

Personal Electronic Devices Policy

2023/2024



Rationale

Educational research identifies a clear correlation between a young person's development and their use of electronic devices*.

Excessive screen time and unregulated use of such devices by children and adolescents can lead to potential negative impacts on physical and mental health, like sedentary behaviour, disrupted sleep, cyberbullying, and increased stress and anxiety. In addition, there is strong evidence that uncontrolled use during school hours could lead to distractions, hampering the learning process and academic performance.

After careful review and consultation, our aim is to limit the use of personal electronic devices in school. We aim to balance the benefits of connectivity and safety with the need to reduce the potential adverse effects. The goal is to minimise unnecessary and potentially harmful screen exposure while ensuring children can communicate with their parents or guardians during their commute to and from school.

As of September 1st 2023, use of electronic devices, in particular Mobile Phones will be limited to only the home-school journey.

*Electronic Devices includes but is not limited to Mobile Phones, Smart watches, Handheld entertainment systems (eg: games consoles) and Portable internet devices, e.g. tablets, iPads

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- ☐ DfE Current 'Keeping children safe in education' guidance
- ☐ DfE Current 'Searching, screening and confiscation' guidance
- ☐ The Data Protection Act 2018
- ☐ The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- ☐ The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019

Ownership and responsibility

Students are responsible for their own belongings. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing property that is lost, stolen or damaged either at school or travelling to and from school.

Students are responsible for replacing lost or damaged school property, including electronic devices.

Personal electronic devices

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to the following items:

- ☐ Mobile phones
- ☐ Smart devices such as watches
- ☐ Handheld entertainment systems, e.g. games consoles, mp3 players
- ☐ Portable internet devices, e.g. tablets, iPads

Expectations

The basic expectation can be summed up as “not seen, not heard, not taken”.

Between the hours of 08:00 and 15:30, personal electronic devices will always be switched off and kept out of sight on the school premises*. Phones must be kept either in students’ lockers or in their bags until 15:30 or until the student has left the premises.

If students are wearing smart watches they must be in "school mode" or "airplane" mode to remove distractions. Smart watches must only be used as a watch and not a communicating device.

If headphones are required for lessons such as Computer Science or Media, they must be wired and kept out of sight until students are directed by the teachers to use them. Students may not bring wireless devices, such as air pods, to school. They are not compatible with our equipment and too valuable to have in school.

* school premises are shown in Figure 1

Spot checks

Should the situation arise, students are required to comply with any request to check their mobile phone during an investigation, including unlocking the phone to facilitate a check of contents. All spot checks will be conducted in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Sanctions

In the **first** instance, when a device is confiscated, the student will be able to collect it after they have served a 30-minute same day detention. Devices will be given back after 15:45.

In the **second** instance, for a repeated violation of this policy, the student will be able to collect it after they have served a 60-minute same day detention. Devices will be given back after 16:15.

If there is a **third** instance, for a repeated violation of this policy, parent/carer will need to collect it after they have served a 60-minute same day detention. Devices will be given back after 16:15 and a conversation will be had with a senior member of staff.

Any following incident is deemed a persistent refusal to follow instructions and will result in the student no longer being able to have any devices on their person during the school day. It will need to be handed in to student services. It does not need to be the same device; it is the breach of rule that results in escalation.

Failure to hand over a phone or any other electronic device when requested to do so by any member of staff will result in an escalation in sanction.

Policy review

This policy is reviewed annually.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to members of staff, students and parents.

School Premises



Updates:

Dec 2023 – School Premises outline updated to remove the bike sheds