



Marshland
HIGH SCHOOL

Mobile & Electronic Device Acceptable Use Policy

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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 wearable devices. This is not a definitive list.

Aim of this Policy

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.

Marshland High School has established this Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones 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, and to reflect parents'/carers' views about safeguarding their child.

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 parent/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. Passing on messages through school reception also eliminates lessons being inadvertently disrupted.

Acceptable Use

Mobile phones must be switched off immediately upon arrival to school and before entering school buildings 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 the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. Parents/carers are requested that in cases of emergency they must contact the school first so we are aware of any potential issue and may make the necessary arrangements.

Students should protect their mobile phone numbers by only giving them to close friends. This can help protect the students' number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice and text messages and inappropriate images.

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. On these occasions, pupils may only use their mobile phones in the classroom when express permission has been given and it is only 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 teacher if requested.

On the first infringement of this policy the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher/support staff, turned off, enveloped and labelled with full details. It will then be passed to the Pastoral team and the infringement logged. Finance and Reception will offer support when Pastoral is not available. The student will be able to collect the mobile phone at the end of the school day and a record will be made of the incident. A communication will also be sent to the parent/carer to inform them of the incident.

On the first infringement the decision to return a mobile phone on the same day of confiscation directly to the student has been taken to reflect parental concerns about the safety of their child travelling to and from school without a mobile phone.

On the second infringement the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher/support

staff, turned off, enveloped and labelled with full details. It will then be passed to the Pastoral team and the infringement logged. Finance and Reception will offer support when Pastoral is not available. Parents/carers will be notified and requested to collect the mobile phone in person from the school. The mobile phone can be collected on the same day of confiscation (during reception opening hours). A record of the second infringement will be made. A second letter will also be sent to the parent/carer to advise them this is the second infringement and remind them of the consequences of subsequent infringements.

On the second infringement the decision to return a mobile phone on the same day of confiscation directly to the parent/carer, has been taken to reflect parental concerns about the safety of their child travelling to and from school without a mobile.

A third or subsequent infringement will result in the mobile phone being confiscated by the teacher/support staff, turned off, enveloped and labelled with full details. It will then be passed to the Pastoral team and the infringement logged. Finance and Reception will offer support when Pastoral is not available. A parental meeting should be held with the parent/carer, this can be booked at the time of the parent / carer collecting the phone.

The school reserves the right to ban a student bringing a mobile phone to school given repeated infringements of this policy, or in the case of a serious misuse.

Failure to heed the rules in relation to serious misuse as set out in this policy may result in alleged incidents, of a serious nature, being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent or carer would be notified immediately.

In the event of a student being removed from lessons to continue learning in "The Bridge" (Marshland's internal isolation area), students are expected to hand over their mobile phones to the member of staff. They will receive their mobile phone back when they leave The Bridge at the end of the agreed isolation time.

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 3:15pm. Students may switch their mobile phones on only once they are outside and are leaving school after 3:15pm, 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 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 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.

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, 'sexting' (sending personal sexual imagery) 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 to 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 to the finance office.

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.

When school confiscates a mobile phone from a student any damage to the phone will be noted. When returning the phone the student/parent will be able to check and agree any damages.

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 to examinations with a mobile phone must hand it to the invigilator before entering the exam hall. The mobile phone will be returned to the student after the examination. In this instance contact will be made with the parent/carer to ensure the student does not bring a mobile phone to any future examination.

Any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination 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.