



Mobile Phone Policy

2023/2024

Date of approval:	September 2023
Approved by:	Local Academy Board
Date of next review:	July 2024



Purpose

The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school administrators, teachers, students, parents and carers take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at school.

This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students.

Ellesmere Park High School has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, students, parents and carer's guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.

Students, their parents/carers must read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.

The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school excursions and extra-curricular activities both on the school campus and off-site.

Rationale

The school recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well.

Personal safety and security. Our school accepts that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.

The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or carers. It is incumbent upon parents to understand the capabilities of the phone and the potential use/miss-use of those capabilities.

Parents/carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school, it is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss or damage. The school cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use.

Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way. Passing on messages through school reception also reduces the likelihood of disrupting lessons inadvertently.

Parents/carers are requested that in cases of emergency they contact the school first so we are aware of any potential issue and may make the necessary arrangements.

Unacceptable Uses

Unless permission is granted, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos on school grounds.

Mobile phones must not disrupt classroom lessons with ring tones, music or beeping. They should be turned off during lesson times.

Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated. In some cases, it can constitute criminal behaviour. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence it is unacceptable regardless of whether 'consent' was given.

It is forbidden for students to “gang up” on another student and use their mobile phones to take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate that student and then send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website for public viewing. This also includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any student or member of staff without their consent. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

Mobile phones are not to be used or taken into changing rooms or toilets or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to their fellow students, staff or visitors to the school.

Should there be more than one disruption to lessons caused by a mobile phone, the responsible student may face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Headteacher. This may include a mobile phone ban in school.

It is unacceptable to take a picture of a member of staff without their permission. In the event that this happens the student will be asked and expected to delete those images.

Theft or damage

Students should mark their mobile phone clearly with their names.

Students who bring a mobile phone to school should leave it in their bag when they arrive. To reduce the risk of theft during school hours, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not ‘advertise’ they have them. Mobile phones that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to front office reception.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords may not be shared.

Lost and stolen mobile phones in the U.K. can be blocked across all networks making them virtually worthless because they cannot be used.

Inappropriate conduct

Mobile phones are banned from all examinations. Students **MUST** hand phones to invigilators before entering the exam hall. Any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination will have that paper disqualified. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified.

Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary action.

Students with mobile phones may 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 face disciplinary action. [It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

Students must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading, racist or pornographic images. The transmission of such images is a criminal offence. Similarly, ‘sexting’ – which is the sending of personal sexual imagery - is also a criminal offence.

Sanctions

Mobile phones must be switched off and kept out of sight during the school day. Students are not permitted to use their mobile phone on school site during the school day.

If a student's phone is SEEN or HEARD during the school the phone will be confiscated. At the end of the school day the student will need to speak with Mr Ross (HT) or Mr Bird (DHT) before the phone is returned.

On the third time a student has their phone confiscated, the phone will not be returned, and their parent/carer must come into school to collect.