

# BEECH HOUSE SCHOOL

## PUPIL MOBILE PHONE POLICY

### **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. This policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring that the benefits that mobile phones provide, such as increased safety, can be enjoyed by our students.

Beech House School has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provide students, parents and carers guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.

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.

The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies during school excursions and extra-curricular activities, both on the school premises and off-site. Mobile phones are not allowed on residential trips.

### **RATIONALE**

The staff recognise that many students and their families own a mobile phone a mobile phone. We also recognise that some parents and carers request that their child brings a mobile phone to school for safety and security reasons on the way to and from school to school.

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.

Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. The School is prepared to allow mobile phones on the premises, but only within the parameters of the policy as stated below.

### **AIMS**

To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones at Beech House School and to outline the procedures and processes of this policy.

### **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. There is also increasing concern about students 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 outside school hours.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

- It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines in this document.
- The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or carers. It is incumbent upon parents/carers to understand the capabilities of the phone and the potential use/misuse of those capabilities
- Parents/carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school it is assumed household insurance will provided the cover in the event of loss or damage. The School cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use.
- Parents/carers are reminded that in the case of emergency, the school office remaind the only point of contact. They can ensure that your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way.

## **GUIDELINES**

- Students remain responsible for their mobile phone
- There is no reason for a mobile phone to be switched on or used during the school day
- Students are reminded that in cases of emergency the school office is the only appropriate method to contact their parents/carers.
- For safeguarding reasons parents should not use their mobile phones on the school grounds.

## **UNACCEPTABLE USES**

- Mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos or use any other application during the school day or while on school premises
- The Bluetooth function of a mobile phone must be switched off at all times and not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones.
- Mobile phones are not to be used or taken out 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.
- Using mobile phones to bully or 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.
- It is forbidden for students to use their mobile phones to take videos or pictures of students or members of staff.
- It is forbidden to send videos or pictures of students or members of staff to other students or upload it to a website for public viewing.

## SANCTIONS

- Students who are seen using their mobile phone on school premises will have their phone confiscated by staff and secured within the school office.
- On the first infringement the mobile phone will be confiscated for two weeks.
- The mobile phone may be collected by a parent/carer before that time span, however further infringement will result in a one-day temporary exclusion.

## INAPPROPRIATE USE

A mobile phone will be used inappropriately if it:

- Disrupts or is likely to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school
- Threaten or is likely to threaten the safety or well being of any person; or is in breach of any law.

Inappropriate use of mobile phones will include students using them to bully, intimidate or otherwise harass other people through any SMT or text message, photographic, video or other data transfer available on the phone. This type of behaviour will be dealt with under the Behaviour Policy.

**It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. The school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.**

## INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT

- Mobile phones are banned from all examinations. Students **MUST** hand phones to their Form Tutor on the morning of any external examinations. The examination boards have a zero-tolerance policy if students are found in possession of mobile phones in an examination room. The School will notify the examination board if any student is found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination.
- Any student uses vulgar, derogatory or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary action.
- Students with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking or sending photos or video. Students doing so 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 or material. The transmission of such images is a criminal offence.