



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

**Governing Body Sub-committee**

Name:

Date approved:

**Full Governing Body (if applicable)**

Date approved: November 2023

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

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.

## **A Responsive and Dynamic Policy**

Mobile phones, entertainment and communication devices are constantly developing therefore it is not possible to give absolutes and specifics for all incidents and issues that arise through the misuse of these items.

## **Acceptable Uses**

- Students in Key Stage 3 & 4 can only use their devices during the following times:
  - before or after the school day
  - mid-morning break
  - lunch break
- Sixth form students are trusted and welcome to use their devices respectfully and sensibly within the school environment.
- Devices should be set on silent mode or turned off and kept out of sight during assemblies, tutor time, lessons and lesson changeover times. 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 and music should be accessed via head/earphones and not broadcast during break and lunchtime only. 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.
- Technology is rapidly developing and communication technology is increasingly being utilised as a teaching and learning tool in educational activities. At the member of staffs’ discretion students may be offered opportunities to use their mobile devices as an aid to
  - develop critical thinking

- participate in learning
- assess what has been taught
- research a chosen theme
- encourage the development of lifelong communication skills

## **Unacceptable Uses**

- Devices must not disrupt classroom lessons with ringtones or beeping, they should be on silent mode or switched off.
- It is forbidden for students to use their devices to take videos and pictures of students or staff. Under no circumstances should photos or videos of members of the school community be shared with others or put on any social media platform. This also includes using devices to photograph or film anyone without their consent. There will be a significant sanction for misuse of this type.
- Using devices to be unkind, bully and threaten other people is unacceptable, will not be tolerated and could receive a significant sanction. In some cases, it can constitute criminal behaviour.
- Students should not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information or photographs on the internet, social media platforms or via phone calls or voice messages. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and all calls, text messages and posts can be traced. It also is against our behaviour policy and may receive an appropriate sanction.
- Devices are not to be used in 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.
- Any student/s caught using mobile devices, including smart watches, in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the School Behaviour Management Policy and also by the Exam Board Regulations- JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications.
- 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.
- Should there be a disruption to lessons caused by devices; the responsible student will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the School Behaviour Management Policy. The sanctions section below details the consequences for misuse of a mobile device.

## 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 will have their devices confiscated and will also receive a sanction for any harm, distress, embarrassment or discomfort potentially or actually caused to others.
- 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. Students will be set a 60-minute afterschool detention the following school 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 be kept by the School Office.
- Students will be set a 60-minute afterschool detention the following school day. It is the student's (first occasion) and parents / carers (second and subsequent infringements) responsibility to collect their property at the end of the day before the office closes. Unclaimed items will be stored securely overnight.
- Under no circumstances will a student be permitted to collect their phone following the second or subsequent confiscations.
- 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.