblinks here)
- ▶ Barnardos, Protecting & Safeguarding Children Online - <https://www.barnardos.ie/resources/schools/>
- ▶ Webwise - Guides and Resources - A Better Internet ; Family Agreement for Online Safety / Talk-Listen-Learn - <https://www.webwise.ie/parents/>
- ▶ Department of Education and Youth - Keeping Childhood Smartphone Free - <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/keeping-childhood-smartphone-free/>
- ▶ UNESCO, To ban or not to ban - <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/smartphones-school-only-when-they-clearly-support-learning>
- ▶ CyberSafeKids
 - ▶ Trends and usage report 2025 - cybersafekids.ie/report2025/
 - ▶ Left to their Own Devices 2024 - cybersafekids.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/CSK-TU-Report-23-24-Final.pdf
 - ▶ Key things you need to know as parents and guardians - cybersafekids.ie/resources/





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Disclaimer

The information supplied in this document is intended as a guide, it does not replace the importance of parental involvement and supervision of their child's online activities. Links to external sites are provided as a convenience and for informational purposes only. They do not constitute an endorsement or an approval by Kiltale N.S., of any of the products, services or opinions of the corporation / organisation / individual.

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Agree to Agree Internet and Technology use Agreement sign up sheet

I/We (Parents/Guardians Print Name)

together with my/our child/children (Child Print Name and Class)

agree to the recommendations set out in the Kiltale N.S.
Internet and Technology Use Agreement, and I/We will implement these
recommendations to the best of our ability in our use of technology at home.

Signed Parents/Guardians

Signed Child/Children

Please return this page, signed by parents/guardians and child/children to the
School. Once received, the School will return a stamped copy to
parents/guardians.