

**Mobile Phones Policy**

**This policy should be read alongside the following policies:**

**Child protection and safeguarding**

**Online Safety**

**Behaviour and bullying**

**Exclusions**

Mobile phones and, in particular, smart phones now include many additional functions such as an integrated camera, video recording capability, instant messaging, mobile office applications and mobile access to the internet. These allow immediate access to email, searching for information on the internet and other functions such as access to social networking sites e.g. Facebook, twitter and blogging sites.

For many young people and adults the ownership of a mobile phone is considered an essential part of their daily life. When used creatively and responsibly the smart phone has great potential to support a student’s learning experiences in school. Ownership of a mobile phone and using it appropriately is an important lesson in itself and encourages the development of independence and individual responsibility, something which is part of our aims as a school.

In recent years many schools have had incidents of poor conduct where mobile phone use has been a feature. This has been particularly difficult to address if it is an element in bullying.

Bullying, intimidation and harassment are not new in society; however bullying using a mobile phone represents a new challenge for schools to manage.

Parents and students should be clear that misuse of mobile phones will not be tolerated.

The following are examples of misuse but are not exclusive. ‘Misuse’ will be at the discretion of the Head of School:

* the deliberate engineering of situations where people's reactions are filmed or photographed in order to humiliate, embarrass and intimidate by publishing to a wider audience such as on Facebook or YouTube
* bullying by text, image and email messaging
* the use of a mobile phone for ‘sexting’ (the deliberate taking and sending of provocative images or text messages)
* Students posting material on social network sites with no thought to the risks to their personal reputation and sometimes with the deliberate intention of causing harm to others
* making disrespectful comments, misrepresenting events or making defamatory remarks about teachers or other students
* general disruption to learning caused by students accessing phones in lessons
* students phoning parents immediately following an incident so that the ability of staff to deal with an incident is compromised
* publishing photographs of vulnerable students, who may be on a child protection plan, where this may put them at additional risk.
* contacting students by phone or by text message may also be considered misuse except in exceptional circumstances

**The Acceptable Use of a mobile phone in school by pupils and students**

**At KS3 and KS4 (Years 7 to 11)**

**Students may choose to bring mobile phones into school. If they choose to do so it is on the understanding that they agree with the following limitations on its use, namely:**

* Mobile phones must be switched off once in the school building
* Mobile phones are to be handed in to the class teacher on arrival to school.
* Mobile phones are not used to contact parents/carers or others during the school day or by parents/carers or others to contact the student. Communication should continue to be through the school office.
* No students may take a mobile phone into a room or other area where examinations are being held.
* The security of the phone remains the responsibility of the student who chose to bring it in to school.
* If asked to do so, content on the phone (e.g. messages, emails, pictures, videos, sound files) will be shown to a teacher
* Students are not allowed to charge their mobile phones in school

**At Sixth form (Years 12 to 14)**

**Students may choose to bring mobile phones into school. If they choose to do so it is on the understanding that they agree with the following limitations on its use, namely:**

* Mobile phones must be switched off once in the school building
* Mobile phones are to be handed in to the class teacher at the start of the school day.
* Students may be allowed to access their phones during break times but they will return them to the class teacher as soon as lesson time begins
* No students may take a mobile phone into a room or other area where examinations are being held.
* The security of the phone will remain the student’s responsibility
* If asked to do so, content on the phone (e.g. messages, emails, pictures, videos, sound files) will be shown to a teacher
* Students are not allowed to charge their mobile phones in school

**It is recommended that students mark their phones with their names.**

**Unacceptable use**

**The school will consider any of the following to be unacceptable use of the mobile phone and a serious breach of the school’s behaviour policy resulting in sanctions being taken.**

* Photographing or filming staff or other pupils without their knowledge or permission
* Photographing or filming in toilets, changing rooms and similar areas
* Bullying, harassing or intimidating staff or pupils by the use of text, email or multimedia messaging, sending inappropriate messages or posts to social networking or blogging sites
* Refusing to switch a phone off or handing over the phone at the request of a member of staff
* Using the mobile phone outside school hours to intimidate or upset staff and pupils will be considered a breach of these guidelines in the same way as unacceptable use which takes place in school time
* Using a mobile phone outside school hours in such as way that it undermines the stability of the school and compromises its ability to fulfil the stated aim of providing ‘a clear moral and ethical lead’.

**Sanctions**

Students and parents are notified that appropriate action will be taken against those who are in breach of the acceptable use guidelines, in line with the schools behaviour policy.

Students can expect both short and long term bans on bringing their phones to school should they be in breach of the rules for acceptable use. This decision may be taken by the class teacher and will be supported by the Senior Leadership team.

Students and their parents should be very clear that the school is within its rights to confiscate the phone where the guidelines have been breached.

**Should a student refuse to hand over their phone, the school will expect parents/carers to attend school and collect the phone, and if necessary the student. Should the student refuse to hand over the phone and remains in school this could lead to a fixed term exclusion in line with the school exclusion policy.**

**The school expects that the parent/carer of any student who intends on bringing a mobile phone to school signs and returns the parental agreement statement below.**

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Mobile Phone Policy

Parental agreement

My son/daughter will be bringing a mobile phone to school.

I hereby agree to support the school and all students by abiding by the Mobile Phone policy. I will ensure my son/daughter is aware of what is acceptable use and unacceptable use. I will support the school with the implementation of the sanctions if necessary.

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parental Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_