

Mission Statement

In Christ We Grow – As a learning community we live out our Mission Statement striving for excellence through caring, sharing and achieving.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour and Rewards Policy
- The Single Equality Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Learning Expectations Policy
- Teaching to Support Learning Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- ICT Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policies

As appropriate, the terms of this policy apply to students who are on alternative provision

This guidance is supplementary to the School e-Safety policy document.

Introduction

For many people the ownership of a mobile phone is considered a necessary and vital part of life, particularly in lockdowns during the Covid-19 pandemic. When used creatively and responsibly the smart phone and electronic technologies have great potential to support a student's learning experiences. However, a rise in the number of incidents of misuse of mobile phones in schools has created a situation where we, in conjunction with our Governing Body, have formulated detailed guidelines which cover mobile phone use here at Our Lady Queen of Peace.

Any form of bullying, intimidation or harassment is unacceptable; however, bullying using a mobile phone represents a particular challenge for schools to manage and misuse of the mobile phone will be dealt with using the same principles set out in the school's Behaviour and Rewards and Anti-Bullying policies, with the response being proportionate to the severity of the misuse.

Students should be aware that use of a mobile phone in school will lead to the confiscation of their mobile. Serious misuse of a mobile phone device either in school or out of school (if it directly impacts on our school community) will lead to more serious sanctions including, where appropriate, an exclusion from school. If the offence is serious it will be reported to the Police.

School will ensure all staff know the correct procedure to follow where a mobile phone has been confiscated and is not returned to the student at the end of a lesson. This will ensure the confiscation is correctly recorded and that the phone is kept securely.

Where it is deemed necessary to examine the contents of a mobile phone this will be done by a member of the safeguarding team. Details of the incident will be recorded in case it later becomes evidence of criminal activity. The record will include the time, who was present and what was found. (See Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy).

These guidelines are intended to help make explicit our expectations on student use of mobile phones and the restrictions which are placed on their use in school and on school grounds. The guidelines sit alongside the Acceptable Use Policy for Internet which all students sign and is shared with parents and carers. It is also to be read alongside our Searching, Screening and Confiscation, Anti-Bullying, and Behaviour and Rewards policies.

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a responsibility to monitor their child's use of mobile phones and social media accounts outside of school. We recommend age appropriate access to the internet and social media platforms, agreed usage periods and regular checks of their child's usage.

If parents/carers have concerns about their child's social media activity they should, as the account holder, report matters to the service provider and, if necessary, to the police. We remind parents that they are entitled to check the contents of their child's phone if they are concerned. We also remind parents that school staff are entitled to check and/or confiscate their child's device as necessary. Staff will support with issues that spill over into school but the manner in which the device is used is, ultimately, a parental responsibility.

Guidelines

Students' mobile phones must not be seen or heard in school; if a student brings their mobile phone in to school, it is at their own risk and the device should remain switched off and out of sight. The school accepts no liability for loss or damage to any electronic device that a student chooses to bring into school.

The following should be noted:

- Mobile phones must be out of sight and switched off at all times during the school day, including break and lunchtimes, and remain off whilst students are on the school premises; it is not acceptable for phones merely to be put on silent.
- Students should hand in their mobile phones at the start of each lesson and Form time; they will pick them up at the end of each lesson or Form.
- No student may take a mobile phone into a room or other area where examinations are being held.
- Mobile phones are handed in at the start of any after-school R&R.
- Mobile phones are handed in for the duration of any time spent in Internal Exclusion.
- Mobile phones are handed in at the start of each day for the duration of any time spent on Red Report.
- If required, and as appropriate in any cause for concern, content on the phone (eg messages, emails, pictures, videos, sound files) will be shown to a member of the safeguarding team.
- Any reasonable cause for concern could lead to the confiscation of a student's mobile phone.

Sanctions-

In lessons and Form time

- If a student has not handed their mobile phone in at the start of the lesson or Form time and it is subsequently heard, or if the student attempts to use it, the device will be handed over to the teacher and retained until the end of the lesson, in the first instance.
- At the end of the lesson, the mobile is handed back to the student.
- At the teacher's discretion – repeated use of the mobile in their lesson - the device may be retained centrally and securely until the end of the day.
- At the earliest opportunity, the teacher takes the device to the Behaviour Administrator – office located off Exclusion – for storage in the safe.

- The teacher should tell the student that they should collect their mobile from here at the end of the school day.
- Students must not be allowed to leave Lesson 4 early to collect mobile phones.
- In the event of a student's non-compliance, Lesson Support should be called and the student may be removed from the lesson with a subsequent after-school R&R, in line with the Behaviour and Rewards Policy; the student's mobile phone will be confiscated and returned to them on completion of the R&R.

At other times

- Similar confiscation arrangements should follow if students do not keep mobile phones switched off and out of sight.

