



# **Policy on the use of Mobile Phones/ Entertainment/ Communication Devices**

**Governing Body Sub-committee**

Name:

Date approved:

**Full Governing Body (if applicable)**

Date approved: 5 July 2018

**The term “devices” used in this policy relates to mobile phones and other electronic entertainment and communication devices.**

**The school strongly urges parents and students to consider whether bringing a mobile phone or other electronic entertainment/communication devices into school is absolutely necessary. Due to the possibility of loss or damage, students are advised not to bring expensive devices into school.**

**The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged devices in school, whilst travelling to and from school or on any out of school activity.**

### **Acceptable Uses**

- **Devices should be switched off and kept out of sight during assemblies, tutor time, lessons and lesson changeover times.** Variations from this may be permitted only in exceptional circumstances if the parent/carer or the class teacher requests it. There is no guarantee that permission will be given and such parental requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate Head of Year. Parents should be reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure their child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.
- While on school premises, students should always use soundless features such as text messaging, answering services, call diversion and vibration alert to receive important calls. Music should be accessed via head/earphones and not broadcast. Earphones should be removed from view when not in use.
- Devices should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school.
- Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to friends and keeping a note of to whom they have given them. This can help protect the student’s number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice, text and picture messages.

### **Unacceptable Uses**

- **Students (other than sixth formers) can only use their devices during the following times:**
  - **before or after the school day**
  - **mid-morning break**
  - **lunch break**
- Unless express permission is granted, devices should be switched off and not used to make calls, send SMS or MMS messages, surf the internet, play music, take photos or use any other application during school lessons and other educational activities, such as assemblies.
- Devices must not disrupt classroom lessons with ringtones or beeping.
- Using devices to bully and threaten other people is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour.
- It is forbidden for students to “gang up” on another student and use their devices to take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate that student and then send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website for public viewing. This also includes using devices to photograph or film anyone without their consent. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

- Devices are not to be used or taken into changing rooms or toilets or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to fellow students, staff or visitors to the school. In PE lessons devices should be switched off and placed in the valuables box.
- Should there be such disruptions to lessons caused by devices; the responsible student may face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the School Behaviour Management Policy.
- Any student/s caught using devices in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the School Behaviour Management Policy and also by the Exam Board Regulations.
- Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a device will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the School Behaviour Management Policy.
- Students with devices will not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS or MMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images by posting them on the Internet or sending them to others using wireless technologies, and phone calls.
- Students taking part in a school visit or out of school activity must comply fully with any instruction from a member of staff regarding their devices. In particular students should not use earphones which would prevent them from hearing instructions from members of staff or which would put their own or others' safety at risk.

### **Theft or damage**

- Students should mark their devices clearly with their names and use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones and keep these password/pin numbers confidential. Devices and/or passwords should not be shared.
- Devices that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to School Office reception and if unclaimed after a year will be disposed of.
- The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged devices in school, whilst travelling to and from school or on any out of school activity.

### **Sanctions**

- Students who infringe the rules set out in this document may have their devices confiscated. On the first occasion, the device will be taken to the School Office and the student may collect it at the end of the day. For second and subsequent infringements within the same academic year, a parent/carer of the student concerned will be contacted and asked to collect the device on the student's behalf. A record of such confiscations will kept by the School Office. It is the student's responsibility to collect their property at the end of the day before the office closes. Unclaimed items will be stored securely overnight.
- As set out in the previous section, failure to heed the rules set out in this document may result in an alleged incident being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent or carer would be notified as soon as possible.
- For students who use their device inappropriately in ways that potentially break the law, the school reserves the right to confiscate the device and hold it for a period of time. This will only be carried out at police request. The device will be stored securely in the school safe until the police collect it or are satisfied that it can be returned to student. The school will endeavour to inform parents of this at the first available opportunity but it should be recognised that we may be unable to successfully contact the parent the same day.