WALTON LE DALE HIGH SCHOOL

**USE OF MOBILE PHONES IN SCHOOL (last updated Jan 2019)**

**Purpose**

The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school administrators, teachers, students, parents and carers take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly in school. This Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide.

Walton le Dale High School has established the following Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, parents and carers guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.

This Policy also applies to students during school excursions and extra-curricular activities.

**Personal safety and security**

Walton le Dale 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.

**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 / careers.

Parents/carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school.

**Acceptable use**

Mobile phones should be switched off and kept out of sight during classroom lessons and while in the school building. 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.

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

Students 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 student’s number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice, text and picture messages.

The school recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones, egg 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 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.

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 and other educational activities, such as assemblies. Mobile phones are only to be used in the event of an emergency and with permission from a member of staff.

Mobile phones must not disrupt classroom lessons with ring tones, music or bleeping.

Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour.

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 students, staff or visitors to the school.

**Theft or damage**

Mobile phones that are found in school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to the School Business Manager.

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

**Inappropriate conduct**

Any student caught using a mobile phone to cheat in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Headteacher.

Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Headteacher.

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 may face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Headteacher.

**Sanctions**

Students who infringe the rules set out in this document will face having their phones confiscated by teachers.

* On the first occasion, the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher and taken to the School Business Manager at break / lunchtime and placed within a secure place within the school office. The student will be able to collect their phone on the Friday at 3pm.
* If a student is caught on a second occasion using their phone, then this would be confiscated by the teacher and taken to the School Business Manager at break / lunchtime and then placed in a secure place within the school office. Students will not be allowed to collect their phone for a further week. Repeated offences will incur additional weeks of confiscation.
* Students will be able to retain their SIM card.
* Parents may personally collect their child’s phone at any time, but under no circumstances will it be handed to the student until the day specified.
* If a student refuses to hand over their phone, On Call will be used and the student may be excluded from school for refusing to comply with a reasonable instruction.

*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 is deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.*

The following summary has been provided (Jan 2019) for use with students:

USE OF MOBILE PHONES from January 2019

Students should not be using mobile phones:

1. at any time during the school day - in buildings including the canopy
2. when outside going between lessons outside the building especially after registrations, p1 & 2; p4 & 5.

USING AN ELECTRONIC DEVICE FOR CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES IN LESSONS

Any student who is found to have used any electronic device eg mobile phone, laptop or Smartwatch to send any form of message/meme/photo etc will have their phone confiscated from the time that the use is discovered until at least the following Friday and possibly for several weeks.

If the use has been to 'cause annoyance, inconvenience or anxiety to another', which is a criminal offence (after the Communications Act 2003), you might well have to face an Internal Isolation (1pm to 6pm) or a fixed period exclusion as well as having your phone confiscated.

January 2019