

Headteacher: Ms Angela Wallace BA Hons, PGCE, MA

## Mobile Phone and Social Media Policy

First reviewed: September 2015

Reviewed by: Angela Wallace

Next Review: Nov 2021

HoD = Head of Department

HOY = Head of Year

SLT = Senior Leadership Team

SEN = Special Educational Needs

### Introduction:

This policy sets out the school's framework for determining what is 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' use of mobile technology by students while they are in and out of school.

The purpose of this policy is to prevent unacceptable use of mobile phones, and thereby to protect the school's staff and students from undesirable materials, filming, intimidation, or harassment.

Smart phones enable children to be constantly connected to the internet, 24 hours a day, placing them at risk of cyber bullying and abuse. Smart phones also enable children to access inappropriate online content.

The school advises against children's use of smart phones due to the widely documented detrimental impacts they have on a child's mental health and their success in school.

Smart phones enable children to use social media apps, such as Snapchat, Instagram and WhatsApp, which can lead to the creation of group chats in which children exchange offensive messages which go against the school's Shared Values.

Where parents/carers need to communicate with their child when they are away from home, the school recommends that phones without internet access ('brick' phones) are purchased.

(This policy will operate in conjunction with policies including the E-Safety Policy and Internet Acceptable Usage Policy.)

It is recognised that these documents must be reviewed and revised regularly in response to developments on technology.

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## The Policy:

1. The school strongly against students bringing mobile phones to school at all. Students have no legitimate need to use a mobile phone at all during the school day.
2. The school accepts that there may be particular circumstances in which a parent/carer wishes their child to have a mobile phone for their journey to and from school. It is recommended that a mobile phone without internet access is used for this purpose.
3. Where a mobile phone is brought into school, it is entirely at the student's & parents/carers' own risk. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of any phone, or other mobile device brought in to school.
4. Mobile phones which are brought in to school must be turned off (not placed on silent) and stored in a student's school bag before the student goes through the school gate. They must remain turned off and inside the student's school bag until the student has left the school site at the end of the day. They should not be heard, seen or used during Break, Lunch or onsite before or after the end of the school day.
5. If a mobile phone is seen or heard by a member of staff, that member of staff will be required to confiscate it immediately. The member of staff will take it straight to the office for safe storage, or store it in a locked, safe, area and take it to an office at the earliest opportunity, clearly identifying to the office staff the name of the student.
6. When a mobile phone is confiscated, the matter will be recorded on the child's behaviour log on SIMs so that the consequence given by the staff member is fair and consistent. The student will be referred for a whole school detention which parents/carers will receive notification of by letter or text message.
7. When a mobile phone is confiscated, the student's parent/carer will be contacted and asked to collect the phone after 24 hours in person, with their child, at the end of the school day. When the parent/carer comes to the school, there will be a brief meeting with a member of SLT and the parent/carer will sign the phone log to state that the phone has been returned. A parent/carer may ask another reliable adult to collect the phone on their behalf.
8. Any student who refuses to hand over a mobile phone when requested to do so will be referred for a 1 day Fixed Term Exclusion. Initial refusal to hand over a mobile phone when requested to do so will result in at least 1 day in the Reflection Room.
9. It is forbidden to record photographic images (still or video) or sound recordings of staff or students at any time.
10. Any student caught filming another person without their permission, inside or outside school (and/or uploading images or videos on to the internet), will have their phone confiscated. It will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter and their parents/carers will be informed of the sanction.
11. The school reserves the right to search the content of a confiscated device where there is a reasonable suspicion that it may contain undesirable material, including those which promote pornography, violence or bullying.
12. The PE changing rooms are locked once students have left to go to their activity and re-opened when they return. Students are responsible for supervising their own belongings during the time in the changing facility. Students and parents should be aware that mobile devices are particularly vulnerable to being stolen in changing rooms, hence the school's advice in point 1 above that mobile phones should not be brought in to school at all, but especially PE day.

13. Where parents/carers or students need to contact each other during the school day, they should do so only through the school's telephone system and not via a student mobile phone.
14. If parents/carers decide not to support the school's Mobile Phone & Social Media Policy, they risk an extended confiscation of their child's device if it is used in any way that brings the school into disrepute or goes against the school's Shared Values.
15. Students who use mobile phones to participate in or encourage behaviour which brings the school into disrepute or goes against the school's Shared Values will have their device confiscated for up to 10 school days.
16. Behaviour which goes against the school's Shared Values includes but is not limited: making or supporting racist, homophobic, sexist or ableist comments and/or content.
17. Students who are part of group chats in which the behaviour in 16 or 17 takes place will have their device confiscated for up to 5 school days.