

Acceptable Use of Mobile Phone Policy



1. Rational

The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school administrators, teachers, pupils, and parents take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at schools. This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students.

1.2 St. Egwin's Middle School has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, pupils and parents guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.

1.3 Pupils, their parents or guardians must read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy before pupils are given permission to bring mobile phones to school.

1.4 The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities.

2. Rationale

2.1 Personal safety and security

St. Egwin's Middle School accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children walking to school alone or travelling alone on public transport. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently.

3. Responsibility

3.1 It is the responsibility of pupils who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.

3.2 The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or guardians.

3.3 Parents should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school.

3.4 Permission to have a mobile phone at school while under the school's supervision is dependent on parent/guardian permission being received.

Parents/guardians may revoke approval at any time.

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3.5 The teaching staff reserve the right to view the content of any child's mobile phone at any time in respect to issues regarding the safeguarding of children.

4. Acceptable Uses

4.1 Mobile phones should be switched off (when pupils arrive on the school site) and stored appropriately. Years 6&7 in the school office; year 8 in pupils' own locker. Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency during the school day, the school office remains the appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.

4.2 Pupils should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to friends and keeping a note of who they have given them to. This can help protect the pupil's number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice, text and picture messages.

4.3 Pupils are advised not to use their mobile phones as they walk to school, unless there is an emergency, as there have been traffic incidents involving pupils who are texting or talking on the phone and not paying full attention to their road use.

4.4 Pupils may use their phones to video and/or photograph if they have been given permission by a teacher who has received permission from the head/SLT to use them as part of a curricular activity.

5. Unacceptable Uses

5.1 Unless express permission is granted by a Senior member of staff, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos or use any other application during school time

5.2 Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour.

5.3 It is forbidden for students to "gang up" on another student and use their mobile phones to take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate that student and then send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website for public viewing. This also includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any student 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.

5.4 Mobile phones are not to be used or taken into toilets or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to their fellow pupils, staff or visitors to the school.

6. Theft or damage

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6.1 Pupils who hand in their phones should mark their mobile phone clearly with their names on the sticker provided.

6.2 Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school should NEVER leave it in their coat/bag when they arrive. To reduce the risk of theft during school hours, mobile phones will be kept by the class teacher.

6.3 Mobile phones that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to the office.

6.4 The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

6.5 The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

7. Inappropriate conduct

7.1 Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will be subject to the school's Behaviour Policy.

7.2 Pupils with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls. If this occurs during the school day, the pupil will be subject to the school's Behaviour Policy.

8. Sanctions

8.1 Students who infringe the rules set out in this document could face having their phones confiscated by teachers and their parents will be informed. Appropriate arrangements would then be made for the parents to collect the mobile phone.

8.2 Repeated infringements may result in the withdrawal of the agreement to allow the student to bring the mobile phone to school.

Links:

Behaviour Policy

Child Protection Policy

DATE: June 13th 2013

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