**Current position**

The school’s policy on mobile phones has, for many years, been that they are not allowed in school and that if they are seen they will be confiscated and only returned when a parent makes an arrangement to have them collected. This is usually through a written note.

Many parents want their children to have a mobile phone with them for their safety.

The governors have agreed that it is time to review this policy so that the school’s policy and what happens in practice are the same, and that parent views are taken into account.

In summary, the problems that mobile phones cause in school include:

Lessons are interrupted by phone/text messages.

On occasions students have text their parents to ask them to collect them because they are ill without speaking to any staff in school. Sometimes, students have received upsetting news (for example, the death of a family member) through a text leaving them distressed and without support from school.

In terms of safeguarding, it is rare, but very possible, that photographs and video clips can be taken of other students or staff and quickly loaded onto social networking sites via a student’s ‘smart phone’.

There is, of course an issue with cyber-bullying, and although this is sadly not uncommon outside of school, if it happened during the school day, we are expected to respond and react by parents.

**Policy**

1.      We strongly recommend that parents do not allow their children to bring mobile phones into school. A pupil who needs to contact home during the school day or at the end of the school day can do so through the school office, with the permission of the relevant Head of College.

2.      If parents feel it is important that their child has a phone with them, they may do so on condition that the phone is switched off and kept out of sight, in either the student’s pocket or bag, at all times when the student is on school premises.

3. When a student is seen with a mobile phone on school premises they will have it confiscated from them. It will be confiscated for a period of one week or until a parent comes into school to collect it. If a student’s phone cannot be seen but nevertheless is heard to ring or emit a text message alert sound whilst on school premises a member of staff will require the student to hand over the phone for confiscation, as above.

5. If a student is seen *using* a mobile phone, then in addition to having the phone confiscated they will be disciplined as appropriate. Depending on the nature of the use, this may range from deduction of “bede’s” points to withdrawal from lessons. In serious cases, such as using the phone to film in circumstances where it amounts to sexual misconduct or harassment of staff, the sanction may extend to exclusion from school and/or the involvement of the police.

6. The only exception to the prohibition of use of a mobile phone on school premises would be if a member of staff gives a student express permission to use his or her phone at a particular time and location, for example to allow a recording during a foreign language lesson for revision purposes.

7. The school will take no responsibility for any damage to, or loss of, a mobile phone unless it has been handed in during PE or an examination. A student can also hand their phone into reception for safekeeping at the start of the day.

Approved Summer 2011