

## ICT - Parent / Carer Acceptable Use Agreement

Digital technologies have become integral to the lives of children and young people, both within and outside school. These technologies provide powerful tools which open up new exciting opportunities for everyone. They can stimulate discussion, promote creativity and promote awareness of context to enhance effective learning. Young people should have an entitlement to safe internet access at all times. However, it is important to raise awareness to both students and parents about the potential hazards which arise from the misuse of technology.

### This Acceptable Use Policy is intended to ensure:

- that young people will be responsible users and stay safe while using the internet and other communications technologies for educational, personal and recreational use;
- that Academy systems and users are protected from accidental or deliberate misuse that could put the security of the systems and users at risk;
- that parents and carers are aware of the importance of e-safety and are involved in the education and guidance of young people with regard to their on-line behaviour.

The Partnership will endeavour to ensure that students have good access to digital technologies to enhance their learning and will, in return, expect students to agree to be responsible users. This document outlines the expectations of the **Student Acceptable Use Agreement** so that parents / carers will be aware of the Partnership's expectations of the young people in their care within each Academy. Parents are requested to read the information below to show their support of the Partnership in this important aspect of its work.

Unless we hear otherwise, your son / daughter will automatically have access to the internet and to ICT systems at the appropriate Academy.

*Please note, as part of this process, your son/daughter will be asked to sign up to an Acceptable Use Agreement (AUA) in lessons and will receive e-safety education to help them understand the importance of safe use of technology and the internet both in and out of school. Every student is taught about social responsibility and to consider the longer-term impact of actions and consequences in a digital age.*

*If you do have further concerns or do not wish your child to sign up to the AUA or be part of this process, you should contact the Academy directly. Otherwise it will be assumed that you are happy with these arrangements.*

Please note, every reasonable precaution is taken, including monitoring and filtering systems, to ensure that young people will be safe when they use the internet and ICT systems. However, it is important to note that the Partnership cannot ultimately be held responsible for the nature and content of materials accessed on the internet and using mobile technologies.

### Monitoring & Security

The ICT systems are monitored for safety purposes (filtering and dedicated internet sites). In the event of a possible breach of the Acceptable Use Policy, it is possible to trace the user's activity back on the system but the day-to-day activity of users is not checked in real time (for privacy reasons).

The Academies ask you to help monitor your child's use of technology, encourage your child to adopt safe use of the internet and digital technologies at home and inform the Academy if you have concerns over your child's e-safety.

### Use of Digital / Video Images

The use of digital / video images plays an important part in learning activities. Students and members of staff may use digital cameras to record evidence of activities both in and out of lessons for use in presentations in subsequent lessons.

Images may also be used to celebrate success through publication in newsletters, on the Academy websites and occasionally in the public media. Please see the SNLP policy on use of images.

The Partnership will comply with the Data Protection Act and request parents / carers permission before taking images of members of the Academies. We will also ensure that when images are published the young people cannot be identified by the use of their names.

In accordance with guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office, parents / carers are welcome to take videos and digital images of their children at Academy events for their own personal use (as such use is not covered by the Data Protection Act). To respect everyone's privacy and in some cases protection, these images should not be published / made publicly available on social networking sites, nor should parents / carers comment on any activities involving other *students* in the digital / video images.

Also, the Academies will make your son/daughter aware of the dangers around sharing digital images on the internet and the importance of protecting their digital footprint so that inappropriate actions do not have longer-term consequences.

## Use of Cloud Systems & the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment)

The academy uses various programmes, Apps and other virtual learning tools (Virtual Learning Environment or VLE) to support your child's learning. This permission form describes the tools and pupil / student responsibilities for using these services.

The following services are available to each student and hosted securely within the Academies or by Cambridgeshire ICT providers:

- **Mail** - an individual email account for Academy use managed by the Academy concerned;
- **Calendar** - an individual calendar providing the ability to organise schedules, daily activities, and assignments;
- **Docs** - a word processing, spread sheet, drawing, and presentation toolset that is very similar to Microsoft Office ;
- **VLE** - an individual and collaborative website which hosts homework, resources and access to collaborative work in a secure controlled environment.

Using the VLE, students collaboratively create, edit and share files and websites for Academy-related projects and communicate via email with other students and members of staff. These services are entirely online and available 24/7 from any Internet-connected computer. Examples of student use include showcasing class projects, building an electronic portfolio of Academy learning experiences, and working in small groups on presentations to share with others.

