

Easthampstead Park Community School

Mobile Phone Policy



To be read in conjunction with E-safety and Anti-bullying Policies

1. Background

1.1 Mobile phones and, in particular, the new generation of smart phones, such as the iPhone, now include many additional functions such as an integrated camera, video recording capability, instant messaging, mobile office applications and mobile access to the internet. These allow immediate access to email, searching for information on the internet and other functions such as access to social networking sites e.g. Facebook, twitter and blogging sites.

1.2 For many young people today the ownership of a mobile phone is considered a necessary and vital part of their social life. When used creatively and responsibly the smart phone has great potential to support a students' learning experiences.

2. Mobile phone in school

2.1 Bringing and having your phone in school is considered a privilege.

2.2 All students in Year 7 and Year 8 Discovery must hand in their mobile phone during am tutor as they are not permitted to have mobile phones in their possession.

2.3 Parents and students should be clear that misuse of mobile phones will not be tolerated.

2.4 In recent years we have had incidents of poor conduct where mobile phone use has been a feature. This has been particularly difficult to address if it is an element in bullying.

2.5 Bullying, intimidation and harassment are not new in society; however bullying using a mobile phone represents a new challenge for schools to manage.

2.6 The following are examples of misuse but are not exclusive. 'Misuse' will be at the discretion of the Headteacher:

- 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 such as on Facebook or YouTube
- bullying by text, image and email messaging
- The use of a mobile phone for 'sexting' (the deliberate taking and sending of provocative images or text 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
- *general disruption to learning caused by students accessing phones in lessons
- Students phoning parents immediately following an incident so that the ability of staff to deal with an incident is compromised
- Publishing photographs of vulnerable students, who may be on a child protection plan, where this may put them at additional risk.

3. Dealing with breaches

3.1 Misuse of the mobile phone will be dealt with using the same principles set out in the school behaviour policy, with the response being proportionate to the severity of the misuse.

3.2 Students are aware that serious misuse may lead to the confiscation of their mobile phone, communication with parents and the imposition of other sanctions up to and including exclusion from school. If the offence is serious it will be reported to the police.

3.3 There is a correct procedure to follow where a mobile phone has been confiscated and is not returned to the students at the end of a lesson. This will ensure that the confiscation is correctly recorded and that the phone is kept securely. See Para 7.

3.4 Where it is deemed necessary to examine the contents of a mobile phone this will be done by a designated member of staff.

3.5 The action will be properly recorded in case it later becomes evidence of criminal activity. The record will include the time, who was present and what is found.

4. Rules for the Acceptable Use of a mobile phone in school by students

4.1 Students are allowed to bring mobile phones into school in Destiny and EPCS 6. If they choose to do so it is on the understanding that they agree with the following limitations on its use, namely:

- Mobile phones must be switched off in all classes, corridors and other areas during teaching time. It is not acceptable for phones merely to be put on silent or pager mode. Teachers may determine the usage to support teaching and learning in KS4 and 5.
- The phone must be kept out of sight during lessons.
- Mobile phones must be 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.
- No students may take a mobile phone into a room or other area where examinations are being held.
- The security of the phone will remain the students' responsibility in all lessons including PE/gym lessons
- If asked to do so, content on the phone (e.g. messages, emails, pictures, videos, sound files) will be shown to a teacher

5. Unacceptable use

5.1 The school will consider any of the following to be unacceptable use of the mobile phone and a serious breach of the school's behaviour policy resulting in sanctions being taken.

- 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 a mobile phone outside school hours in such a way that it undermines the stability of the school and compromises its ability to fulfil the stated aim of providing 'a clear moral and ethical lead'.

6. Sanctions

6.1 Students and parents are notified that appropriate action will be taken against those who are in breach of the acceptable use guidelines, following the schools behaviour policy.

6.2 In addition:

- Students and their parents should be very clear that the school is within its rights to confiscate the phone where the guidelines have been breached.
- If a phone is confiscated, school will make it clear for how long this will be and the procedure to be followed for its return.

- Students 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's commits an act which causes serious harassment, alarm or distress to another students or member of staff the ultimate sanction may be permanent exclusion. School will consider the impact on the victim of the act in deciding the sanction.

7. Confiscation procedure

7.1 If a mobile phone is confiscated then:

- a. at the discretion of the teacher the mobile phone will be returned at the end of the lesson, *or*
- b. the students will be informed that the phone can be collected at the end of school day from the Headteacher or nominated senior member of staff
- c. the confiscation will be recorded in the school behaviour log for monitoring purposes
- d. school will ensure that confiscated equipment is stored in such a way that it is returned to the correct person
- e. in the case of repeated or serious misuse the phone will only be returned to a parent/carer who will be required to visit the school by appointment to collect the phone.

8. Removal of a phone licence

8.1 Where a student persistently breaches the expectations, following a clear warning, the Headteacher may impose an outright ban from bringing a mobile phone to school. This may be a fixed period or permanent ban. If your mobile phone licence is removed you will be allowed to bring it to school but you will need to hand in your phone to Raising Standards every day and collect it at the end of the school day.

9. Where the phone has been used for an unacceptable purpose

9.1 The Headteacher or a designated staff member will have the right to view files stored in confiscated equipment and if necessary seek the cooperation of parents in deleting any files which are in clear breach of these guidelines unless they are being preserved as evidence.

9.2 If required evidence of the offence or suspected offence will be preserved, preferably by confiscation of the device and keeping it secure or by taking photographs of the screen

9.3 School will consider whether an incident should be reported to the safeguarding team or police

9.4 The designated staff member should monitor repeat offences to see if there is any pattern in the perpetrator or the victim which needs further investigation.

Devised:	January 2018
Responsibility for Implementation and Review:	Deputy Headteacher Student Support Committee
Date of Next Review:	Spring 2019