

Reviewed: April 2017

Mobile Phone Policy

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. This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed.

The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school trips and extra-curricular activities.

RATIONALE

Personal safety and security

Northumberland Pupil Referral Unit accepts that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. 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 child(ren) should be made by parents or carers. Parents/carers should be aware if their child has taken a mobile phone to school.

Staff

Staff must have their phones on 'silent' or switched off during class time. Use of phones must be limited to non-contact time when no children are present.

Staff may not make or receive calls during teaching time. If there are extreme circumstances (e.g. an acutely sick relative) the member of staff will have made the Headteacher/Support Services Manager aware of this and can have their phone in case they need to receive an emergency call. Staff would be encouraged to give out the school office number if there are emergencies. This means we can put the call through to staff when they are in a private room so they can receive phone call in private.

Phones must be kept out of sight preferably locked away (e.g. drawer, handbag, pocket – not on show) when staff are with children.

Calls/texts must be made/received in private during non-contact time when no children are present.

Phones will never be used to take photographs of children or to store their personal data.

Students

Acceptable Uses

Mobile phones should be switched off and handed to staff for safe keeping during lessons and while on the school premises. 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 can be reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.

Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to friends and keeping a note of who they have given them to. This can help protect the student's number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice, text and picture messages.

Unacceptable Uses

The Bluetooth function of a mobile phone must be switched off at all times and not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones.

Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

It is forbidden for students to use their mobile phones to take videos and pictures of other students without their consent and then send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website for public viewing. 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.

Theft or damage

Students should mark their mobile phone clearly with their names.

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 can be blocked across all networks making them virtually worthless because they cannot be used.

Inappropriate conduct

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

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 as sanctioned by the Headteacher.

[It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action as sanctioned by the Headteacher is deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.]

Sanctions

Students who infringe the rules set out in this document could face having their phones confiscated by teachers.

Should a student be found to have a mobile phone on their person during the school day, the phone will be confiscated and a parent/carer will be asked to collect the phone.

Should a student be found to have a mobile phone on their person and refuse to hand it in, a parent/carer will be asked to come to school. The student will not be permitted to leave the school until it had been checked for any safe-guarding breach.

If a parent refuses permission to check the content of a phone, then the police may be called.

_____ **Chair**

_____ **Date**