

MOBILE COMMUNICATION DEVICE POLICY

RATIONALE

The nature and function of mobile communication devices, including but not limited to, mobile phones, smart phones and smart watches has changed considerably in recent years. Each new generation shows new functionality and most now include an integrated camera, video recording capability, potential for instant messaging, mobile office applications and mobile access to the internet. These functions allow immediate access, for example, to email, the internet and to social networking sites. For many young people today, the ownership of one, or more mobile communication device(s) is considered a necessary and vital part of their social life.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in incidents of poor conduct reported in the media where the use of a mobile communication device has been a feature. This has been particularly difficult to address if it is an element in a bullying incident. Bullying, intimidation, and harassment are not new in society; however, bullying using a mobile communication device represents a challenge for schools to manage. Parents and pupils should be clear that misuse of mobile communication devices will not be tolerated. The definition of 'misuse' will be at the discretion of the Headmaster. The following are examples of 'misuse' but are not exclusive:

- 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.
- Bullying by text, image, email messaging or social media.
- Pupils posting material on social network sites with no thought of 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 pupils.
- General disruption to learning caused by pupils accessing devices in lessons.
- Pupils contacting parents immediately following an incident so that the ability of staff to deal with that incident is compromised.
- Publishing the personal details or photographs of another student (without permission).
- Publishing photographs of vulnerable pupils, where this may put them at additional risk.
- Sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Upskirting.
- Viewing and sharing of pornography and other harmful content.

COLLEGE MOBILE COMMUNICATION DEVICE RULES

A large number of pupils travel to and from College by coach or public transport. Parents may require that their sons/daughters have a mobile communication device so that they can maintain contact should there be any change/delay to the journey. Similarly, with regard to after school sports fixtures or other activities, pupils may use such devices to give up-to-date information to parents regarding arrival or pick-up times.

Year 7-11 pupils are allowed to bring mobile communication devices to College at their own risk and on the understanding that responsibility for the safety, security, and use of such devices lies entirely with the pupil. The College cannot be held liable for any damage or theft. Year 7-11 pupils are not permitted to use mobile communication devices at any time during the school day, including breaks and lunchtimes (other than for checking the time in the case of smart watches).

Sixth Form students are allowed the use of mobile communication devices in and around the Sixth Form common room, and in A Level classes with the permission of the subject teacher if it is to support the student's

learning experience. Sixth Form students should not use such devices in more public areas within College or in corridors.

MANAGING BREACHES OF POLICY

Misuse of the mobile communication device will be dealt with using the principles set out in the College Behaviour Policy, with the response being proportionate to the severity of the misuse. Pupils are aware that misuse may lead to the confiscation of their mobile communication device, communication with parents and the imposition of other sanctions up to and including exclusion from school. If the offence is deemed very serious it will be reported to the Police.

RULES FOR THE ACCEPTABLE USE OF A MOBILE COMMUNICATION DEVICE IN SCHOOL BY PUPILS: YEARS 7- 11

Pupils will be allowed to bring mobile communication devices into school, on the understanding that they fully adhere with the following limitations on its use, namely:

- Mobile communication devices must be switched off at all times during the school day, including break and lunchtimes, and remain off whilst pupils are on the school premises. It is not acceptable for such devices merely to be put on silent mode. Smart watches must be set to show the time only.
- Such devices must be kept out of sight during lessons, break and lunchtime.
- No pupil may take a mobile communication device into a room or other area where examinations are being held.
- The safety and security of such devices will remain the pupil's responsibility in all lessons including PE/ Sports lessons.
- Mobile communication devices are brought to College entirely at the risk of the pupil.
- Mobile communication devices may be used for emergency purposes during the school day at break or lunchtime only, and only in the Reception area with permission of a staff member. Use in any other location will be regarded as unacceptable use.
- Mobile communication devices may be used on some College day or residential visits depending on the nature of the visit and the guidelines given by the Party Leader.
- Mobile communication devices are permissible at weekend sports fixtures.
- If requested by a teacher, content on any mobile communication device (e.g. messages, emails, pictures, videos, sound files) must be shown to that teacher immediately.

UNACCEPTABLE USE

The school will consider any of the following to be unacceptable use of the mobile communication device, and a breach of the College's Behaviour and Discipline Policy, resulting in sanctions being taken:

- Year 7-11 pupils are not permitted to use mobile communication devices during lessons, break or lunchtimes or at any other time within the school day.
- Photographing or filming of 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, posts or images to social networking or blogging sites
- Refusing to switch a mobile communication device off or refusing to hand over a device at the request of a member of staff

- Use of a mobile communication device outside of 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 communication device outside school hours in such a way that it undermines the stability and wider reputation of the College

SANCTIONS

Pupils and parents should be aware that appropriate action will be taken against those who are in breach of the acceptable use guidelines, following the College's Behaviour and Discipline Policy. In addition:

- Pupils and their parents should be very clear that the school is within its rights to confiscate any mobile communication device where the guidelines have been breached.
- If a device is confiscated, the College will make it clear for how long this will be, and the procedure to be followed for its return.
- Pupils should be aware that the police will be informed if there is a serious misuse of the device where criminal activity is suspected
- If a pupil commits an act which causes serious harassment, alarm or distress to another pupil or member of staff the ultimate sanction may be permanent exclusion.

The College will consider the impact on the victim of the act in deciding the sanction.

CONFISCATION PROCEDURE

If a mobile communication device is confiscated then:

- The mobile communication device should be passed to the Deputy Headteacher with a description of the incident leading up to the confiscation of the device.
- The device may be held for a designated period of time or the pupil will be informed that the device can be collected at the end of the next school day from the Deputy Headteacher or nominated senior member of staff.
- The confiscation will be recorded appropriately for monitoring purposes and parents will be informed in writing. A signed copy of the letter will be required from parents before the mobile communication device is returned. A Conduct Mark will also be given and possibly other sanctions such as a detention.
- The College will ensure that confiscated equipment is stored securely and in such a way that it is returned to the correct person.
- In the case of repeated or serious misuse, the device will only be returned to a parent/carer who will be required to visit the College by appointment to collect it.
- Where a pupil persistently breaches the expectations, following a clear warning, the Headmaster may impose an outright ban from bringing a mobile communication device to College. This may be for a fixed period or a permanent ban.
- Where it is deemed necessary to examine the contents of a mobile communication device, this will be done by two designated members of staff. The action will be properly recorded in case it later becomes evidence of criminal activity. The record will include the time, who was present and what was found.
- Where the phone has been used for an unacceptable purpose, the Headmaster or a designated staff member will have the right to view files stored on the confiscated equipment and if necessary, seek the cooperation of parents in deleting any files which are in clear breach of these guidelines unless they are being preserved as evidence.
- Evidence of any offence or suspected offence will be preserved on the original device through confiscation of the device and by keeping it secure. If the evidence relates to any potentially illegal

activity, the incident will be referred to the DSL (or, in their absence, the Deputy DSL) who will also be given the device for secure storage.

- The College will report an incident to the local safeguarding board and/or police if appropriate.
- The designated staff member should monitor repeat offences to see if there is a pattern in the perpetrator or the victim which needs further investigation.

| POLICY CONTROL | |
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| <i>Author</i> | <i>Deputy Headteacher</i> |
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