



Prudhoe Community High School	
Name of Policy	Mobile Technologies
Named Person	Faye Warkman
Approved by:	S McArdle - Chair's Action
Last review date	7 March 2022
Next review date	Spring 2023

Mobile Technologies Policy Updated March 2022

The purpose of this policy is to provide teachers, students, parents and carer's guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.

We recognise that the widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people today requires that we 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.

Students, their parents or carers must read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school. The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities both on the school campus and off-site.

Related School Policies

- Child Protection
- Quality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Anti Bullying
- Drugs and Substance Misuse
- Exclusion & Seclusion
- ICT Acceptable Use (for both Staff & Students)
- Home School Agreement
- Restraint of Pupils

Rationale

Our semi rural setting and wide travel to work area for working parents presents challenges when it comes to communications. Prudhoe Community High School recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted and growing part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well.

So we accept that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety when travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school.

Responsibility

When students access and use mobile technologies during a school day it is recognised that a high degree of responsibility and accountability is therefore accepted by the student. The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or carers. It is incumbent upon parents to understand the capabilities of the phone and the potential use/mis-use of those capabilities.

Parents/carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school. It is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss or damage. **The school cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred under any circumstances.**

Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office, 01661 832486 ext 0 remains a vital and appropriate point of contact. Contacting the school office can ensure your child is reached quickly with the passing of messages through reception also reducing the likelihood of disruption to lessons.

Acceptable Uses

Mobile phones should be placed on silent or switched off, and kept out of sight during timetabled lessons and while moving between lessons. However whilst on school premises, during breaks and lunch times students should use soundless features such as text messaging, answering services, call diversion and vibration alerts to receive important calls or at the request or authorisation of a member of staff in the Dining Area or outside.

The school wishes to embrace the emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, MP3 and MP4 playback, blogging, texting and email etc. to aid teaching and learning. Students may well be 'invited' to use their mobile phone technologies to support their learning and on these occasions pupils may use their mobile phones in the classroom. The use of personal mobile phones in one lesson for a specific purpose does not mean blanket usage is then acceptable.

So to sum up we believe that mobile phones should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routines of the school or in a way which detracts from the learning at any time.

Unacceptable Uses

Unless express permission is granted, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos or use any other application during school lessons and other educational activities, such as assemblies. Mobile phones must not disrupt classroom lessons with ringtones, music or beeping or sanctions may be applied.

Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable, so too is Cyber bullying which has a zero tolerance at PCHS and in certain cases it can constitute criminal

behaviour. It is also forbidden for students to “gang up” on another student and use their mobile phones to take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate that student and then send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website for public viewing. This also includes using mobile phones to photograph or film 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. See Behaviour Policy

Theft or damage

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 and whose owner cannot be located will be handed in at the Main School Office. **The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.** We strongly advise students to use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that any unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones, by other students, or if stolen. Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential and we also advise that passwords should not be shared.

Inappropriate conduct

Mobile phones and other electronic devices are banned from all examination areas. Students are expected to switch off and hand all devices to invigilators before entering the examination area. Any student found in possession of a mobile phone or electronic device during an examination will be reported formally to QCA and may as a consequence have that paper disqualified or face disqualification from further examinations for up to 5 years.

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’ –which is the sending of personal sexual imagery – is also a criminal offence.

Sanctions

Students who infringe the rules set out in this document could face having their phones confiscated by members of staff. Confiscation of mobile phones in this case is supported in law and set out within our behaviour policy. A record will be made of the incident on our behaviour recording system and the student will be able to collect the mobile phone at the end of the school day or on a date and time specified by the member of staff dealing with the confiscation. A letter may be sent to the parent/carer to inform them of the incident.

Students who repeatedly infringe the rules set out in this document will have their Parents/Carers notified and the pupil will not be permitted to collect the phone without a parent/carer’s attendance at a prearranged meeting with a senior member of staff.

If a parent/carer is unable to attend the school they are permitted to phone and give verbal consent for their child to collect the phone following a conversation with a senior member of staff. The incident will be recorded. Failure to adhere to the rules set out in this document may result in an alleged incident – of a serious nature – being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent or carer would be notified either by the school or the Police.