



Co-op Academy
Failsworth

Use of Mobile Phones Policy

Issue 2

Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy (Students)

1. Purpose

1.1. The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that academy administrators, teachers, students, parents and carers take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at the academy. This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students.

1.2. Co-op Academy Failsworth has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, students, parents and carers guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during academy hours.

1.3. Students, their parents or carers must read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to the academy.

1.4. The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during academy excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities both on the academy campus and off-site.

2. Rationale

2.1. The academy recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well.

2.2. Personal safety and security

Our academy accepts that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to the academy. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently.

3. Responsibility

3.1. It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to the academy to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.

3.2. The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or carers. It is incumbent upon parents to understand the capabilities of the phone and the potential use/mis-use of those capabilities.

3.3. Parents/carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to the academy. It is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss or damage. The academy cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use.

3.4. Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the academy office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way. Passing on messages through the academy reception also reduces the likelihood of disrupting lessons inadvertently. **Students should not be contacted directly.**

4. Acceptable Uses

4.1. Mobile phones should be switched off and kept out of sight during classroom lessons and lesson changeovers unless directed by a member of staff to enhance teaching and learning. Phones must be turned off during all internal and external examinations. Parents/carers are requested that in cases of emergency they contact the academy first so we are aware of any potential issue and may make the necessary arrangements. Likewise, we expect that if an incident occurs, students do not contact home immediately. The academy will inform parents in the first instance if necessary with a balanced view of the event.

4.2. Headphones must not be visible or in use during lesson times or lesson changeovers.

4.3. While on academy premises at break and lunchtime only, students should use soundless features such as text messaging, answering services, call diversion and vibration alert to receive important calls.

4.4. Mobile phones should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the academy (see below).

4.5. Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to close friends and keeping a note of who they have given them to. This can help protect the student's number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice, text and picture messages.

4.6. The academy recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, MP3 and MP4 playback, blogging etc. In the future teachers may wish to utilise these functions to aid teaching and learning and pupils may have the opportunity to use their mobile phones in the classroom. On these occasions pupils may use their mobile phones in the classroom when express permission has been given by the teacher. The use of personal mobile phones in one lesson for a specific purpose does not mean blanket usage is then acceptable.

4.7. Students must not give their passwords/phone access to other students.

5. Unacceptable Uses

5.1. Unless express permission is granted, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos or use any other application during academy lessons and other educational activities, such as assemblies.

5.2. The Bluetooth function of a mobile phone must be switched off at all times and not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones.

5.3. Mobile phones must not disrupt classroom lessons with ring tones, music or beeping. They should be turned off during lesson times.

5.4. 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.

5.5. It is forbidden for students to "gang up" on another student and use their mobile phones to take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate that student 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. 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.

5.6. Mobile phones are not to be used in changing rooms or toilets or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to their fellow students, staff or visitors to the academy.

5.7. Should there be disruption to lessons caused by a mobile phone, the responsible student may face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Headteacher. This may include a mobile phone ban in the academy.

5.8. It is unacceptable to take a picture or film images of a member of staff without their permission. In the event that this happens the student will be asked and expected to delete those images and the necessary sanction applied.

5.9. There should be no use of the camera function on a phone during academy time, unless specifically instructed to by a member of staff.

6. Theft or damage

6.1. Students should mark their mobile phone clearly with their names.

6.2. Students who bring a mobile phone to the academy should keep it in a safe place. To reduce the risk of theft on journey to and from the academy, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not 'advertise' they have them.

6.3. Mobile phones that are found in the academy and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to Pupil Services.

6.4. The academy accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

6.5. The academy accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from the academy.

6.6. It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (eg. by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords may not be shared.

7. Inappropriate conduct

7.1. Mobile phones are banned from all examinations. Students are expected to hand phones to invigilators before entering the exam hall, or store them at the back of the exam hall, switched off. Any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination will have that paper disqualified. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified. The exam board will be notified.

7.2. Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary action.

7.3. Students with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls. Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary action. *[It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the academy may consider it appropriate to involve the police.]*

7.4. 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.

7.5 The promotion of banned or restricted substances, items and anti-social behaviour via mobile communication will be sanctioned by the academy. This may include isolations, behaviour placements and fixed term exclusions.

8. Sanctions

8.1. Students who infringe the rules set out in this document could face having their phones confiscated by teachers. If the phone is being used during lesson time the student must give it to a teacher and it will be returned at the end of the day by the behaviour office. If there is a refusal to hand the phone will be confiscated for 5 working days and mark the envelope with an 'A'. Parents/carers may collect the phone during this time period if requested but the academy requests the phone does not return to the academy within the 5 day period.

8.2. Any further infringements of the mobile phone code of conduct may result in a ban on bringing a mobile phone to the academy.

8.3. As set out in the previous section, failure to heed the rules set out in this document may result in an alleged incident – of a serious nature - being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent or carer would be notified immediately.

8.4 Serious incidents or persistent misuse of mobile phones may lead to behaviour sanctions, including fixed term exclusions, behaviour placements and permanent exclusion.

