



WOODBIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1.** The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school administrators, teachers, students, parents and carers 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.** Woodbridge High School has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, students, parents and carers with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.
- 1.3.** Students, their parents or carers are expected to read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy before students bring mobile phones to school.
- 1.4.** The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school excursions and extra-curricular activities.
- 1.5.** The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to other electronic devices and associated accessories such as headphones and earphones

2. Rationale

- 2.1.** Woodbridge High School accepts that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. 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, but if used inappropriately or at the wrong time, mobile phones can be highly disruptive; the school therefore needs to limit their use at school and during school trips.

3. Responsibility

- 3.1.** It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines in this document.
- 3.2.** The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or carers. The school will accept no responsibility for the safekeeping of a mobile phone belonging to a student. During some activities, such as PE lessons, safe places may be provided for valuables. These cannot be guaranteed every lesson and responsibility for the safekeeping of valuables remains with students and their parents / carers at all times.
- 3.3.** Parents/carers should be aware if and when their child takes a mobile phone to school.
- 3.4.** Students in the 6th Form are responsible for keeping the school informed of their current mobile phone number as the fact that they are able to leave the site during the day means that there may be occasions where they need to be contacted directly. Other students are not asked to share their mobile phone number with the school.

4. Acceptable Uses

- 4.1.** Mobile phones should be switched off or in silent mode and kept out of sight during classroom lessons and while students are in the school building or around the site. This includes during break and lunchtimes and immediately after school. 6th Form students may use mobile phones in the 6th Form

areas only, and must keep these switched off or in silent mode and out of sight in other areas of the school. The school may designate other locations where the use of phones and earphones is permitted. Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.

4.2. The school recognises the value of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones and smartphones, e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, music and video playback, note taking applications etc. It is possible that teachers may wish to allow students to make use of these technologies to aid learning and teaching. On these occasions, students may use their mobile phones in the classroom when express permission has been given by the teacher.

4.3. In the event of an emergency, mobile phones may be used with the permission of a member of staff.

5. Unacceptable Uses and Inappropriate Conduct

5.1. Except as described in section 4, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send texts or instant messages, access the internet, take photos, or access any other application at any time during the school day.

5.2. The “Bluetooth” or near-field communication functions of a mobile phone must be switched off at all times and not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones.

5.3. Mobile phones must not disrupt classroom lessons with ringtones, music or beeping.

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

5.5. Students must not use their mobile phones to take videos or pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate another student and / or send the pictures to other students or upload them to a website for public viewing. This includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any student without their consent or knowledge. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

5.6. Mobile phones are not to be used in changing rooms or toilets or in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to students, staff or visitors to the school.

5.7. Mobile phones and other electronic devices must not be on the person of a student who is taking a public exam. The procedures for dealing with infringements of this rule are issued by the examination bodies and are available separately. Any student found using a mobile phone in an internal exam or assessment will be sanctioned appropriately.

6. Theft or damage

6.1. Students should mark their mobile phone clearly with their name if possible. They are encouraged to take advantage of police property marking schemes. It is good practice to take note of a mobile phone’s IMEI number. This can be used by the police if a mobile phone is lost or stolen.

6.2. Students who bring a mobile phone to school should leave it in their bag or pocket at all times. To reduce the risk of theft during school hours, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not ‘advertise’ they have them.

6.3. Mobile phones that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed in at one of the school offices.

- 6.4.** The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. Parents or carers who allow students to bring mobile phones to school must accept that staff cannot spend time investigating or searching for lost or stolen 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.
- 6.6.** It is strongly advised that students use passwords / PIN numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their passwords/ PIN numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords should not be shared.

7. Sanctions

- 7.1.** Students who infringe the rules set out in this document will have their mobile phone confiscated by staff.
- 7.2.** At first sight of a mobile phone around the school or in a lesson, a student will be reminded of the policy and asked to hand over the phone immediately. The student will be issued with a behaviour point. Parents / carers will be informed. The phone will be placed in a secure location in one of the school offices and returned at the end of the day. The incident will be recorded and appropriate further sanctions put in place if necessary. Students who refuse to hand over their phone will be subject to a more serious sanction.
- 7.3.** The school reserves the right to confiscate mobile phones for a longer period as determined by the school if they are causing a nuisance or being used inappropriately, as outlined above. If necessary, parents may be asked to be present at the return of a mobile phone once confiscated.
- 7.4.** As set out in the previous section, failure to heed to the rules set out in this document may result in an alleged incident being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent/carers would be notified immediately.

Policy Prepared by: Mr J. Clifton, Deputy Headteacher.

Approval: Approved by PDC on 1st November 2023 and Curriculum and Standards Committee on 7th November 2023.

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