



SMITHDON HIGH SCHOOL

HUNSTANTON

Mobile & Electronic Device Acceptable Use Policy

from September 2022

Work hard, be kind and smile

Policy adopted by the Governors September 2022

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Introduction

For the purpose of this policy, all references to 'mobile phone(s)' should be taken to include any electronic communication devices and/or recording technology including associated accessories including earphones, that are used to access content on digital devices.

Examples of these include: multimedia devices, laptops, tablets and smart watches. This is not a definitive list.

Aims

The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school, 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.

Smithdon High School has established this Acceptable Use Policy for Electronic Devices that provides teachers, students, parents and carers with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use during school hours.

Students, their parents or carers must read, understand and accept this policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.

This Acceptable Use Policy also applies to students during school trips and extra-curricular activities both at school and off-site.

Rationale

Our rural setting and extensive commuting area for working families presents challenges when it comes to communication. 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, commuting long distances to school and walking home via rural and isolated routes. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents/carers reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently. This policy has been written to take account of these risks, the need to ensure the school can meet its statutory responsibility for safeguarding students.

Responsibility

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

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

Parents/carers should be aware, if their child takes a mobile phone to school, the school cannot

accept responsibility for any loss, damage or theft incurred due to its use at school. The school would advise parents/carers to check that their household insurance covers loss or damage of mobile phones taken outside of the home.

Parents/carers are reminded the school office must be the initial point of contact during the normal school day and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way.

Acceptable Use

Mobile phones must be switched off immediately upon arrival to school and before entering the school site and must be kept out of sight at all times during the school day. Exceptions may be permitted only in exceptional time-limited circumstances, for instance, if the parent/carer specifically requests it on a particular day and for a specific purpose. Such requests must be handled on a case-by-case basis and must be directed to Mr Johnson, Assistant Head for Behaviour and Pastoral Care (m.johnson@smithhigh.org.uk).

The school recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones. Teachers may wish to utilise these functions to aid teaching and learning and pupils may have the opportunity to use their mobile phones in the classroom. Students should place phones flat on the table and they should only be used for the specific purpose as directed by the teacher. The use of personal mobile phones in one lesson for a specific purpose does not mean blanket usage is then acceptable.

Unacceptable Use

Please see Appendix 1 for a comprehensive list of unacceptable use under this policy.

Theft or Damage

The theft and/or damage of mobile phones will follow the guidance in Appendix 2 of this policy.

Exams and Inappropriate Conduct

Please see Appendix 3 of this policy.

Sanctions

Students who infringe the rules set out in this document could face having their mobile phones confiscated by teachers. If the mobile phone is being used inappropriately the student must give it to a member of staff if requested.

On the first infringement of this policy the mobile phone would be confiscated by a member staff, turned off, enveloped and labelled with full details. It will then be passed to the Reception team and the infringement logged. The student will be able to collect the mobile phone at the end of the school day. The Pastoral Manager will contact the parents/carers to inform them of the incident.

On the second infringement the mobile phone would be confiscated by a member of staff, turned off, enveloped and labelled with full details. It will then be passed to the Reception team and the infringement logged. The Pastoral Manager will contact parents/carers and make them aware that they need to collect the phone. The Pastoral Manager will remind them of the consequences of subsequent infringements.

Appendix 1

Unacceptable Use

Mobile phones:

- Must be switched off upon arrival to school and before entering school buildings and not switched on again until the end of the school day at 3:00pm. Students may switch their mobile phones on only once they are outside and are leaving school after 3:00pm, or if the student is waiting outside reception to be collected following an after-school activity.
- Must not be used at any time in school classrooms or corridors unless expressly permitted and supervised by a teacher to support their learning.
- Should not be used for any purpose during the school day, unless express permission is granted.
- Are not to be used in 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.

Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated and 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 and will result in further action including internal investigation or referral to the police.

Students with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using social media, messaging, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls. Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary action.

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

It is forbidden for students to use their mobile phones to take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate another student and then send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website or social media for public viewing. This also includes photographing or filming 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, messages and emails can be traced. 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 and will receive a behaviour sanction.

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, the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online is also a criminal offence.

Students who knowingly allow another person to access and use their mobile phone to send abusive or offensive material will be held jointly liable, regardless of whether they are aware of the content or not.

Appendix 2

Theft or Damage

Students should make sure their mobile phone is secure with traceability and security features such as 'find my phone' and 'remote wiping'. It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their mobile 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.

Students who bring a mobile phone to school must leave it switched off locked away in their locker/bag immediately upon arriving at school and before entering school buildings. 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 should be handed at Reception.

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

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

Appendix 3

Exams and Inappropriate Conduct

As per instructions by JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications), mobile phones are banned from all examinations. Consequently, students must not bring mobile phones to any examination or controlled assessment.

Students who arrive at examinations with a mobile phone must ensure it is switched off and place it into a numbered bag (removing the co-ordinating number card) and place it into the secure box held by an invigilator before entering the exam hall. The mobile phone will be returned after the examination, only to the student holding the matching number card.

Any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination (or immediately afterwards, suggesting it was kept in a bag or pocket and not placed into the secure box) risks having that paper disqualified by the exam board and JCQ. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified. The school has a statutory responsibility to ensure the integrity of examinations and must report all such infringements to JCQ.