



**Ramsden Hall
Academy**



**Parallel
Learning
Trust**

**MOBILE PHONE POLICY
Ramsden Hall Academy**

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| Last Review Date | September 2018 | Review Period | 2 Yearly |
| Next Review Date | September 2020 | Owner | Emma Baker |

The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that the academy, parents and carers take steps to ensure that they are used responsibly at school.

Therefore this policy has been designed to ensure that potential issues involving the acceptable use of mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that such phones provide (e.g. increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students. This policy will provide teachers, students, parents and carers, guidelines and instructions for the appropriate and acceptable use of mobile phones.

Students and their parents or carers must read and understand the Policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.

The Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school trips, fixtures, residential and extended day activities.

1. Rationale

We recognise that mobiles are now an accepted part of everyday life and we need to embrace it as a form of communication but also recognise that it is vital to safeguard children too. Phones have been a useful tool in a culture of recording and reflecting on achievements and successes (recording images of a trip or a piece of successful work).

2. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.

The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or carers. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to understand the capabilities of the phone and the potential use/misuse of those capabilities.

Parents/carers should be aware that if their child takes a mobile phone to school it is not covered by academy insurance. The academy cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use. The academy will continue to provide a safe storage for students who wish to deposit their mobiles in the office for safe keeping for the duration of the day.

Students are responsible for keeping the academy informed of their current mobile phone including number to aid return if lost at school/residential.

Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the academy office remains the point of contact and staff will ensure that your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way.

3. Acceptable Uses

Mobile phones must be switched off and kept out of sight during lessons and while moving between lessons. Reminding a student to put a phone away in lesson times reduces the learning time.

Students may check their phones outside during 'free time'. Students should use soundless features such as text messaging, answering services, call diversion and vibration alert to receive important calls. Students may use their phones for entertainment when on long journeys in school transport at the discretion of the staff.

Mobile phones must be kept on silent at all times.

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

Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to close friends and keeping a note of who they have given them to. 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. Students should remember to use the resources at www.thinkyounow.co.uk to keep themselves safe when communicating digitally.

The academy recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, MP3 and MP4 playback, blogging etc. In the future teachers may wish to utilise these functions to aid teaching and learning and students and teachers 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 usage is then acceptable in all other lessons.

In line with good child protection and safeguarding practice it is expected that residential students will hand their phones in at night in order that staff on duty can lock them in a safe place until the morning when they will be returned to them.

4. Unacceptable Uses

Unless express permission is granted, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos or use any other application during school lessons or in the residential.

Mobile phones must not disrupt classroom lessons with ring tones, music or beeping. They should be turned off during lesson times.

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

It is forbidden for students to "gang up" on another student and use their mobile phones to take videos and pictures of acts to degrade 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 and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

The use of devices to record people (Sound/Video/Still images) without their knowledge is both illegal (under The Data Protection Act) and unacceptable within school.

5. Theft or damage

Students should mark their mobile phone clearly with their names/post codes.

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

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

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. Where possible students should use technology such as 'find my iPhone' for added security.

6. Inappropriate conduct

Mobile phones are prohibited from examination rooms. Students are expected to hand phones to invigilators before entering the exam. 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. See exam guidance www.jcq.org.uk.

Students 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. 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.]*

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. Students who are concerned about an image should speak to staff or report to CEOP via report form on our website. It is advised that parents and carers should continue to reinforce the importance about being selective with regards to the 'age appropriateness' of content accessed from digital media.

9. Consequences/Confiscation

Students who are failing to follow the Mobile Phone and Mobile Device guidelines will initially face having their phone confiscated and students may be asked to clear any inappropriate data from the device in front of a suitably qualified and experienced member

of staff. This will be returned at the end of the school day or if in the residential at the start of the next day. Should the student continue to ignore the guidelines their phone/mobile device will be confiscated until a parent/carer collects it. The student may then face a mobile device ban or more serious consequences.

Any concerns regarding inappropriate usage could be referred to the police or other appropriate authorities.

Mobile Phone: Parent/Carer Permission

I have read and understand the above information about appropriate use of mobile phones at Ramsden Hall School, Billericay site, 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 identify 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.

I understand that the school will not accept any responsibility for loss, damage or theft of a mobile phone.

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| Parent/carer name : | Signature of parent/carer: |
| Name of student: | Signature of student : |
| Mobile phone details: 1. Make and model number..... 2. Mobile phone number..... 3. Colour/description of phone..... This information may be used to help return lost property | |