

Guidance on the use of Mobile Phones/Technology

This guidance outlines the appropriate use of mobile phones on our school site, school buses and on school trips/activities. Students and parents/carers must read and understand the guidance below as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.

The Staff and Governors of STAGS recognise that many students and their families own a mobile phone. We also recognise that some parents/carers request that their child brings a mobile phone to school for safety and security reasons on the way to and from school. The school recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday adult 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.

Guidance

- It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document
- It is incumbent upon parents to understand the capabilities of their students phone, and the potential use/misuse of those capabilities
- In general, students should not bring mobile phones or other valuable items to school, as they can be easily lost, broken or stolen. Parents/carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school it is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss, theft or damage. The school cannot accept responsibility for any loss, theft, or damage costs incurred due to its use or possession in school
- There are no reasons why a student needs to have in their possession or use a mobile phone during the school day. 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 relevant way
- If mobile phones are brought into school by students they should not be used between the hours of 8.35am and 3.10pm. This includes **both** break and lunchtime. The phone should be switched off and kept in student **lockers locked** (using a padlock) during the day. If for any reason this is not possible (e.g. lost locker key, late to school) the mobile phone should be switched off and handed into the Student Support Officer or at Student Reception, where it will be kept in a lockable cupboard and collected at the end of the day. Please note that even this is no guarantee against loss or theft
- 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 must not be shared. Students should not use their mobile phone as an internet 'hotspot' for other users
- The procedures applying to the inappropriate use and security of mobile phones, apply equally to the inappropriate use of iPads or tablets, smart watches, portable computer games, iPods and similar devices. Students are permitted to use laptops in school, during lessons only, for the purposes of education. This is entirely at the discretion of the class teacher
- Sixth Form students are allowed to bring their mobile phones into school but they may only be used in the Sixth Form Centre. Students must not use hotspot for any reason whilst on school premises.
- If a Sixth former requires to use their own mobile device in a lesson then they must be logged onto the school Wifi whilst using the phone and its usage will be under the supervision of the class teacher. Students may only use their own mobile device in a lesson when directed to do so by their teacher, otherwise mobile devices must be in bags turned off
- The Department for Education are in support of schools confiscating mobile phones and issuing disciplinary action towards misuse of mobile phones during the school day
- As mobile phones are a prohibited item during the school day the school is also able to search students for this item. The school follows guidance from Searching, Screening and Confiscation in schools by the Department of Education

Inappropriate Use

Generally, a mobile phone will be deemed to have been used inappropriately if it; disrupts or is likely to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school day, threatens or is likely to threaten the safety or well-being of any person or is used illegally.

- Using mobile phones to bully and 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 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
- It is forbidden for students to use their mobile phones to take videos and/or pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate another student/ staff member, 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. 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 fellow students, staff or visitors to the school
- It is illegal to photograph another person without their consent. Students who do this must accept that there are legal consequences for this
- In order to avoid the accidental photographing of students, students are not permitted to take photographs of other students (including selfies) whilst on the school site, school activities or buses, en route to and from school
- 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
- Mobile phones are banned from all examinations. Students MUST hand phones to invigilators before entering the exam hall. The examination boards have a zero tolerance policy if students are found in possession of mobile phones in the examination hall. The school will notify the examination board if any student is found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination

Sanctions

- If mobile phones are seen or heard during the school day they will be confiscated until the end of the day and a C4 issued in line with the school behaviour policy
- It is unacceptable to take a picture of any student or member of staff without their permission. It is unacceptable to post any picture of a member of staff on the internet/ social media without permission of that person. In the event that this happens the student will be sanctioned and asked, and expected, to delete those images
- The school reserves the right to take action if a student is involved in an incident of inappropriate behaviour, when a student is out of school and where they involve membership of the school community (e.g. cyber-bullying, use of images or personal information)
- In the event that an investigation into an incident is needed the school will expect students to co-operate and allow their phone to be accessed. A failure to cooperate will be considered an obstruction of justice
- In addition to sanctions in school, actions involving the misuse of mobile phones could result in police intervention

Parents/Carers/Visitors

- For safeguarding reasons parents/carers are asked not to use cameras on phones to take images on the school grounds
- Parents should not place images of other children taken at school on social media sites without permission from the parents involved