



Policy for Students' Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones

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Chris WILLISHER

Ratified by Board of Governors

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school staff, students, parents and carers take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at school. 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 Priestlands School has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides staff, students, parents' and carers' guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.
- 1.3 Students, their parents or carers must read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.
- 1.4 The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school trips, camps and extra-curricular activities both on the school campus and off-site.

2 Rationale

- 2.1 The school recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well.
- 2.2 Priestlands 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 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.
- 2.3 Students are not required to have a mobile phone in school and we will support parents who make the decision that this is not necessary by ensuring that students are able to use school landlines to contact parents in an emergency. This policy does, however, recognise that the majority of our students do own a mobile phone.

3 Responsibility

- 3.1 It is each student's responsibility 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. It is incumbent upon parents to understand the capabilities of the phone and the potential use/misuse of those capabilities.
- 3.3 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. The school cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use.
- 3.4 Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains the first point of contact to ensure students are reached in a relevant and appropriate way.
- 3.5 Under JCQ regulations, mobile phones are banned from all examinations. Students MUST hand phones to invigilators. The school must report any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination and the likely consequence is that paper being disqualified and parents being asked to pay any associated costs. Such an incident may also result in all other exam papers being disqualified.
- 3.6 Parents, carers and students are reminded that calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

4. Curriculum links



- 4.1 During PSHCE time, the school will provide a programme of lessons designed to help students make informed decisions about their use of mobile phones.

5 Use of Phones by Students

- 5.1 Mobile phones must be switched off and kept out of sight during classroom lessons and while moving between lessons.
- 5.2 Mobile phones may not allowed be used in the classroom unless at direct request of staff. However, the school recognises the importance of the technologies present in modern mobile phones (e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, MP3 and MP4 playback, blogging, etc.). In some lessons staff may wish to use these functions to aid teaching and learning and students may have the opportunity to use their mobile phones in the classroom. The use of personal mobile phones in a lesson for a specific purpose does not mean blanket usage is then acceptable.
- 5.3 Staff will never give permission for students to listen to their own music in class (even through headphones).

6 Unacceptable Use

- 6.1 If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence it is unacceptable regardless of whether 'consent' was given. (Refer to the E-Safety and IT Policy.)
- 6.2 Using mobile phones to bully, harass and/or threaten another person is unacceptable. This includes engaging in personal attacks, harassing another person or posting private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated. Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary action. (It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.)
- 6.3 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 or member of staff without their consent. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person.
- 6.4 Mobile phones are not to be used in changing rooms or toilets or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to students, staff or visitors to the school.
- 6.5 Students must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading, racist or pornographic images. The transmission of such images is a criminal offence.
- 6.6 Similarly, 'sexting' – which is the sending of personal sexual imagery - is also a criminal offence.

7 Theft or damage

- 7.1 Students should mark their mobile phone clearly with their names.
- 7.2 Students who bring a mobile phone to school should leave it in their bag when they arrive. 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.
- 7.3 Mobile phones that are found in the school should be handed to the front office or the nearest member of staff.
- 7.4 The school accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.



- 7.5 It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin codes to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/pin code confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords must not be shared.
- 7.6 Lost and stolen mobile phones in the UK can be blocked across all networks making them virtually worthless because they cannot be used.

8 Student contact with parents/carers

- 8.1 Parents/carers are requested that in cases of emergency they contact the school office first so that we are aware of any potential issue and may make any necessary arrangements.
- 8.2 If a student is ill they **MUST** see Matron. The only way any arrangement with home can take place is through the school.
- 8.3 Students cannot phone home from their mobile to arrange to go home; neither should parents contact students directly to arrange to pick them up.

9 Sanctions

Informal

- 9.1 Students must give their phone to a member of staff if requested.

Formal

- 9.2 Students who infringe the rules set out in this document will face having their phones confiscated by teachers and taken to a secure place. Students will be able to collect the mobile phone at the end of the school day and a record will be made of the incident.
- 9.3 On the second infringement parents/carers may be asked to collect the phone from school and a record will be made of the incident.
- 9.4 Any further infringements of the mobile phone code of conduct may result in a ban on bringing a mobile phone to school.

