



HIGHFIELDS SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

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Purpose

The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school staff, students, and parents take steps to support the effective, positive and safe use of such technologies. This Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile devices provide can be enjoyed by our students without interfering with their learning or the rights of others in the school.

Rationale

We accept that many 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 or commuting long distances to school. Providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently e.g. upon returning from a sports fixture or from an extended trip or educational visit, particularly when the return time is not as previously advised. We also accept that there are times when teaching staff need to remain in contact with students (such as educational visits): mobile devices are useful in those circumstances.

This policy is intended to offer a realistic approach that balances the benefits of the technologies with the school's duty of care to all and its desire to create the proper environment which will support the education of every student.

Highfields School has established the following Policy for mobile devices that provides teachers, students and parents guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use during school hours or during any school-sponsored activities.

Responsibility

Parent

This policy involves parents as partners of the school in educating their children in the proper use of mobile phones: it is underpinned by an expectation that students will use their technologies in a responsible and considerate manner.

The decision to provide mobile phones for their children should be made by parents or guardians. Parents should be aware that their child has taken a device to school.

Parents are reminded that, in cases of emergency contact during the school day, the school office remains the appropriate point of contact: we will ensure that any message left with the office reaches the relevant student quickly and assisted in any appropriate way. Parents should not contact their child by mobile phone during the school day.

Students:

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

While on school premises, students should have their phones turned off and they should be kept out of sight, **it is not acceptable** to have them **on silent or vibrate** as these functions can still disrupt lessons. Mobile phones should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school.

The school recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, MP3 and MP4 playback, blogging etc. If at any point teachers wish to utilise any of these functions to aid teaching and learning, express permission may be given by the teacher.

General guidelines for acceptable use:

- The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.
- Mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos, make videos or use any other application during school time and other educational activities.
- Any calls which need to be made must always be through the relevant Year / School office
- Students must follow the instructions of staff relating to the use of mobile technologies at all times.
- Mobile phones are only to be used in the event of an emergency and with permission from a member of staff.
- The Bluetooth function of a mobile phone must be switched off at all times.
- Headphones must not be worn when moving around the school building
- Devices should be clearly marked with the student's name
- Students who bring mobile technologies to school should keep them safe. To reduce the risk of theft while travelling we advise students to keep them well concealed and not 'advertise' that they have them.
- It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised use cannot be made.
- Students should protect their contact information at all times.
- Where bags are left unsupervised (e.g. at Sports fixtures) devices should be switched off and handed in to a member of staff for safe keeping.
- Students can hand in mobile devices to the year office during the school day if they so desire.
- The use of devices to intimidate, bully or share and distribute inappropriate material is forbidden
- It is forbidden for students to use their mobile phones to photograph, film or record any student or member of staff whilst in school or in school uniform.
- Any action that could potentially damage the reputation of the school is forbidden
- 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. The use of devices that may be interpreted as illegal will result in the student being reported to the appropriate authorities.
- The use of devices to access material or locations that are filtered by the School's ICT systems or conflicts with the Network Acceptable Use Policy is forbidden.
- Any concerns or incidents of improper use should be reported to a member of staff or via tell@hswv.co.uk

School

We are developing a culture of responsible use of mobile devices by our students. We will, through lessons, assemblies and general advice, endeavour to guide students in the safe and sensible use of mobile phones.

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

- On the first infringement of this policy the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher and taken to the relevant year/school office. 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.
- On the second infringement parents will be notified and the student will not be permitted to collect the phone without a parent/carer's verbal consent to a member of the year team. The incident will be recorded. A letter will also be sent to the parent/carer to inform them of the incident.
- On the third infringement the student will not be permitted to collect the phone without a parent/carer present. After the third infringement the school will withdraw the agreement to allow the student to bring the mobile telephone to school.

The School will keep mobile devices for a period of 13 weeks that are found in the school and whose owners cannot be located, after which time they will be donated to an appropriate charity.

Sixth Form

Students in the Sixth Form need to be mindful of the example that they set to younger students in school. As role models, we expect that they will not use their mobile phones around the school.

Sixth formers are not allowed to use their mobile phones, except to make calls to support their learning in the Restaurant area during lesson times only. At break and lunch times, if students need to use their phones they must leave the school site or go to the Sixth Form Office.

Any infringements of this policy will be passed to the Year Team who will contact home.

Staff

Staff should model good practice and not use mobile phones in any area that is visible to students, unless in the event of an emergency.