MOBILE PHONES POLICY

Policy Type:	**Academy Policy**
Approved By:	**Local Governing Body**
Date Approved by LGB:	**21/03/2024**
Review Date:	**21/03/2027**
Person Responsible:	**Principal**

Summary of Changes

The policy has been amended as follows.

Page Ref.	Section	Amendment	Date of Change
4	Preamble	Added Govt Guidance as per Govs comment	27/03/2024
Various	ALL	Major re-draft of text.	27/03/2024

General Policy Roles and Accountabilities

The Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) is accountable for all policies across its Academies. All policies, whether relating to an individual Academy or the whole Trust, will be written and implemented in line with our ethos and values as articulated in our prospectus. We are committed to the provision of high-quality education in the context of the Christian values of service, thankfulness and humility where individuals are valued, aspirations are high, hope is nurtured, and talents released.

A Scheme of Delegation for each Academy sets out the responsibilities of the Local Governing Body and Principal. The Principal of each Academy is responsible for the implementation of all policies of the Academy Trust.

All employees of the Academy Trust are subject to the Trust's policies.

Pre-Amble

This policy recognises the Academy's legal duties under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Equalities Act 2010, in respect of safeguarding and students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

It recognises the most recent Government guidance on phones in schools which is summarised as below

The new guidance states that schools should:
- *Develop a mobile phone policy that prohibits the use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video) throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.*
- *Consider and decide whether sixth-form students should be permitted to access their phones and prohibit the use of mobile phones by sixth-form in front of younger students.*
- *Develop and implement a policy to prohibit the use of mobile phones and other similar devices which reflects their school's individual contexts and needs.*

The guidance also suggests different ways in which schools should manage the guidance around mobile phones. The government has suggested implementing at least one of the following:

A) **No mobile phones on the school premises** – *A school may decide that no mobile phones should be brought to school by its pupils, and they must be left at home or with parents.*

B) **Mobile phone handed in on arrival** – *A school may decide that its pupils may require access to their mobile phones before and after school, but they do not want pupils to have access to their mobile phones throughout the school day. On entry to the school each pupil hands in their device to school staff and these are then collected at the end of the school day.*

C) **Mobile phones kept in secure location**, *which the pupil does not access throughout the school day – If mobile phones are brought to the school, at the start of the school day they should be put straight into lockers or similar secure storage and not be accessed by the pupil until the end of the day.*

D) **Never used, seen or heard** – *Some schools may choose to adopt a policy where pupils keep possession of their mobile phones only on the strict condition that they are never used, seen or heard – with consequences for breaching this.*

Aims:

- To set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents, and volunteers, as well as support other academy policies, especially those related to child protection and positive behaviour.
- To address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as: risks to child protection, impact on mental health, over reliance on mobile technology and distractions that can Impact on learning in the classroom.

Principles

The Open Academy provides stimulating, exciting learning in a calm, orderly environment. Students are expected to always act in a responsible and respectful manner.

The Academy provides a place for students where they feel safe, secure, and cared for. Students are offered continual guidance on appropriate behaviour, and they are treated in a fair and consistent way at all times. This applies to the approach to mobile devices.

Mobile Phones

We recognise that mobile phones can be an essential tool in keeping in touch with your child before and after the school day, so we operate a policy that does not usually ban them outright, however insists that if they are brought into school, they are kept switched off and in your child's locker or bag along with headphones or earpieces. Mobile

phones/headphones that are visible during the school day will be confiscated until the end of the day. Repeated failure to adhere to this policy may result in us banning a student from keeping their phone during the school day for a period of a half term.

If we see it. If we hear it. You lose it.