Persistent non-compliance

- Home contact including parent/carer meetings
- After-school R&R
- Internal Exclusion
- Red Report
- Temporary or permanent ban on the mobile phone
- Further sanctions as appropriate

The Year 11 Common Room

In line with their growing maturity as they move towards life beyond Our Lady's, Year 11 students are permitted access to their mobile phones at break and lunch times. This is within the confines of the Common Room only and responsible behaviour is expected: no video recording, no selfies or photographs and sensible use of software platforms. Devices must be switched off and placed out of sight before students make their return to lessons.

Any misuse of this privilege will result in appropriate sanctions as outlined in this policy. This will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Confiscation procedure

If a mobile phone is confiscated then:

- if it has been retained centrally, the timing of the return of the device to a student or parent/carer is normally at the discretion of the Senior Leadership Team
- the confiscation will be recorded for monitoring purposes and the device will be retained for an appropriate length of time until it is returned to the student or a parent/carer collects it
- school will ensure that confiscated equipment is stored in such a way that it is returned to the correct person
- where a student persistently breaches the guidelines, following a clear warning, the Senior Leadership Team may impose an outright ban on the mobile phone in school; this may be a fixed period or a permanent ban.

Unacceptable use and eSafety considerations

The school considers any of the following to be unacceptable use of a mobile phone and a serious breach of the school's eSafety and Behaviour and Rewards policies:

- the deliberate engineering of situations where people's reactions are filmed or photographed in order to humiliate, embarrass and intimidate by publishing to a wider audience including social media platforms
- bullying by text, image, email or messaging

- the use of a mobile phone for 'sexting' (the deliberate taking and sending of provocative images or messages)
- students posting material on social network sites with no thought to the risks to their 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
- promoting any other form of hate speech
- 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 an incident is compromised
- parents phoning children in school during social times and lessons
- publishing photographs of vulnerable students, who may be on a child protection plan, where this may put them at additional risk
- photographing or filming staff or other students without their knowledge or permission
- photographing or filming in toilets, changing rooms and similar areas
- bullying, harassing or intimidating staff or students by the use of text, email or multimedia messaging, sending inappropriate messages or posts to social networking or blogging sites
- refusing to switch a phone off or handing over the phone at the request of a member of staff
- using the mobile phone outside school hours to intimidate or upset staff and students will be considered a breach of these guidelines in the same way as unacceptable use which takes place in school time.
- using it to check the time

Peer-on-peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age, and under the age of 18.

- Abuse can take many forms, including language meant to intimidate and cause fear, hate speech, filming of others without consent, inappropriate image sharing
- All staff understand that children can abuse other children and will inform the DSL team of any concerns
- Peer-on-peer abuse will be taken as seriously as any other form of abuse, including physical and emotional abuse

Students and parents/carers are notified that appropriate sanctions will be taken against those who use their mobile phone in an unacceptable way.

The following should be noted:

- Students and their parents/carers should be very clear that the school is within its rights to confiscate the phone where the guidelines have been breached.
- Members of the safeguarding team will have the right to view files stored in confiscated equipment and will seek the cooperation of parents/carers in deleting any files which are in clear breach of these guidelines unless these are being preserved as evidence.
- If required, evidence of the offence will be preserved, preferably by confiscation of the device and keeping it secure or by taking photographs of the screen.
- The school will monitor repeat offences to see if there is any pattern which needs further investigation.
- If a phone is confiscated school will make it clear for how long, and the procedure to be followed for its return.
- Students and their parents/carers should be aware that the police will be informed if there is a serious misuse of the mobile phone where criminal activity is suspected.
- If a student commits an act which causes serious harassment, alarm or distress to another student or member of staff, the ultimate sanction may be permanent

exclusion; school will consider the impact on the person affected in deciding the sanction and parents/carers will be involved.

Support for those involved in the misuse of mobile phones

Where an incident has involved the victimisation, harassment, alarm or distress of another student or member of staff, the school will provide support. This will be discussed with the family of those affected or, where the incident involves a member of staff, appropriate support may be obtained from welfare or union representatives.

To support their rehabilitation, the following measures may be offered in consultation with those affected, their family or support representative(s):

- implement the school's restorative practice procedures; as appropriate the perpetrator will participate in this process as part of their reintegration programme following the incident.
- follow up with those affected and their family to agree a suitable way to achieve an effective closure.
- where restorative practice does not take place, the school will pursue other avenues of support; eg school counselling, Childline
- school will also ensure that the perpetrator, and any others involved, are educated about the impact of their actions
- senior staff will consider education programmes to be implemented as part of PSHCE, eSafety lessons and assemblies
- where material has been posted online about a person, school will provide support in getting the material removed either through discussion with the perpetrator or contact with the service provider; assistance may also be sought through the local authority.

The school will always ensure a fully documented case history of any incident is recorded and secured.

Revised July 2021