

# Mobile Phone Policy



Redbridge Community School

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## 1. Purpose

**1.1.** 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 can continue to be enjoyed by our students.

**1.2.** Redbridge Community School has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, 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 excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities both in school 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. Personal safety and security**

Our School accepts that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child, though parents must avoid contacting their child during school time unless it is an emergency. Parent/ carers should call main reception on 02380771381 to alert the school so they can ask 'on-call' their child. This will minimise disruption to learning.

## **3. Responsibility**

**3.1.** It is the responsibility of students 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. It is incumbent upon parents to understand the capabilities of the phone and the potential use/mis-use 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 most appropriate point of contact and 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.

## **4. Acceptable Uses**

**4.1.** Mobile phones should be switched off and handed to the teacher at the start of a lesson and be collected at the end. Devices may only be used if they are part of the lesson or to record homework or to access Google classroom.

**4.2.** Students are permitted to use their mobile phones before 8.40am, during first break (11:00 am – 11:20 am) and second break (12:20 pm – 12:45 pm). At 2.45pm students are free to use their mobile phones again. They should not use them during lesson changeover.

**4.3.** Mobile phones should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school.

**4.4.** Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to close friends. This can help protect the student's number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice, text and picture messages.

**4.5.** The school recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones. Teachers may wish to utilise these functions to aid teaching and learning and students may have the opportunity to use their mobile phones in the classroom. On these occasions students may use their mobile phones in the classroom when express permission has been given by the teacher. The use of personal mobile phones in one lesson for a specific purpose does not mean blanket usage is then acceptable.

## **5. Unacceptable Uses**

**5.1.** Unless express permission is granted, mobile phones should not be used during school lessons, assemblies or any other educational activity.

**5.2.** Students are not allowed to ring parents because they are in trouble, have a problem with another student or are unwell. The school considers this to undermine its systems and could result in a punishment.

**5.3.** Parents should not contact students by mobile phone during the day. Phone calls during lessons, by parents, are extremely disruptive (see section 2.2).

**5.4.** Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence it is unacceptable regardless of whether 'consent' was given.

**5.5.** 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, or send unlawful messages, pictures or videos to other students that are deemed criminal. Staff are permitted to use school recording devices in exceptional circumstances for breaches of our behaviour policy and criminal acts. This can then be used in evidence.

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

**5.7.** Should there be disruption to lessons caused by a mobile phone; the responsible student may face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Headteacher. This may include a mobile phone ban in school.

**5.8.** 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. The responsible student may face disciplinary actions, as sanctioned by the Headteacher.

## **6. Theft or damage**

**6.1.** Mobile phones that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to front office reception.

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

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

**6.4.** 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 password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords may not be shared.

**6.5.** It is advisable that phone trackers (e.g. Life 360) are used to locate lost or stolen phones.

## **7. Inappropriate conduct**

**7.1.** Mobile phones are banned from all examinations. Students are expected to hand phones to invigilators before entering the exam hall. Any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination will have that paper disqualified. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified. This is an exam board rule and as an examination centre we are obliged to follow this and JCQ will be notified.

**7.2.** Students with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person or post private information about another person. 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.]

**7.3.** 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. Similarly, 'sexting' – which is the sending of personal sexual imagery - is also a criminal offence.

## **8. Sanctions**

**8.1.** Headteacher's and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions.

**8.2.** Students who infringe the rules set out in this document could face having their phones confiscated by teachers. If the phone is being used inappropriately the student must give it to a teacher if requested.

**8.3.** Any infringements of the mobile phone code of conduct may result in a ban on bringing a mobile phone to school. Although the school reserves the right to ban mobile phones without any warnings, opportunities or chances because students do not have the legal right to bring phones into schools.

**8.4.** As set out in the previous section, failure to heed the rules set out in this document may result in an alleged incident (of a serious nature) being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent or carer would be notified immediately.