

Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy - SMG (Jan 22)

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To allow teaching and learning to take place
- To maintain school discipline and behaviour
- To reduce potential conflict situations

The School Day

We have not implemented an outright ban of mobile phones or electronic devices (such as tablet computers, kindles and so on). We are aware that students have phones for emergency reasons but have preferred a “No See, No Hear” approach. It is required that mobile phones/electronic devices are switched off during the school day (8.30am -2.55pm).

The only exceptions to this are when, with staff permission:

- a device is also a camera and the student has to take a picture of their work for coursework purposes
- the student uses the device as an e-reader during the literacy reading session
- Students have been asked to use an app in class to support learning (the app will be age appropriate, free to download and notice given in advance of the lesson where it is to be used
- It forms part of access arrangements agreed with the IL department.

If a mobile phone/electronic device is seen or heard in school (including break and lunch time) then the item will be confiscated and put in a secure place in the school office until a parent/carer is able to come in to collect it. Staff will not be able to look after mobile phones/electronic devices.

On a number of occasions in lessons when a mobile phone has gone off, the caller has been a parent contacting their child. If a parent/carer needs to contact their child then they must phone the school office. The message will then be passed on to the child. If a student needs to phone home, then they can use the pay phone in reception or in emergencies, they can use the school phone.

There have been circumstances where a student, following an incident, has contacted a parent/carer during the school day using their mobile phone. The parent/carer has then come straight into school demanding to see a member of staff. Very often, the school has not been aware of any issue at this point or has been in the process of investigating it prior to contacting the parent/carer. We wish to work in partnership with parents but a parent/carer coming into school and demanding to see someone straightaway is not acceptable. Any parent/carer who comes into school during the school day following mobile phone contact with their child will be asked to leave the premises and to phone the school to make an appointment. The student’s mobile phone will also be confiscated as it has been used during the school day.

Sixth Form students are allowed to use their mobile phones in their Common Room but nowhere else in the school. Any confiscated Sixth Form mobile phone will be returned by the Head of Sixth Form.

Mobile phones/electronic devices (other than calculators) must never be taken into public examinations. The school will provide secure storage for these items during the examination.

If there is a whole school emergency which may cause the school to close then students will be allowed to use their mobile phones to contact a parent/carer and to rearrange transport.

School Trips

Students are able to take mobile phones to help with communication if travel arrangements are changed at short notice.

The student's mobile phone should not be used otherwise as one of the aims of residential trips is to help the student to become more independent. For residential visits, parents/carers will be given the school mobile phone number which the group leader will have and any contact with the trip should be through this number.

Other electronic devices must not be taken on day trips.

Other electronic devices may be taken on residential trips with the Trip Leader's prior permission to help with the journey. Parents/carers/students must be aware that it is highly unlikely that secure storage for such devices will be available at any centre/hotel/hostel and that staff will not be able to look after them. As they would not be stored securely they would not be covered by the trip insurance and so are taken completely at the student's own risk.

General

Mobile phones/electronic devices have many positive uses. However, they can also be abused, for example, the unsuitable use of a mobile phone or other electronic device would include:

- taking photographs or making recordings (other than where authorised by a teacher for academic purposes)
- Sending sexually explicit photographs, videos or messages to another person (sexting)
- placing photographs or recordings on the internet (e.g. on social networking sites) without the permission of those in the photograph
- any activity connected with text / cyber-bullying
- gaining access to inappropriate internet sites.

These are not acceptable at John Colet. If a member of the staff of the school has any suspicion that a mobile phone/electronic device has unsuitable material stored on it (this does not cover illegal material), students will be required to hand over the phone to a member of staff and, from September 2010, the content looked at (only in the United Kingdom and not on overseas trips as covered by the Education Act 2010). In such instances the student concerned will be dealt with accordingly. In some cases, the Police may become involved.

Where the material on a mobile phone/electronic device may be illegal then the device will be confiscated, the contents will not be looked at by staff with the Police contacted. The device will remain confiscated until Police advice is given to the school.

Parents/carers need to be aware that mobile phones/electronic devices are not covered by school or school trip insurance. Any item brought into school is at the student's own risk.