

Mobile Phones Policy

| Document Control - Document Details | |
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| Document Name | Mobile Phones Policy |
| Purpose of Document | Policy for safe use of mobile technology |
| Document Version number | 53 |
| Document Owner | Emma Green |
| Prepared by | Emma Green |
| Document location | T:\0-School Administration\01-College Policies\Approved policies 2018-2019 |
| Date of first draft | March 2017 |
| Date Approved | 10 th June 2019 |
| Approved by | Governing body |
| Next scheduled review date | June 2020 |

| Version History | | |
|-------------------|---------------|--|
| Version number | Date Approved | Change/Reasons for Change/Comments |
| 1 | unknown | |
| 2 | October 2015 | |
| 3 | November 2017 | WSCC model policy. Updated to incorporate new GDPR provision. |
| 4 | June 2018 | Policy unchanged at proposed review date |
| 5 | June 2019 | GB asked for a sentence to be added: 'No pupil at Oathall will be at an academic disadvantage because they do not have a mobile phone' |
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| Distribution list | | |
| Governors | | |
| Head | | |
| Leadership Team | | |

Mobile Phones Policy

Purpose

The widespread ownership of mobile phones and devices¹ among young people requires that school leaders, teachers, students and parents take steps to ensure that devices are used responsibly at school. This policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving devices can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring that the benefits to learning and safety that mobile devices provide can continue to be enjoyed by our students.

Responsibility

Oathall recognises that mobile devices are now an accepted part of everyday life. We accept that many parents give their children devices as a means of keeping in touch and to help with personal safety. The decision to provide a child with a mobile device is entirely that of the parents. Parents are responsible for understanding the capabilities of any device and any potential use or misuse of the device.

No pupil at Oathall will be at an academic disadvantage because they do not have a mobile phone. Parents are reminded that the school office remains the most appropriate point of contact, especially in an emergency. This will ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way. Passing on messages through school reception also reduces the likelihood of disrupting lessons inadvertently. If you do need to send your child non-urgent messages please send them during a school break. (At morning break or lunchtime.)

Students should not use their devices to contact parents during the school day from their mobile phones as this can compromise school systems in place. Students who do have a genuine need to contact parents can report to our student services office where their Assistant Head of House can arrange access to a school phone or a place of seclusion to use their mobile phone if appropriate. Parents should be aware that the school cannot accept responsibility for any theft, loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use on the school premises or as part of any school related activity. It remains the responsibility of parents or students to ensure phones are appropriately insured and appropriate security measures are in place. It is recommended mobile phones are kept securely on the student's person such as an inside blazer pocket at all times.

Any use of a mobile device must comply with the schools acceptable user policy (AUP) applicable to all digital & information technology used in the school. Misuse of a device will be subject to the school behaviour policy.

! Throughout this policy a device refers to any kind of digital or smart handheld mobile technology such as phones, tablets, recording devices, cameras. This list is not exhaustive.

Oathall has established the following information to provide teachers, students, and parents with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of phones and devices during school hours. This policy also applies to students during off-site visits and extra-curricular activities.

Acceptable use

- Under the specific direction of teachers, mobile phones or devices may be used in lessons or tutorial time (for example to access information, calculate, time or take images).
- Mobile phones may be used before/after school and during free time at break and lunch times apart from in the school canteen or library. These areas have been designated as phone free zones.
- The college's student Wi-Fi network may be used.
- In controlled circumstances, a member of staff may direct and supervise the taking of photographs. Specific guidance will be provided about the appropriate use of photography on school trips. Permission from other participants must always be obtained.
- In controlled circumstances, a member of staff may allow a student to record or film a learning activity. Permission from other participants must always be obtained.

Unacceptable use

- Students are not permitted to use a device in a lesson or tutorial or assembly if a teacher has not directed them to do so. At these times devices should **be switched-off or placed on silent mode** and kept out of sight.
- Mobile phones must not be taken into public examinations. If this is unavoidable they must be switched off and handed to an invigilator or placed where instructed before the start of the examination.
- The use of phones when moving between lessons or in corridors/on stairs is unsafe and is not allowed at any time.
- The wearing and use of headphones is unsafe and so is not allowed at any time within the school day.
- Devices should not be used to broadcast or play out music or sound at any time – unless you have been directed to do so by a member of staff.
- The use of a mobile camera to take pictures of other people, lessons or school activities without permission is not allowed at any time on the school premises or on school trips.
- At no time should any photographs, film or sound recordings of other people or activities taken at Oathall be uploaded to social media or the internet. Nor should any such material be sent using a device to another person.
- Students may not use the school facilities to charge a device.

Staying Safe

Through the school curriculum Oathall supports students' safe and responsible use of mobile devices. This includes how to take action if young people feel threatened or unsafe, the danger of grooming when talking to unknown contacts and the risks and illegalities of sexting.

We recommend parents seek advice and guidance about the safe use of mobile phones from the Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP) visit ceop.police.uk and thinkuknow.co.uk. There are also useful resources for young people at these sites.

If specific concerns arise about the safety of students we ask parents contact us about this so we can work mutually to support the young person. This is however never a substitute to contacting the police where real safety threats and criminal activity appears to exist.

Consequences for the misuse of mobile phones

If a student uses a phone or device unacceptably as outlined the phone or device may be confiscated by a member of staff. The phone will be kept with the Headteacher's P.A. until the end of the day where it may be collected by the student.

Where a student is persistently abusing the schools condition of use or there is an incident of serious misuse that threatens the health and safety of others parents will be requested to collect the phone to facilitate a home/school dialogue about the incident of misuse.

Persistent misuse could result in the school withdrawing the right of the student to bring their mobile phone to school.

Where the school reasonably believes a phone holds material that has been used to bully or for harassment or holds pornographic, illegal or overtly offensive material or information relevant to a criminal investigation it may be necessary to pass the phone directly to the police. In the case of such gross misuse of a phone the school may withdraw the right of the student to bring a mobile phone to school.