



## MOBILE PHONE POLICY

<b>Title of Policy</b>	Mobile Phone
<b>Date of adoption</b>	Summer 2021
<b>Originator</b>	Andrew Binns
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<b>Additional information</b>	This policy should be read in conjunction with the schools behaviour policy and the schools exclusion policy

## Mobile Phone Policy

### **Introduction**

Ashby School recognises and accepts that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. Many students travel alone on public transport, commute long distances to school and/or take part in extra-curricular activities outside of normal school hours. It is also acknowledged that, for many young people, the ownership of a mobile phone is considered to be a necessary and vital part of their social life.

Mobile phones, and in particular the new generation of smartphones, such as the iPhone, now include many additional functions such as the 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 access to social networking sites e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat.

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

- The deliberate engineering of situations where people's reactions are filmed or photographed in order to humiliate, embarrass or intimidate by publishing to a wider audience such as on Snapchat or YouTube.
- The act of recording/videoing a fight between other students.
- Bullying by text, image and email messaging.
- The use of a mobile phone for 'sexting' (the deliberate taking and sending of provocative images or text messages).
- The posting of material on social networking sites with no thought to the risks to personal reputation and sometimes with the deliberate intention of causing harm to others.
- Making disrespectful comments, misrepresenting events or making defamatory remarks about teachers or other students.
- General disruption to learning caused by students accessing phones in lessons.
- Pupils phoning parents immediately following an incident so that the ability of staff to deal with it is compromised.
- Publishing photographs of vulnerable students who may be on a child protection plan, where this may put them at additional risk.

These guidelines outline the expectations of the school on student use of mobile phones. They also give clear guidance to staff, students and parents about the consequences of breaches of these guidelines.

### **Responsibility**

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

Students should be advised that if they do bring mobile phones (or other such electronic devices) to school, they do so at their own risk. The security of the phone will remain the student's responsibility in all lessons, including PE. Phones can be handed in at the year Room Office for safe-keeping and picked up at the end of the school day.

Students are discouraged from bringing expensive items to school if it is not necessary to do so.

### **Acceptable Use**

Students are allowed to carry their personal mobile phones in school and to use them responsibly in accordance with the following principles:

- Mobile phones must be switched off in all classes and put in school bags. If a phone is seen in the pocket of a student then they will be asked to put it in their bag. It is not acceptable for phones merely to be put on silent mode.
- Students may voluntarily hand their phone in at the start of the lesson to be kept by the teacher and receive it back at the end of the lesson.
- Students are permitted to use their mobile phone at break-time and lunch time. Use of the phone's cameras are prohibited.
- Sixth Formers are permitted to use their mobile phone discreetly during non-teaching time in the Sixth Form area. They are still bound by the rules on unacceptable use outlined below. The camera function is prohibited.
- In line with police advice, students are advised for personal safety reasons not to display expensive or desirable electronic items in public places, for example on the journey to and from school.
- Education as to responsible use, by pupils, of mobile technologies will be delivered by the school and included in PSD and pastoral programmes. Teachers will be vigilant for the misuse of technology in bullying.
- We encourage parents/carers to talk to their child about appropriate use and security.

### **Unacceptable Use**

Any use of a mobile phone outside of the principles outlined above will be deemed unacceptable and can result in sanctions. The school will also 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:

- Photographing or filming staff or other students without their knowledge or permission.
- Posting photographs or other material about a member of staff or another student online without their knowledge or permission.

## Consequences

- If the student has their phone in their pocket then they will be given the opportunity to put the mobile phone in their bag. If the student refuses to do so, or if it is taken out of the bag again, it will be confiscated by the teacher.
- If a student has their mobile phone out during the lesson then it will be confiscated by the class teacher. The mobile phone will then be picked up from the lesson and stored securely until it can be picked up by a parent/carer.
- Parents/carers will be informed of the situation and a request will be made that the phone is collected by a parent or carer ideally the same day. Phones can be picked up until 5pm every day of the week from the relevant year room and will need to be signed for.
- If the parent or carer fails to collect a mobile phone after a period of seven days, it will be returned to the student with a warning of the implications of a further breach of rules.
- On the third or subsequent infringement, the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher and taken to the relevant Year Room, where it would be securely stored. Parents/carers will be notified and a meeting arranged where the student's repeated infringements will be discussed with the parent and a decision will be made whether the student may be required to hand in their phone at the beginning of the day and collect it at the end of the day for various periods of time.
- For repeated offences, the school may decide to withdraw the agreement to allow the student to bring the phone into school.
- If a student refuses to hand over their mobile phone after getting it out in the lesson then they will be removed from the lesson and placed into inclusion and parents/carers will be contacted.
- In certain circumstances where it is not possible for a parent/carer or member of the family to pick the phone up then the phone will be kept in the safe for three days (including the day of the confiscation) and will be returned to the student on receipt of a letter/communication from the parent allowing this.
- Any student caught using a mobile phone to cheat in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action.
- Students in the isolation room are required to hand in their mobile phones for safe keeping. These will be returned to students at the end of their stay in the room, unless other factors make it inappropriate. Should other factors render it necessary, the procedure for confiscation will be followed.
- Serious breaches in conduct, particularly involving bullying, will be dealt with by the respective Head of Year or another suitable senior member of staff. In such cases, parents/carers will always be notified. The sanctions for more serious incidents will vary and will depend on the circumstances, the offence, and the degree to which trust has been breached.
- The Headteacher or a designated staff member will have the right to view files stored on confiscated mobile phones and will seek the cooperation of parents in deleting any files which are in breach of these guidelines, unless these are being preserved as evidence. The involvement of the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be considered at this point.
- If required, evidence of the offence will be preserved. Victims will be encouraged to keep screenshots for this purpose.

- If a student is caught recording a fight with their mobile phone, then the following disciplinary procedures will be followed:
- The video will be deleted from the mobile phone.
- The person responsible for recording the fight will receive a fixed term exclusion.
- Anyone who is caught forwarding the video to other students/persons will be receive a fixed term exclusion.
- Any student who posts the video on YouTube, Snapchat or any other social networking page, will receive a fixed term exclusion.

### **Theft or Damage**

It is advised that mobile phones are insured and marked for easy identification and that a record is kept of the device's serial number.

Students are encouraged to keep mobile phones in their bags during the school day.

Mobile phones that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed in to the student support office.