

Mobile Phones in College

Adapted from
Cambridgeshire County Council
*Guidelines for
Students and Parents*

Updated
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Advice on Safe Use of Mobiles

Key safety points for all students:

- keep your security code or PIN number private;
- don't give out your number or friends' numbers to people you don't know well, especially in Instant Messenger or Chat Rooms;
- if you get texts which upset you, don't reply but keep a record and inform your parent/carer; serious cases can be reported to the police;
- if you receive an unpleasant or embarrassing image or text, do not forward it to others;
- distributing sexual or violent images of other young people is contrary to the College's discipline code and could be illegal;
- avoid taking pictures of your friends while in College (and ask always permission anyway);
- even if you have a good reason for taking a photo, think before sending it on; once it is sent, you have lost control of it and it could be misused by others.

Further information. www.kidsmart.org.uk

Benefit

- students may feel more confident knowing they can make contact with someone in an emergency – this does *not* include when they are in lessons or when misconduct is being dealt with by staff.

Disadvantages

- mobiles are valuable and can be lost, stolen or damaged; given the College's advice that expensive personal items of all kinds should not be brought into school, any investigation into loss or theft is undertaken as an act of goodwill;
- students can be bullied by text messaging or silent phone calls;
- mobiles can be used to communicate inappropriate material;
- mobile phones and text messages can be used to make inappropriate contact with young people.

Note on Misuse

- mobiles should never be used to ask parents to come into College in the working day without the permission of a member of staff; failure to follow this instruction may lead to disciplinary action.

School Policy and Practice

- **Students must keep phones switched off and out of sight in lessons and in the College building;**
- any exception to the above must be as a result of the direct and specific permission of a member of staff;
- in exceptional circumstances, such as a family emergency, students should seek staff permission to use their phone;
- students who ignore this policy and use a mobile on school premises without permission may be required to hand over their phone to a member of staff for collection later; on occasion, parents may be requested to collect it;
- if a member of the staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone has unsuitable material stored on it, the student will be required to hand over the phone and parents will be asked to collect it from a senior member of staff. If there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile may relate to a criminal offence, the phone may be passed to the police for further investigation; parents will need to recover the phone directly from the police in such circumstances;
- mobiles (and all other valuable items) remain the responsibility of the student at all times; the only form of insurance may be through parents' home contents insurance; the College cannot assist with financial loss.

Failure on the part of a student to comply with the above guidelines may result in disciplinary action up to and including (permanent) exclusion. The penalty imposed by examination boards for use of a mobile phone during a public examination can be disqualification.

Parents should be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to students having a mobile phone in terms of personal safety there are also several associated risks. These include potential theft, bullying and inappropriate contact.

Thank you for your co-operation.