- Students will be provided with a reminder of our mobile phone policy if a device is seen or heard. The staff member can use their discretion as to whether they allow the student to switch it off and put it in their bag. If the students has no bag, or is generally uncompliant, we will at this point ask for their phone
- If a student has been asked to hand in their phone because they have not responded to a request to adhere to our policy, it is expected that students will hand their phone over to be stored in the academy safe. This will be returned at the end of the day.
- If a student fails to follow instructions to hand in their phone, students will be sanctioned with a detention and a phone call home will be made by the year team.
- Repeated failures to adhere to our policy (2 or 3 phone incidents) may result in a phone ban.
- Phone Bans are where we will ask that the student hands their phone in at the start of the Academy day at reception.
- Phone bans will be reviewed on a termly basis. A first ban will last 6 weeks, however, further failures to adhere to our policy may result in longer bans.
- Failure to comply with a phone ban could result in significant behaviour consequences including suspension
- Students who use their phones to threaten harass or harm members of the Open Academy community including staff students or parents, may be subject to a phone ban, with duration from 6 weeks upwards, depending upon the severity of the situation

Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy. Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

Staff are expected to model expected behaviour and set a good example to the students at this school. Therefore, it is inappropriate for staff to make or receive personal calls, or send texts, while students are present/during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones is be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room).

We recognise however that some staff, due to their role, may need frequent access to their pastoral or leadership mobile and so students may see phone use, which is entirely appropriate. Also, There may be rare circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members
- For emergencies in the classroom i.e. medical emergency

Students

Mobile Phones are not permitted to be used, seen, or heard during the school day.

- Phones and other electronic devices must be switched off and placed into lockers, bags or handed in to the relevant year team or reception if required.
- *If we see it. If we hear it. You lose it.* Staff members can use their discretion as to whether they allow the student to switch it off and put it in their bag. If the student has no bag or is generally uncompliant, they will at this point ask for their phone

You must comply with a request by a member of staff hand over your phone if it is used, seen, or heard.

- If a student has been asked to hand in their phone as they have not responded to a request to adhere to our policy, it is expected that students will hand their phone over to be stored in the academy safe.
- This will be returned at the end of the day.
- If a student fails to follow instructions to hand in their phone, students will be sanctioned with a detention and a phone call home will be made by the year team.
- Repeated failures to adhere to our policy (2 or 3 phone incidents) may result in a **phone ban**.
- **Phone Bans** are where we will ask that the student hands their phone in at the start of the Academy day at reception.
- Phone bans will be reviewed on a termly basis. A first ban will last up to 6 weeks, however, further failures to adhere to our policy may result in longer bans.
- Failure to comply with a phone ban could result in significant behaviour consequences including suspension
- **Phone bans** may be used immediately as a consequence for a one off misuse of a phone for example using a phone to threaten harass or disrupt. Students may be informed that they will be required to hand in their phone to reception each morning and collected at the end of the day, in order to keep themselves and others safe, whilst adhering to our policy.
- Misuse of phones may be considered serious breach of our positive behaviour policy, and may lead to all elements of our behaviour management process, including but not limited to detentions, phone bans, suspensions or in extreme situations consideration for permanent exclusion. If we suspect a crime has been committed we will always inform the police
- Note phones must be handed in on arrival at The truancy response room, Internal exclusion or time out

Once a phone or electronic device is handed in, it will be placed securely inside the academy safe and returned to students at 3pm or after detention. Students may decide to hand their phone in to their Head of Year, however, the year teams can take no responsibility for lost or damaged phones.

Safeguarding

To avoid potential safeguarding concerns, students should:

1. Avoid sharing contact details with people you do not know, and do not share other people's contact details without their consent.
2. Not share phone passwords or access codes with anyone else.
3. Not use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
4. Remember that phones are not permitted in any internal or external examination or test. Bringing a phone into the room can result in your exam being invalid.
5. Not use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
   a. Email
   b. Text/messaging apps
   c. Social media

Mobile phone searches

Schools also have power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a pupil's phone if you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

Searches can only be undertaken by members of staff designated by the Principal to do so.

These staff are:

- Members of the Leadership Team
- Members of the Pastoral Team
- Safer Schools Officer

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The academy takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:
- Sexting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone based on someone's
- ethnicity, religious beliefs, or sexual orientation.