

TKS Mobile Phones for Pupils in School Policy

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CONTENTS:

1. Staff Responsible
2. Dissemination of policy
3. Background
4. Aims of the Policy
5. Expected Standards of Behaviour for pupils
6. Response to Incidents
7. Other Devices

1. Staff responsible

The overview of the contents of the policy is the responsibility of the Principal. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all members of staff, particularly class teachers and year tutors. The policy is to be reviewed annually with respect to its effectiveness, as judged by representatives of the school community.

2. Dissemination of policy

This policy can be found in the T Drive and its contents are disseminated to staff on an annual basis. Relevant contents of the policy are explained to parents on induction of new students and on subsequent occasions when appropriate (for example, during a parents' evening). The contents of the policy are disseminated and explained to students on entry into the school.

3. Background

Mobile phone technology is now an integral part of our culture and its influence will only increase over time. The technology is neutral of itself; use may be appropriate or inappropriate. Potential problems with mobile phones in a school context include:

Disruption of lessons

Inappropriate material in school, including unregulated internet access

Inappropriate texting: gossip, bullying etc

Incoming/outgoing messages that bypass the school administration

Inappropriate image generation

A potential target for theft

TKS Mobile Phones for Pupils in School Policy

Health issues. Advice from the department of health ('Mobile phones and Health': Dept. of Health 2009) highlights this:

"... the UK Chief Medical Officers strongly advise that where children and young people (under the age of 16) do use mobile phones, they should be encouraged to: use mobile phones for essential purposes only and keep all calls short - talking for long periods prolongs exposure and should be discouraged"

There is therefore a need for the school to have a policy that regulates the use of mobile phones in the school.

4. Aims of the policy

Firstly, the policy aims to give clear standards and expectations of behaviour with respect to mobile phones in school.

Secondly, the policy aims to give clear procedures for responding to incidents in order to maintain the ethos of the school community.

5. Expected standards of behaviour

Students are expected to comply with the following code of behaviour with respect to mobile phones:

It is our expectation that Primary age pupils will not require mobile phones during the school day. If parents of Primary aged children feel that their child should have a mobile phone on their person (e.g. for safety reasons if they are to be walking home unaccompanied), they should make a special arrangement with their child's class teacher to hand the phone in at the beginning of the school day, and it will be returned by the teacher at the end of the school day.

For Secondary aged pupils we recommend, as a general principle, that pupils do not bring their mobile phones to school. However, the school recognises that parents may wish or permit their children to have access to mobile phones either side of school hours.

Mobile phones should not be used for any purpose on school premises in school hours. In particular, any use of mobile phones which involves bullying, invasion of privacy, libelous or pornographic materials, photography, or the disruption of the work of the school are all considered unacceptable. Phones must always be switched off (not on silent mode) and kept out of sight. Exceptionally, a teacher may give permission for phones to be used for educational purposes, under supervision.

It is the responsibility of parents and pupils to ensure mobile phones are properly insured; the school accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects relating to mobile phones.

In the case of trips, visits, exchanges and other off-site activities, mobile phone use must be clarified with the member of staff responsible before the trip, and not assumed.

TKS Mobile Phones for Pupils in School Policy

Use of mobile phones should not be necessary in emergencies in school hours. If a student needs to contact his/her parents/guardians they will be allowed to use a school phone.

No photographs or videos may be taken on phones or cameras in school without permission from a member of staff. Posting photographs or videos on the internet (for example, You Tube or social network sites) is strictly prohibited. Parents may wish to post photographs of their own children taking part in school events (e.g. performances), but if these include other children then permission must be obtained from their respective parents.

The E-Safety policy and Acceptable Use agreements which are signed contain further details.

6. Response to incidents

1. Breaches of these rules will result in:
 - The Student will be required to hand their phone to the office/tutor on arrival at school and collect it at the end of the school day; this enforced for a period determined by the Head of Secondary.
 - Parents/carers will be informed of the incident and requested to deprive the student of the phone for a period of at least 24hours.
2. Persistent or serious offences will result in a ban on the phone being brought to school and this formalised in writing to parents. Breach of this ban will be deemed to be a serious disciplinary matter and acted on according to the disciplinary policy.
3. If a member of the staff has reasonable suspicion that a mobile phone is being used, students may be asked to hand the phone over. Refusal to do so will be deemed to be a serious disciplinary matter and acted on according to the disciplinary policy.
4. If a member of the staff has reasonable suspicion that a mobile phone has inappropriate material stored on it, students will be required to hand over the phone to a member of staff and parents will be asked to collect it from the Principal. Refusal to hand over the phone will be deemed a serious disciplinary matter and parents will be informed of this. In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the phone will be handed over to the police for further investigation. Parents will need to recover the phone from the police in such circumstances

7. Other devices (eg mp3 player, Smart watches etc)

The school recognizes that pupils may wish to listen to music via headphones whilst travelling to and from school. However, as with mobile phones, all such devices must be switched off and not used in school. The only exceptions to this are:

- a. Year 11 may listen to music in their tutor room at breaks, but via loudspeakers, not headphones. This privilege is monitored by the Y11 tutor.
- b. Individual pupils may be given permission to work in lessons with headphones on a case-by-case basis by staff (for example, if there is a good educational reason to do so).

TKS Mobile Phones for Pupils in School Policy

A smartwatch may be worn to school, however this must not have any 4G/5G connectivity or be connected to the internet in any other way, nor is it permissible to bring a smartwatch that has an in-built camera. Smartwatches which do not fit this criteria must not be linked to a mobile devices and may not be worn in examinations.

This policy link with our policies on:

- Behaviour
- E-Safety