

SCHOOL MOBILE PHONE POLICY

The impact of overuse of mobile phones and the time pupils spend in front of a screen is a growing concern due to the negative impact on learning and wellbeing. Mobile phones distract many learners during the school day. It is vitally important that learners can fully focus on their learning during lessons and spend quality time socialising together in their free time. In light of this, having consulted with our pupils, our parents' voice forum and school staff, we are going to implement some changes to our school mobile phone policy.

Therefore, learners will be permitted to:

- bring a mobile phone to school – however such devices **MUST BE switched off (powered off) and out of sight** during the school day (8:30am – 3:10pm)
- If learners need to use their mobile device for an essential reason – they **must ask for permission from a member of staff**.
- use their phone **respectfully whilst travelling to and from school** – i.e.. no photos / videos/ social media posts of other pupils, no online bullying/nasty messages, no loudspeakers etc
- use their phone during lessons with the **permission of the member of staff** – this will only be for educational purposes e.g. using websites or apps such as Kahoot; research purposes etc. Mobile phones **MUST BE** switched off again following such a lesson.

Learners will not be permitted to :

- use their mobile device without permission at any time during the school day (8:30am – 3:10pm)
- leave their device switched on (powered up) in their bag/pockets etc during the school day – this is due to notifications distracting learning and thus having a negative effect on learning and wellbeing
- use headphones/speakers during the school day

Consequences

Any learner not following the steps outlined above **during lessons** will have their phone taken from them, and the device will be placed in a secure box until the end of the lesson – this will be recorded on SIMS (central school behaviour system).

Any learner not following the conditions above (**outside of lessons**) will have their mobile phone taken to the school office to be collected at the end of the school day.

Repeated offences will result in further consequences – e.g. parents being asked to collect the device, a suspension of the privilege to bring a phone to school.

Any more **serious misuse of a phone** (e.g. taking photos or videos during the school day, online bullying or hate messages etc) will result in more severe consequences and consultation with relevant authorities.

Concerns

We understand that some of the above may be a concern to you, but would also like to emphasise the

challenges that we as a school regularly face due to mobile phones and their negative impact on learners' education and wellbeing. Please see some answers below to queries/concerns that you may have:

FAQ's

I need to contact my child during the school day – how can I do that?

- We understand that parents may need to contact their child during the school day – we ask that parents phone the school office (01792 560600) and a message will be relayed to your child immediately. This may include a message for them to call you themselves.

My child needs to contact me (parent) during the school day – how can they do that?

- We ask that any learner that needs to contact home asks permission from a member of staff before doing so. There is also a free to use 'pupil phone' in reception that learners can use to contact parents/carers if necessary. All parent/carer phone numbers should already be stored on our database.

My child uses the Satchel app (previously Show My Homework) to view their timetable & homework – how will they manage now?

- All learners will be given paper copies of their timetable at the start of the year – these should be glued into their contact books and kept safely. If any learner requires another copy – they can be obtained via the school office. All members of staff also have access to all learners' timetables and can assist if required.
- Learners should check/organise their homework before coming to school (ideally the evening before) – learners are not required to check/view homework during the school day – this should be done at home.

My child is not going to cope without their device being turned on

- Phone addiction and reliance is a growing concern for many of us, there will be times when young people and adults will have to go without their mobile phone for various reasons. We feel it is better to educate and support learners now, and at a younger age, before it becomes a more serious problem.

Parental support with this is vitally important and very much appreciated. There are many studies into the negative effects of screen time in regards to young people's mental health, wellbeing and brain development and we feel it is our duty to take these important steps in an effort to support the wellbeing and learning of all pupils.