

# Mobile Devices Policy

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## 1. Rationale

Mobile communication devices are a feature of modern society and many of our pupils own one. Increasing sophistication of mobile technology presents a number of issues for schools:

- The high value of many of these devices and the ease with which they can be damaged.
- The integration of cameras into them leading to potential child protection and data protection issues.
- The high number and variety of apps, particularly social media apps, which allow for unsupervised contact with others and ease of sharing information.
- The potential to use the device, for example for texting, whilst on silent mode.

At school, we have a duty of care to take steps to ensure that children are safe. We take this duty very seriously.

National research tells us that unsupervised usage of mobile devices can lead to issues with Child Protection, exposure to inappropriate content, exploitation, child on child abuse, mental health and well-being, safety and staff protection. Other risks can also be a negative impact on learning and a decrease in social skills and personal interaction.

It is not realistic to prohibit all of these devices being brought into school, nor is it logistically possible for schools to collect them in each morning and return them in the afternoon. It is our policy to allow pupils to have devices with them in school under the conditions outlined in the policy below.

## 2. Policy

2.1 Devices can be brought to school but must not be used for any purpose (eg phoning, texting, using the internet, taking photos, checking the time, taking or watching videos, using social media, listening to music) during the school day from 8.45am to 3.15pm. 'Smart' watches such as the Apple Watch can be worn and used as a watch but pupils cannot use their smart watches for any function of a mobile phone.

2.2 Devices must always be switched off (not on silent mode) and kept out of view in the pupil's bag or inside blazer pocket.

2.3 If a pupil breaches these rules the device will be confiscated and passed to the school office at reception. Devices that are confiscated will be placed into a locked cabinet to be collected at the end of the day by a parent or carer before 4.30 or at the end of the following day by the pupil.

- 2.4 Where repeated incidents of phone confiscations take place or there is a serious breach of this policy, pupils must hand in their mobile phones at the office at the start of each day. The device will be returned to them at the end of the day.
- 2.5 Devices must not be taken into examinations. In accordance with JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) rules, if a candidate is found to have taken a device into an exam room they will be subject to a penalty and possible disqualification.
- 2.6 In exceptional circumstances, pupils may be allowed limited and supervised access to their mobile device for predetermined and agreed reasons. Examples might be: to remove specific barriers to their learning (e.g. online translator for EAL pupils); or to access apps which help them manage a health condition (e.g. diabetes).
- 2.7 The mobile phone policy applies during offsite school visits however pupils may be able to use their mobile phones (e.g: to take photographs whilst site seeing, to use an online map) at the discretion of the visit leader.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's other policies in particular the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

### 3. Emergencies

- 3.1 If a pupil needs to contact their parents/guardians, they will be allowed to use a school phone and should go to the school office to organise this which will be facilitated by On Call staff.
- 3.2 If parents need to contact children urgently, they should contact the school office and a message will be relayed promptly.

### 4. Responsibility for Mobile Phones

- 4.1 School accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile devices. It is the responsibility of parents and pupils to ensure mobile devices are properly insured.

### 5. Mobile Communication Devices Protocol

This should be considered alongside our Mobile Device Policy above. Pupils who wish to bring a mobile device to school must abide by the following protocol:

- 5.1 Mobile devices must not be seen during the school day. They should be kept in a pupil's bag or inside blazer pocket.
- 5.2 Mobile devices must be turned off not just on silent mode.

5.3 If a device is seen or heard during the school day, it will be confiscated.

5.4 Refusal to hand over a mobile device which has been seen or heard will result in the pupil being placed in isolation.

5.5 Devices may not be used in lessons as calculators.

5.6 Devices, unless smart watches, are not to be used as time pieces instead of watches.

5.7 Devices may not be used in school for playing music, games, or viewing photographs or videos.

5.8 Devices are not to be used to take or record images or sound in school at any time.

**5.9 Devices are not allowed in examination rooms.**

5.10 Pupils found abusing the use of a device (e.g. making threatening calls, filming or photographing pupils or staff) will be banned from bringing the device to school and sanctioned in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy. Pupils must leave their device at the office.

The Headteacher's decision on all matters relating to mobile communication devices protocol is final.