

Mobile Phone Policy (Pupils)

This mobile phone policy will be reviewed biennially by the pupil and personnel committee of the governing body.

Date of last review: Autumn 2018

Date of next review: Autumn 2020

Rationale

We understand that mobile phones are now part of modern society and know the majority of pupils now own a mobile phone with a 3G/4G connection. We also appreciate that for safety reasons pupils will carry a mobile phone in order to contact parents/carers after school/before school. However, mobile phones can lead to problems in school such as bullying, disruption to lessons and inappropriate web usage. It is for these reasons, the use of mobile phones in school is completely forbidden and pupils found using their mobile phone on the campus will be dealt with in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy. It should be noted that failure by a substantial number of pupils to adhere to this policy will result in serious consideration being given to a complete ban on pupils bringing mobile phones to school.

Aims

1. To support our behaviour policy, which aims for outstanding behaviour and safety of pupils across the school.
2. To ensure that pupil welfare and safeguarding incidents associated with mobile phones are minimised.
3. To clarify the school position on mobile phones as it relates to pupils.
4. To clarify parental responsibility, in accordance with the Malicious Communications Act, when an issue with mobile phones involves misuse of the device.

Guidelines

Mobile phones must be **switched off** and kept **out of sight** at all times when on campus. The consequences for a breach of this rule or for incidents of misuse are explained in the table below. All other types of internet ready device, such as smart watches, are banned from school.

If this happens	We will
A pupil is found not to have switched off their mobile phone or it is seen or heard on campus.	Confiscate the device and the pupil will be issued with a C5 (one day in isolation). Parents can collect the device at the Friday drop-in by adult only.
The same pupil breaks the rule again.	Confiscate the device and issue the pupil with an exclusion for a fixed period together with mobile phone ban. Parents will also be invited into school.
An incident of mobile phone misuse at school, for example cyber bullying or taking images or a video.	Confiscate the device and issue the pupil with an exclusion for a fixed period together with mobile phone ban. The pupil's parents will be invited into school.
A serious incident of mobile phone misuse at school, for example repeated cyber bullying or taking images or a video and then, without consent, sharing it online.	Confiscate the device and issue the pupil with an initial exclusion for a fixed period, whilst consideration is given about whether or not the incident merits permanent exclusion .

- School leaders may carry out spot checks to ensure pupils have their mobile phone turned off. They may also search a device if there is good reason to believe there has been an incident of mobile phone misuse on the premises.
- Pupils may be allowed to use their phone after school hours to contact home relating to safety/transport or for personal reasons, for example, when participating in a drama, music or sporting activity or when on a school trip. In these instances, staff should allow pupils to use their phone on or off site only where appropriate.
- Pupils will receive assemblies explaining the mobile phone policy and the policy will be placed on the school website for parents to access. Parents will also be provided with further guidance aimed to address the safe use of social media, including information on age restricted for apps.

Sixth form students

Mobile phones (and other devices) may be brought into school, but they must be switched off and kept out of sight in lessons and around the campus generally, but may be used in the sixth form common room. A mobile phone may be confiscated, if it is seen around school or if a disruption is caused to learning by a sixth former accessing it in a lesson.

Confiscation

- Breaches of this policy will result in confiscation of mobile phones.
- Confiscated devices should be taken to support services for secure keeping.
- When a pupil hands in their mobile phone, it must include the 'sim' card.
- Refusal to hand in a mobile phone for confiscation can lead to exclusion.
- Parents may collect their child's device each Friday between 2.30pm and 3.30pm.
- Devices will not be handed back directly to the pupil.

Parental responsibility

When an issue with mobile phones involves serious misuse outside school hours, such as transmitting images or cyber bullying, parents will be expected, under the Malicious Communications Act, to take responsibility for the phone and any issues resulting from the phone. Children and young people use a range of apps, many of which have age restrictions for use. Therefore, parents are also expected to monitor their child's appropriate use of apps.

App age restrictions:

- Age 18: YouTube (13, with parent's permission), Flickr.
- Age 16: Whatsapp
- Age 13: Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Reddit, Tumblr, Pintrest

Disclaimer

Pupils are not required to have a mobile phone in school and we support parents who make the decision that this is not necessary by ensuring that pupils are able to use school landlines to contact parents in an emergency. Parents can, of course, contact school via the landline. This policy does, however, recognise that the majority of our pupils do own a mobile phone. Any pupil who brings a mobile phone into school does so at their own risk and school will not be held responsible for any loss or damage.

Annex A

Examples of mobile phone misuse. This is not an exhaustive list but incidents can include:

- bullying by text, image and messaging;
- making disrespectful comments, misrepresenting events or making defamatory remarks about teachers or other pupils;
- pupils posting material on social network sites with no thought to the risks to their personal reputation or the reputation of others or the school and sometimes with the deliberate intention of causing harm to others;
- general disruption to learning caused by pupils accessing phones in lessons;
- the deliberate engineering of situations where people's reactions are filmed or photographed in order to humiliate, embarrass and intimidate by sharing these images or videos online;
- pupils phoning parents immediately following an incident so that the ability of staff to deal with an incident is compromised;
- publishing photographs of vulnerable pupils, who may be on a child protection plan, where this may put them at additional risk;
- the use of a mobile phone for taking and sending of provocative images or text messages.