



The Telford Park School
Ensuring Excellence

Mobile Phone Policy

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Policy Name: Mobile Phone Policy

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School Standards Committee: Mr S Mirza

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Mobile Phone Policy

1. Rationale

This policy applies to mobile phones / smart watches and any other electrical device brought into school.

1.1 Mobile phones and, in particular, the new generation of smart phones, such as the iPhone, now include many additional functions such as an integrated camera, video recording capability, instant messaging, mobile office applications and mobile access to the internet. These allow immediate access to email, searching for information on the internet and other functions such as access to social networking sites e.g., Facebook, twitter and blogging sites.

1.2 For many young people today the ownership of a mobile phone is considered a necessary and vital part of their social life. When used creatively and responsibly the smart phone has great potential to support a pupil's learning experiences.

1.3 In recent years we have had incidents of poor conduct where mobile phone use has been a feature. This has been particularly difficult to address if it is an element in bullying.

1.4 Bullying, intimidation and harassment are not new in society; however, bullying using a mobile phone represents a new challenge for schools to manage.

1.5 Parents and pupils should be clear that misuse of mobile phones will not be tolerated.

2. Misuse

The following are examples of misuse but are not exclusive. 'Misuse' will be at the discretion of the Headteacher:

A. 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 such as on Facebook or YouTube

B. bullying by text, image and email messaging

C. the use of a mobile phone for 'sexting' (the deliberate taking and sending of provocative images or text messages)

D. pupils posting material on social network sites with no thought to the risks to their personal reputation and sometimes with the deliberate intention of causing harm to others

E. making disrespectful comments, misrepresenting events or making defamatory remarks about teachers or other pupils.

F. general disruption to learning caused by pupils accessing phones in lessons.

G. pupils phoning parents immediately following an incident so that the ability of staff to deal with an incident is compromised.

H. publishing photographs of vulnerable pupils, who may be on a child protection plan, where this may put them at additional risk.

3. Dealing with breaches

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

3.2 When confiscated, staff will hand the phone to the School Business Manager. This will ensure that the confiscation is correctly recorded and that the phone is kept securely. Where it is deemed necessary to examine the contents of a mobile phone this will be done by a designated member 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 is found.

4. Rules for the acceptable use of a mobile phone in school by pupils

Pupils are allowed to bring mobile phones into school. If they choose to do so it is on the understanding that they agree with the following limitations on its use, namely:

- A. The phone must be kept out of sight during the school day.
- B. Mobile phones 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 phones merely to be put on silent or pager mode.
- C. No pupil may take a mobile phone into a room or other area where examinations are being held.
- D. The security of phone will remain the pupil's responsibility at all times.
- E. If asked to do so, content on the phone (e.g., messages, emails, pictures, videos, sound files) will be shown to a member of staff.

5. Unacceptable use

The school will consider any of the following to be unacceptable use of the mobile phone and a serious breach of the school's Behaviour Policy resulting in sanctions being taken.

- A. Photographing or filming staff or other pupils without their knowledge or permission.
- B. Photographing or filming in toilets, changing rooms and similar areas.
- C. Bullying, harassing or intimidating staff or pupils by the use of text, email or multimedia messaging, sending inappropriate messages or posts to social networking or blogging sites.
- D. Refusing to switch a phone off or handing over the phone at the request of a member of staff.
- E. Using the mobile phone outside 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.
- F. Using a mobile phone outside school hours in such a way that it undermines the stability of the school and compromises its ability to fulfil the stated aim of providing 'a clear moral and ethical lead'.

6. Sanctions

Pupils and parents are notified that appropriate action will be taken against those who are in breach of the acceptable use guidelines, following the school's behaviour policy.

Pupils seen with a mobile phone or earphones will have such items confiscated.

In addition:

- a) Pupils and their parents should be very clear that the school is within its rights to confiscate the phone where the guidelines have been breached. Using the mobile phone outside school hours to intimidate or upset staff and pupils or undermine the stability of the school in any way will be considered a breach of these guidelines in the same way as unacceptable use which takes place in school time.

- b) If a phone is confiscated, school will make it clear for how long this will be and the procedure to be followed for its return.
- c) Pupils should be aware that the police will be informed if there is a serious misuse of the mobile phone where criminal activity is suspected.
- d) 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.

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

7. Confiscation procedure

If a mobile phone is confiscated, then:

- a) the pupil will be informed that the phone can be collected at the end of school day from the business managers office.
- b) the confiscation will be recorded on the school management information system. If a phone is confiscated 3 times in a half term, then parents will be notified and asked to collect on a pupil's behalf.
- c) school will ensure that confiscated equipment is stored in such a way that it is returned to the correct person.
- d) in the case of repeated or serious misuse the phone will only be returned to a parent/carer who will be required to visit the school by appointment to collect the phone. This may be at the end of a week, a half term or longer. At the discretion of the Headteacher the phone may be returned to the pupil at the end of the confiscation period.
- e) where a pupil persistently breaches the expectations, following a clear warning, the Headteacher may impose an outright ban from bringing a mobile phone to school. This maybe a fixed period or permanent ban. Where the phone has been used for an unacceptable purpose
- f) The Headteacher or a designated staff member will have the right to view files stored in 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.
- g) If required evidence of the offence or suspected offence will be preserved, preferably by confiscation of the device and keeping it secure or by taking photographs of the screen.
- h) School will consider whether an incident should be reported to family connect.
- i) The designated staff member should monitor repeat offences to see if there is any pattern in the perpetrator or the victim which needs further investigation.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the school standards committee annually.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.