

## Mobile Phone Policy

Academic studies have shown that despite being an efficient tool, mobile phones generally harm learning and distract students. Young people often overestimate their ability to multitask and may not realise that their phones are distracting them, even when they are not using them. Evidence suggests that the presence of a smartphone, even when idle on a student's desk or in their pocket, can significantly affect memory recall and accuracy. Just thinking about a smartphone is enough to break concentration.

From **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025**, any mobile phones seen in school, without an urgent, valid reason, e.g. checking blood sugar levels, will be confiscated until the end of the school day.

We recognise the importance of mobile phones in keeping our students safe and connected with parents and carers in the community. Rather than imposing a complete ban on phones, we have decided that students must keep their mobile phones turned off in their school bags, so they can use them while travelling to and from school.

### Mobile Phone Procedures

1. Students in Yrs 7-11 must switch off their phones as soon as they enter the school gates and store them in their bags – out of sight.
2. If a device is seen, it will be confiscated by a staff member and stored securely:
  - 2.1. The first incident – the phone will be confiscated, stored securely, and can be collected from the Main Office at the end of the school day. The student will also be issued an SLT lunch detention.
  - 2.2. Where there are repeat offences – the phone will be confiscated, stored securely, and parents will be contacted to arrange collection of the mobile phone.
3. Wireless/wired headphones, in any form, must not be used whilst on school premises. If students decide to use headphones when commuting to and from school, they must remove them before entering the school site. If headphones are observed on school premises, they will be confiscated
4. Smartwatches, for example, the Apple Watch, can be used to access the features of a smartphone, such as reading and replying to notifications, and as such, are subject to the same conditions of this policy.
5. We understand that there may be exceptional circumstances where a child might need to use their phone. These could include situations where a child needs to monitor a health condition or needs to contact a parent/guardian urgently. In these cases, staff will use their discretion to allow temporary phone use.

6. Bringing a mobile phone to school is at the student's own risk. The school does not accept responsibility for lost or damaged devices.

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and to adapt to any changes in technology or educational practice.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **How can I contact my child in an emergency?**

*Parents can reach the school by calling our main line at 01777 713700.*

### **How can my child contact home in an emergency?**

*If students need to contact a parent or guardian, they can request to do so via our Main Office.*

### **My child uses a smartphone to monitor health conditions**

*Please inform your Head of House.*

### **My child uses their phone to tell the time**

*Classrooms and social spaces (The Dome) are equipped with clocks for easy timekeeping.*

### **My child uses their phone to access their school timetable**

*Students will be given a paper copy of their timetable on the 6<sup>th</sup> January. If students lose their timetable, they need to speak to their Form Tutor.*

### **My child uses their phone to record their home learning**

*Staff use Arbor to record homework. Please encourage your child to access Arbor regularly at home. This will help them stay organised and on top of their schoolwork.*

### **My child uses their phone to occupy them at break/lunch times**

*We encourage students to socialise with their peers and to take part in extracurricular activities.*

### **If confiscated, will my child's phone be stored securely?**

*Yes. A system for recording and storing mobile devices has been implemented. All confiscated devices will be locked away in a secure location*

### **My child doesn't have a phone; will they be disadvantaged in lessons?**

*No, your child will not be disadvantaged. For e.g. The Expressive Arts Faculty may give students the choice of using their mobile phone in photography lessons to take photographs, however, the faculty will also have cameras and are also looking at extending the equipment they have in order to facilitate the changes this policy will bring.*