



Mobile Phones and other Electronic Devices –Acceptable Use Policy

Reviewed March 2011

Policy

1. RATIONALE

Mobile phones, camera/video phones, MP3 players/headphones and other electronic devices have become an essential part of everyday life for most children and young people and many adults. Mobile phones are a vital form of communication. It would be unreasonable to ban students from taking them to school as many parents rely on electronic communication to ensure the safety of their children. However, the Academy needs clear guidelines to address the issues raised:

- They are valuable items that may be stolen.
- Their use can cause students and staff to be subject to bullying.
- Even when in silent mode, texts can undermine classroom discipline, distracting not only the person with the phone, but also other people around.
- Mobile phones with integrated cameras could lead to child protection and data protection issues, regarding the inappropriate taking and sending of images.

2. AIMS

The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure personal safety.
- Ensure security.
- Acknowledge and support parent's rights to provide their children with a mobile phone and for the child to carry it to and from school.
- Recognise and endorse the right of all staff and students to teach and learn in an environment free from disruption.
- Enhance learning and teaching.

4. The Acceptable use Policy also applies to students during Academy extra curricular activities, excursions, residential etc., when students are under the control of Academy staff, during the formal school day, informal day and at weekends.

Policy into Practice

4. VALUABLE EQUIPMENT. It is strongly recommended that valuable items of equipment are not brought to the Academy. The Academy will not accept responsibility or liability for loss of, or damage to, valuable items which are brought to school.

However, the Academy recognises that students with the approval of their parents may wish to bring a mobile phone, MP3 player/headphones or other electronic device, to school. The following rules apply:

- a) Mobile phones, MP3 players/headphones and other pupil items of electronic equipment may be used up to the Academy gates at the start of the school day, and beyond the Academy gates at the end of the day.
- b) At all other times, these items must be in school bags, SWITCHED OFF (not on 'silent') and out of sight. There will be no exceptions to this part of the policy.

5. RULES

1. There must be no illegal photographing, videoing or recording.

- The photographing, videoing or recording of a member of staff, other pupil or other person, without their permission, is unacceptable, illegal and therefore prohibited.
- It is also an offence to distribute the image or recording, to any other person by any means, e.g. mobile phone, email, media representative, social networking site etc.
- Inappropriate material should not be accessed at any time. Inappropriate material which has been accessed out of school should not be brought into school or shared with others. Any pupil found to have done so will be subject to strong disciplinary action, including exclusion.
- Students are required to mark their mobile phones with their name. Phones can be locked in lockers for safety.
- Students using mobile phones to bully other students will follow disciplinary action according to Academy policy.

5. Emergency contact to and from parents and carers should be made through the school, not by mobile phone.

- Pupils who feel unwell should contact home via the office, and not use their mobile phone. This allows the office staff to monitor the student while they wait to be collected. It also avoids students leaving school without permission.
- In general, parents should not contact students by mobile phone during the school day. A message can be left at reception and we will endeavour to get it to the student. At other times students should use soundless features to receive important calls.

3. Bullying

- It is a criminal offence to use a mobile to menace, harass or offend another person. As such the Principal may choose to involve the police. Hence, students with mobile phones must not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls.
- Students using mobile phones to bully other students will follow disciplinary action according to Academy policy.

4. Discipline

- Students using mobile phones or similar devices at a prohibited time, or in a prohibited place, will have the item confiscated by a member of staff. The mobile phone or device will be handed in to the Principal's PA, and it will be available for collection at the end of the school day. If this happens on more than two occasions, parents / carers will be asked to collect the item(s).
- However, in very unusual circumstances (e.g. suspicion that inappropriate material has been accessed) it may be necessary for a member of the SLT to confiscate a mobile phone or other item. The item will be held securely until the child's parent comes to the school office to collect it. As part of an investigation, and with the parent's permission, it may be necessary to examine the contents of the phone. Where appropriate, the police will be involved.

5. Examinations

- It is strictly forbidden to take mobile phones or any digital audio device into the examination room.
- If students do so, it will be considered an attempt to cheat and the examination entry for that subject may be cancelled.
- Switching a phone off or taking a battery out will not be enough to avoid this sanction.
- Examination entry for other subjects may also be affected if the phone makes a noise and disrupts an exam.
- Students must hand in their mobile before an examination before they go into the exam room.
- Parents who wish to contact pupils during exams should contact the Academies office.

Confiscation of mobile phones (Teachernet guidance)

Mobile phones will be confiscated for the remainder of the day by a member of staff if:

- .They pose a threat to others (suspected bullying, texts, photos)
- .They pose a threat to good order for learning (if a phone goes off in a classroom, if a student is seen texting or using a phone in any way)
- .They counter the ethos of the school (are being blatantly used to counter Academy rules).

Phones will be returned by the end of the day.

Mobile Phones will be confiscated and handed to a member of the Leadership team if they affect Safeguarding , such as:

- 1) Photographs taken in a changing room,
- 2) Photos or recordings of a teacher
- 3) Photos, messages or recording of a fight, happy slapping
- 4) Photos, texts or messages threatening a student or member of staff.

Parents and potentially the police will be involved. Parents will be requested to collect the phone. They will not be returned to the student at the end of the day.

Confiscated items

A record of all items confiscated will be maintained by the Principal's PA, and students will be required to sign this record when the item is returned.