The Partnership believes that use of the VLE is the safest way to use technology as it is secure and safe and significantly adds to your child's educational experience.

## Use of Biometric Systems

The Partnership uses biometric systems (fingerprint technologies) to identify children for access, attendance recording, charging, library lending etc. Please note, this system does not record or store fingerprints in the conventional sense but is converted into digital format which can only be read by certain Academy systems (cashless catering and attendance). Under the "Protection of Freedoms" legislation the Academy will seek permission from a parent or carer.

Biometric technologies have certain advantages over other automatic identification systems as students do not need to remember to bring anything with them so nothing can be lost, such as a swipe card.

The Partnership has carried out a privacy impact assessment and is confident that the use of such technologies is effective and justified in an Academy context.

No complete images of fingerprints are stored and the original image cannot be reconstructed from the data; it is not possible for example, to recreate a pupil's fingerprint or even the image of a fingerprint from what is in effect a string of numbers.

If you are unsure about the use of fingerprint technology or have concerns you should contact the student's Academy directly.

## Safe Use of Mobile 'Phones and other portable devices

With the changes in the use and availability of technology, some students may wish to bring 'phones or other devices into the Academies to use to enhance their learning. It is important to note that the use of personal mobile devices are not essential and no student will be disadvantaged if he/she does not have one readily available. As such, whilst the use of personal devices is not discouraged, it not encouraged either. *It remains a personal choice taking into account the risks and benefits that such devices bring.*

**Acceptable** use of mobile phones and personal devices might include the following:

- carrying out research;
- accessing the Academy VLE;
- responding to emails.

Unless the use of mobile phones or personal devices are an integral part of the lesson (and permission is given by the teacher), then the use of devices is prohibited. Some sixth form students may wish to use such technologies during their none-contact study periods.

**Unacceptable** use of mobile phones and personal devices includes:

- accepting or making phone calls during the Academy day (including break and lunch);
- using devices to scroll or access information when walking along between lessons (not paying attention to others);
- using the devices with ear phones (to listen to music or watch video) as this may cause a student not to hear a fire alarm;
- sending texts or other personal messages during the Academy day;
- sending inappropriate video or images.

It is important to note that there are certain issues which need to be highlighted:

- devices or mobiles remain the responsibility of the student/user;
- devices are not covered for loss or damage by the Academy insurance schemes (as they are not compulsory or required for your child's learning);
- devices must be used appropriately; this means:
  - they must abide by the Academy acceptable use policy;
  - in some lessons it may be inappropriate to use devices and students may be asked not to use them;
  - devices which are allowed to join the Academy bring your own device (BYOD) network can browse the internet securely but will not have full functionality in order to protect the security and integrity of the network and other users' data (virus attack and hacking).

## The use of Mobile Phones

Please note the Academies discourage the use of mobile phones during the school day. If you need to contact your child in the event of an emergency you should do so via Reception in the conventional way. Parents should not communicate with their child during lessons.

Mobile phones may be taken from students by teaching staff if used inappropriately, to be returned at the end of the day. Mobile phone use is not permitted in corridors or classrooms.

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 Academies' discipline

- code and could be illegal;
- avoid taking pictures of your friends while in the Academy (and always ask 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.

### **Why allow the use of mobile phones?**

The advantages include:

- 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.

The disadvantages of mobiles are:

- they are valuable and can be lost, stolen or damaged;
- 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.

### **Notes on Misuse**

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

### **Mobile Phone Policy and Practice**

1. Students must keep phones switched off and out of sight in lessons and in the Academy buildings.
2. Any exception to rule number 1 must be as a result of the direct and specific permission of a member of staff.
3. In exceptional circumstances, such as a family emergency, students should seek staff permission to use their phone;
4. Students who ignore this policy and use a mobile 'phone 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.
5. If a member of 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 (SLT). 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.
6. Parents will need to recover the phone directly from the police in such circumstances.
7. 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 Academies 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 possession or 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 mobile 'phones or other portable devices in terms of personal safety or accessibility to information, there are also several associated risks. These include potential theft, bullying and inappropriate contact or access, or spread of inappropriate materials.

Thank you for your co-operation.