



Mobile Device Guidance

Note: *The term 'mobile device' is used to cover all mobile phones, tablets, smart watches, music players and ear or headphones, including wireless accessories.*

Rationale and Guidance

As part of the launch of the **Be Well Programme**, we have reviewed our guidance for the use of mobile devices in school. Young people are amongst the most frequent users of both mobile devices and social media. In fact, recent statistics estimate that - on average - teenagers can spend nine hours a day on their mobile device, which is often one hour more than they sleep. Whilst social media can play a role in encouraging people to connect, the reality is that it can replace positive face-to-face interaction. Along with this comes a pressure to constantly be in contact, checking for and responding to messages. Evidence suggests that their overuse can have a negative impact on self-esteem, which in turn can lead to an increase in poor mental health, anxiety and depression. Moreover, the misuse of mobile technology is also a nationally reported concern from young people.

With this in mind, we believe (along with an increasing number of education professionals) that students would benefit from a complete break from these pressures for the seven hours a day they are in school, allowing more time to talk to each other face-to-face during social times.

Although we recommend that students do not bring their mobile devices to school, we appreciate that some students have a long journey to and from school and that parents and carers may feel more reassured if they are able to contact their child during this journey. For this reason, students are permitted to bring a mobile device into school, provided they adhere to the expectations below:

- Before entering the school site, students must turn their mobile devices off and place them out of sight in their bag (including earphones) for the duration of the school day and should not turn them back on until they have left the school site.
- Failure to comply with these expectations will lead to the mobile device being confiscated and taken to ACE Reception, where the student can collect it at the end of the day. An 'M' code will be recorded in their planner.
- Mobile devices must not be used to photograph or video anyone and any breach of this will result in further serious sanctions.

Where there are repeated instances of a student using their device outside of these guidelines, or if they are defiant when asked to hand over their phone, then parents or carers will be contacted to discuss the situation further and students will lose the privilege of bringing their device to school for an extended period.

Any student needing to urgently speak to a parent/carer should do so via their Head of Year. In an emergency, parents/carers should continue to contact the main reception in the usual manner.

Mobile devices are brought into school entirely at the student's own risk.