

MOBILE PHONE CODE OF CONDUCT

Version: 2.0
 Approved: 16 July 2018
 Reviewed: 4 May 2021¹
 Next review: May 2024
 Co-ordinator: Tracey Savage

Rationale

Personal communication through mobile technologies is an everyday part of life, but such technologies need to be used effectively and appropriately. Personal safety is key to students and staff at Sandwich Technology School alongside a focus on engaging in learning. This code of conduct outlines the conditions upon which permission is granted to bring mobile phones into school.

Any reference to personal electronic devices includes: mobile phones, earphones, ipads, ipods, tablets or any similar device that uses the same technologies.

Purpose

This is a measure to support the well-being, social skills, academic performance and behaviour of students. As a school we are aware that students:

- display worrying addictive/attachment behaviour to their phones;
- are increasingly distracted by social media and mobile phone communication;
- are susceptible to harm through cyber bullying;
- are damaging their own social development through over-reliance on their phones rather than simply conversing with their friends

Through taking this stance we are giving the students respite from their electronic devices, which we hope will have numerous benefits.

Implementation

Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students will not be allowed to use their mobile phones in school at all during the school day, including lunchtimes or break times.

The Mobile Phone Code of Conduct also applies to students during twilight lessons, after school clubs, school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities, both on the school site and off site. During extended or residential trips students may have restricted access to their phones at the discretion of the lead teacher.

Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students are not permitted to access mobile phones or personal electronic devices from their arrival on school premises until the end of their school day, when they have left the school premises. Any mobile or electronic device that is brought into school must be switched off and kept out of sight in a school bag. Such devices must not be kept in students' pockets. **If devices are seen they will be subject to confiscation.**

Mobile phones are banned from all exams. Any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an exam will have their paper disqualified. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified.

Liability

Parents/carers should be aware that, 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.

¹ 'Sanctions' section revised to clarify the period of confiscation if it should overlap a weekend.

The school will not accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use. The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

Safeguarding

During the school day if a student needs to contact their parent/carer they should report to Student Reception who will help where appropriate.

Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, reception is the first point of contact and office staff can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way. Passing on messages through school reception also reduces the likelihood of disrupting lessons inadvertently. This also applies for clubs and activities that take place after school hours.

Sanctions

If a student breaches the Mobile Phone Code of Conduct **they will have their phone confiscated for a period of 24 hours** after which time parents are invited to collect them during normal, school office hours only (8.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Thursday and 8.00 am to 4.30 pm on a Friday during term time). We will not return phones directly to the students unless we have a written request to do so from the student's parent, in which case the phone will be returned to the student after **an extended period of 48 hours**. Should the period of confiscation end over the weekend the phone will be returned on the first working day back.

Parents/carers unable to collect the phone may nominate another adult to collect the phone on their behalf. Parents wishing to do this will need to contact the school office. They will be asked to identify who will collect the phone and provide a disclaimer to cover any issues that might occur once it is handed over to that person. School staff will ask to see proof of identity from anyone who is not a parent/carer who has come to collect a phone.

Students who refuse to hand over their phone can expect to be withdrawn from the usual lessons and isolated as a consequence of their defiance. Further sanctions can be applied in line with the school's behaviour policy should defiance or refusal to follow instructions continue.

Infringements of the Mobile Phone Code of Conduct may result in a ban on school trips or school activities.

Acceptable Uses

Students that have formally-approved access arrangements may bring their laptops to school for the purpose of completing school work. It is the parent/carer's responsibility to understand the capability of the machine and to ensure that it is not misused. If these devices are misused, sanctions will apply. Students must password protect the device and not share it with other students.

The school recognises that Sixth Form students (Key Stage 5) who are developing into young adults should be allowed to use digital devices. Sixth Form students may use mobile phones in the Sixth Form Common Room only, but will be encouraged to restrict this usage.

Unacceptable Uses

A reminder for students when not on school premises

Using mobile phones to bully or threaten other students is totally unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence, it is unacceptable regardless of whether consent was given. The school behaviour policy will be followed should a student be misusing technology in such a way out of school. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour.

It is forbidden for students to join together to target any student, individual or member of staff or to use their mobile phone to take videos/images of an individual in order to humiliate or mock. Sharing, sending or uploading images/videos to other students or individuals, or making them publicly available is strictly prohibited. The school behaviour policy will be followed should a student be misusing technology in such a way out of school. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour.

This also includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any student, individual or member of staff without their consent. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

It is unacceptable to take a picture of a member of staff without their permission. In the event that this happens the student will be asked and expected to delete those images, their phone will be confiscated and the school behaviour policy will be followed for misuse of technology.

Links to other policies/documents

- Confiscation of Items Guidelines
- Student Behaviour Management Policy