



Mobile Phone Usage Policy

Approved by	
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1) Introduction

New technologies have become an integral part of the lives of children and young people in today's society, both within schools and in their lives outside school. The internet and other digital and information technologies are powerful tools, which open up new opportunities for everyone. Electronic communication helps both teachers and students learn from each other. They can stimulate discussion, promote creativity and increase awareness of context to promote effective learning.

Mobile phones, iPod/iPad, MP3 players/headphones and other electronic devices (from hereon in will be referred to as mobile phones) have become an essential part of everyday life for most young people and many adults. Mobile phones are not only a vital form of communication but can also form part of a young persons identity. It would therefore, be unreasonable to ban pupils from taking them to school. However, schools need clear guidelines to address any issues that may arise from this. Such as:

- They are valuable items that may be stolen
- Their use can cause pupils and staff to be subject to bullying
- Even when in silent mode, texts can undermine classroom discipline, distracting not only the person with the phone, but also other people around.
- Mobile phones with integrated cameras could lead to child protection and data protection issues, regarding the inappropriate taking and sending of images.

These issues are discussed in the mobile phone usage risk assessment and appendix A

It is important to recognise that a number of features of these devices could also be used to facilitate and support teaching and learning. For example:

- Recording facilities
- Integrated digital cameras and video facilities
- Electronic calendars
- Electronic calculators
- Online dictionaries, encyclopaedias etc.

School policy must take in to account the benefits to be gained by appropriate use in school under the direction of the teacher.

2) Aims

The aim of this policy are to:

- Ensure personal safety
- Ensure security
- Acknowledge and support parents' rights to provide their children with a mobile phone and for the children to carry it to and from school.
- Recognise and endorse the right of all staff and pupils to teach and learn in an environment free from disruption
- Enhance learning and teaching

3) Implementation of the policy

This policy will be implemented through the use of meetings with parents/carers, teachers and students, but also throughout the academic year with guest speakers from the local authority and local police service to highlight the dangers, risks and legalities of mobile phone usage.

Valuable Equipment

South Lakes Academy Strongly recommend that valuable items of equipment are not brought to school. The school will not accept responsibility or liability for loss of, or damage to, valuable items which are brought to school. However, we recognise that pupils with the approval of their parents may wish to bring a mobile phone, MP3 player/headphones or other electronic device, to school. In this instance the following rules apply:

- **There must be no illegal photographing, videoing or recording**
 - The photographing, videoing or recording of a member of staff, other pupil or other person, without their permission, is unacceptable, illegal and therefore prohibited
 - It is also an offence to distribute the image or recording, to any other person by any means, e.g. Mobile phone, email, media representative, social networking site, etc.
 - Inappropriate material should not be accessed at any time. Inappropriate material which has been accessed out of school should not be brought into school or shared with others. Any pupil found to have done so will be subject to strong disciplinary action, including exclusion
 - Readmission of pupils will be considered only after a risk assessment has been drawn up. This will include a statement of the consequences of reoffending.
- **Emergency contact to and from parents should be made through the school unless permission is granted by the class teacher**
 - Pupils who feel unwell should inform a member of staff, who will then either call their parent/carers or grant permission to call parent/carers
 - In general, we ask that should parents wish to contact their children during school that they contact school direct or leave a message so that their child knows to contact them when it is convenient to do so.
- **Discipline procedures will apply**
 - Students whose phone use is becoming a distraction will be asked to put them away
 - Failure to do so will be dealt it as with any other incident where a pupil refuses to follow a reasonable instruction given to them by a member of staff
 - The general rule is that mobile phones will not be confiscated by staff
 - However, in very unusual circumstances (e.g. suspicion that inappropriate material has been accessed) it may be necessary for the head of centre to confiscate a mobile phone or other item. The item will be held securely until the young person's parent/carer comes into school to collect it. As part of an investigation, and with the parents permission, it may be necessary to examine the contents of the phone. Where appropriate the police will be involved.
 - If the offence is repeated, it may be necessary to ban the student from having the device in school at any time
- **Regulations for examinations must be followed**
 - It is strictly forbidden to take mobile phones or any digital audio device into the examination room
 - If pupils do so, the examinations board will consider this an attempt to cheat and the examination entry for that subject may be cancelled
 - Switching a phone of or taking a battery out will not be enough to avoid this sanction
 - Examination entry for other subjects may also be affected if the phone makes a noise and disrupts an exam
 - Parents who wish to contact pupils during exams should contact the school and speak to the examinations officer
- **Bullying by mobile phone or social networking sites will be dealt with in accordance with the South Lakes Academy Antibullying policy.**
 - The matter may also be reported to the police.

4) Communication

This policy has been formulated in consultation with staff, and will be published to the students, on the school website and be part of the enrolment process

5) Monitoring, evaluation and review

This policy will be reviewed as and when required by new legislation or annually

