



Mobile Phones in School Policy

Ranelagh School

Date reviewed by SLT	Autumn 1 2020
Date reviewed by Designated Governor	Autumn 1 2020
Date approved by Governing Body	Autumn 1 2020
Date of next review	Autumn 1 2023

Aim of this policy

- To communicate the school's position on mobile phones and all other internet connected devices in school and alternative means of communication during the school day
- To prevent unacceptable use of mobile phones, camera-phones and other recordings devices by students in school and thereby to protect students and the school's staff from inappropriate use of such technology in school.

Note: For the purposes of this policy, all references to 'mobile phones' should be taken to include camera phones, iPods, MP3, MP4 players and any similar devices, even those that do not incorporate communications technology.

Policy context

Whilst Ranelagh recognises that mobile phones are now very much part of everyday life, student safety and learning are paramount.

Although the Internet is undoubtedly a valuable learning resource, mobile phone use, including for access to the internet, email, access to social networking sites and recording sound and images, can be a major distraction to learning during a school day. Within school, the use of the school ICT systems provides an alternative, more controlled and safer means of enhancing learning through the use of such technology.

Students have no legitimate need to use a mobile phone at all during the school day.

Parents and students are reminded that mobile phones pose a potential threat in terms of street crime and police have been clear in discussions with the school that they support our policy of no mobile phones in school.

Statement

Mobile phones are not allowed in school unless there are very exceptional circumstances. In such circumstances, parents must contact the Headteacher. If permission is given, the mobile phone must be left with the School Office at the start of each day and collected at the end of each day.

Any student or parent needing to make urgent contact can do so through the appropriate system via the School Office. All very urgent messages are relayed immediately.

Schools' general power to discipline, as set out in Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a student's property as a disciplinary penalty, where reasonable to do so. If any student does bring a mobile phone into school, and it is seen by a member of staff, that member of staff will be required to confiscate it immediately and take it to the School Office for safe-keeping.

When a mobile phone is confiscated, the matter will be recorded on the student's behaviour log.

If any student refuses to hand over a mobile phone when requested to do so, the refusal will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

When a mobile phone has been confiscated, a parent/carer of the student will be expected to collect the student's mobile phone from Reception (during School Office opening hours) rather than the student himself/herself. Only in exceptional circumstances will the student be able to collect the phone himself/herself and then only with the permission of the Headteacher (or senior member of staff designated by the Headteacher).

A mobile phone may be retained for a period of time as a sanction. The period of time will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Headteacher (or senior member of staff designated by the Headteacher).

If a mobile phone has not been collected within 6 months of the date of confiscation and after the school has written to the student's parents notifying them of the school's intention to dispose of the mobile phone by a specified date if it is not collected, the mobile phone will be disposed of.

If a student brings a mobile phone into school and there is evidence that it has been used for taking photographs or filming in school, or there is evidence of inappropriate or indecent images stored on it or there is evidence of cyberbullying, then this will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter and further action will be taken. This will involve confiscation of the phone, contact with the parent/carer, appropriate sanctions applied and the Governing board may be informed.

If a member of staff finds a pornographic image, the possession of which constitutes a specified offence (i.e. it is extreme or child pornography), it must be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable.

Department for Education guidance (*Searching, Screening and Confiscation*, February 2014) stipulates that headteachers and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search students or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student may have a prohibited item or an item banned by the school rules. Prohibited items include pornographic images or any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence. The school will, therefore, exercise its right to search the content of a confiscated device where there is a reasonable suspicion that it may contain undesirable material, including those which promote pornography, violence or bullying.

As young adults, Sixth Form are permitted to bring mobile phones to school and to use them within the designated Sixth Form social area ONLY. If they use them outside this area, the same sanctions will apply unless they are being used in a lesson as specifically requested by a teacher.

Mobile phones must never be taken into examination rooms under any circumstances. Breach of this rule may lead to invalidation of that examination and, potentially, invalidation of other examinations.

The school will take no responsibility for any mobile phone on the school premises, including financial responsibility. The school will take all reasonable measures to keep confiscated items secure; but it is the responsibility of parents/students to ensure the mobile phone is not brought to school.

Other related policies and documents include

- Ethos of the school
- The Code of Conduct
- Our Statement against Bullying
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy

Dissemination

All staff, parents/carers, students and Governors will be reminded of this policy on an annual basis