

Woodchurch High School

A Church of England Academy



MOBILE PHONE/SMART DEVICE ACCEPTABLE USAGE POLICY DOCUMENT

Approved by the Curriculum Committee: Spring 2019

Approved by Full Governors: Spring 2019

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end"

Lamentations 3:22

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Smart watches are not permitted on school premises. This is because it is more difficult to store a smart watch safely on your person whereas a mobile phone can go in a pocket when deactivated.

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The widespread ownership of mobile phones and smart devices among young people requires that school administrators, teachers, support staff, pupils, parents and carers take steps to ensure that mobile phones and smart devices are used responsibly at schools. This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones and smart devices can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones and smart devices provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our pupils.
- 1.2. Woodchurch High School has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones/smart devices that provides teachers, pupils, parents and carers with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones/smart devices during school hours.
- 1.3. Pupils, their parents or carers 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/smart devices also applies to pupils during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities.

2. Rationale

2.1. Personal safety and security

Woodchurch 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.

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 carers.
- 3.3. Parents/carers 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 contingent on parent/guardian permission in the form of a signed copy of this policy. Parents/carers may revoke approval at any time.
- 3.5 Woodchurch High School retains the right to withdraw the right to bring such devices to school at any time to safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of the community.

4. Acceptable Uses

- 4.1. **Mobile phones should be switched off and kept out of sight during classroom lessons and while on the school premises including the outside environment.** Exceptions may be permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Such requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis and should be directed to the Headteacher, Ms R Phillips. 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. Should a pupil need to contact a parent, carer or other family member, they can do so in their PPL's office or at the main office if permission has been given by the PPL.
- 4.2. Mobile phones should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school.
- 4.3. 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.
- 4.4. The school recognises the importance of social media present in modern mobile phones e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, access to social media applications. Teachers may wish to utilise these functions to aid teaching and learning and pupils may have the opportunity to use their mobile phones in the classroom. On these occasions pupils may use their mobile phones in the classroom when express permission has been given by the teacher.

5. Unacceptable Uses

- 5.1. Unless express permission is granted, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages eg. access social media, take photos or use any other social media application during school lessons and other educational activities, such as assemblies. Mobile phones are only to be used in the event of an emergency and with permission of the Headteacher.
- 5.2. Mobile phones must not disrupt classroom lessons with ringtones, music or beeping.

- 5.3. Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other pupils is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour.
- 5.4. It is forbidden for pupils to “gang up” on another pupil and use their mobile phones to take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate that pupil and then send the pictures to other pupils or upload it to a website for public viewing. This also includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any pupil 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.
- 5.5. Mobile phones are not to be used or taken into changing rooms or toilets or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to their fellow pupils, staff or visitors to the school.
- 5.6. Should there be repeated disruptions to lessons caused by a mobile phone, the responsible pupil may face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Headteacher
- 5.7. Mobile telephones are not permitted on school trips. This is because pupils, when in their hotel rooms, or at other times, can:
 - Take images of pupils
 - Become involved in or become the victim of social media bullying and negativity
 - Have an invasion of their privacy
 - Become involved in transmitting video images without the permission of those involved

There is also a serious danger of accessing unfiltered internet through means by which we have no control. The school strictly controls what pupils can and cannot see using filtering. This is not available when mobile devices and public hot spots are used. Therefore, pupils could have access to inappropriate material without the knowledge of the staff responsible.

6. Theft or damage

- 6.1. Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school are advised to be careful where they keep it. To reduce the risk of theft during school hours, pupils who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not ‘advertise’ they have them. They can also be handed into their Pupil Progress Leader or Headteacher’s PA at the start of each day for safekeeping.
- 6.2. Mobile phones that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to the Pupil Services Office.
- 6.3. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.
- 6.4. The school accepts no responsibility for pupils who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

- 6.5. It is strongly advised that pupils use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other pupils, or if stolen). Pupils must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords may not be shared.
- 6.6. Lost and stolen mobile phones in the U.K. can be blocked across all networks making them virtually worthless because they cannot be used.

7. Inappropriate conduct

- 7.1. All mobile phones are to be handed into the Examinations Officer prior to exams. Any pupil/s caught using a mobile phone to cheat in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Headteacher and the examination board will be informed. Any mobile phone or smart watch that makes a noise during an examination, even in error, will be confiscated, the owner will be reported to the Headteacher and the examination board will be informed.
- 7.2. Any pupil who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Headteacher.
- 7.3. 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. Pupils using mobile phones to bully other pupils will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Headteacher.

[It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action as sanctioned by the Headteacher deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.]

8. Sanctions

- 8.1. Pupils who infringe the rules set out in this document could face having their phones confiscated by teachers.
- 8.2. On the first infringement of this policy the mobile phone would be confiscated by the member of staff and taken to a secure place within the Pupil Progress Leader's office, or to the office of the Headteacher's PA. The pupil will be able to collect the mobile phone at the end of the school day and a record will be made of the incident. A letter will also be sent to the parent/carer to inform them of the incident. The location and form of the secure place will be one deemed appropriate by the management team.
- 8.3. On the second infringement the mobile phone would be confiscated by the member of staff and taken to a secure place within the Pupil Progress Leader's office or the office of the Headteacher's PA. Parents will be notified and the pupil **will not be permitted** to collect the phone without a parent/carer present. **After the second infringement**

the school will withdraw the agreement to allow the pupil to bring the mobile telephone to school.

- 8.5. As set out in the previous section, failure to heed 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 or carer would be notified immediately.
- 8.6 The school reserves the right to prohibit a pupil bringing a mobile telephone or smart watch to school at any time to safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of the community.

WOODCHURCH HIGH SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONE/SMART DEVICES ACCEPTABLE USAGE

Parent / Carer Permission

I have read and understand the Mobile Phone/Smart Devices Acceptable Usage Policy about appropriate use of mobile phones at Woodchurch High School and I understand that this form will be kept on file at the school and that the details may be used (and shared with a third party, if necessary) to assist in identifying a phone should the need arise (e.g. if lost, or if the phone is being used inappropriately).

I give my child permission to carry a mobile phone to school and understand that my child will be responsible for ensuring that the mobile phone is used appropriately and correctly while under the school's supervision, as outlined in this document.

Parent/Carer name (print): _____

Parent/Carer signature: _____

Date: _____

Pupil name (print): _____ Form: _____

Mobile phone number: _____

Pupil signature: _____

Date _____

If you have any comments or suggestions, please write them below:
