



SECKFORD FOUNDATION
FREE SCHOOLS TRUST
“Providing a foundation for life”

Curriculum and Pastoral Review
Student mobile phone policy

On the Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones:

The focus of this paper is to ensure that all three schools within the Trust have a clear understanding and the protocols they are required to follow when following the SFFST Policy on Mobile Phones and other electronic devices’.

Recent feedback from staff, students and parent/carers has highlighted the need for us to review and ensure that all schools in the SFFST have a consistent message on the way that we respond to the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices in our schools.

Mobile phones and, in particular, the new generation of smart phones, now include many additional functions such as an integrated camera, video recording capability, instant messaging, mobile office applications and constant access to the internet. These allow immediate access to email, searching for information on the internet and other functions such as access to social networking sites e.g. Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and blogging sites. For many young people today the ownership of a mobile phone is considered a necessary and vital part of their social life. When used creatively and responsibly the smart phone has great potential to support a student’s learning experiences. However, recent incidents and research has also highlighted the impact that these devices can have on a student’s concentration and focus in lessons. This along with the way in which these devices have been used to bully, intimidate and harass are not new in society; and will not be tolerated in our schools.

Therefore from Thursday 6 September 2018, the following acceptable use policy will be in place across all schools in the SFFST:

Principles:

- The purpose of this policy is to prevent unacceptable use of mobile phones, “smart watches”, tablets etc. by students, and thereby to ensure that all students are fully engaged and concentrating on their learning at all times and to protect the School, students and staff from undesirable material, filming, intimidation or harassment.
- The School strongly advises that mobile phones should not be brought into school at all.
- Students have no legitimate need to use a mobile phone during the school day.
- The School accepts that there may be particular circumstances in which a parent wishes their son / daughter to have a mobile phone for their journey to and from school. Where parents or students need to contact each other during the school day, they should do so only through the School’s telephone system (via the school Office) and not via student mobile phones.
- Where a mobile phone is brought into school, it is entirely at the student’s and parent’s own risk. The School accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of any phone, mp3 player or other mobile device brought into school.

- Mobile phones and devices which are brought into school must be turned off (not placed on silent) and stored out of sight immediately the student arrives at the school gate. They must remain turned off and out of sight during the school day.
- Any student caught filming another person (and/or uploading images or video onto the Internet) will have their phone confiscated. It will be treated as a serious and unacceptable disciplinary matter.
- The School reserves the right to search the content of a confiscated device where there is a reasonable suspicion that it may contain undesirable material, including those which promote pornography, violence or bullying.
- If a mobile phone is seen by a member of staff, that member of staff will be required to confiscate it immediately, complete a B1 and pass the phone to the Student Pastoral Team for secure storage as soon as possible.
- The phone will be kept in secure storage and returned to the student at the end of the School day.
- A repeat offence will lead to confiscation of the phone which will require the collection of the mobile phone by parents who will be invited to meet with the Pastoral Support Team. During this meeting, parents will be reminded of school policy and informed of the next stage, should the phone be confiscated a second time. The phone will also be checked for any inappropriate material.
- If there is a further confiscation the phone will be kept in secure storage for six school weeks and parents will then be invited to a meeting with the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Pastoral.
- If a student refuses to hand over their mobile phone, the student will be placed into internal isolation with the Pastoral Support Team.

In Summary:

If a student's mobile phone is seen or heard anywhere on the school grounds it will be confiscated **immediately** and a B1 issued. Confiscated items will normally be returned at the end of the school day; however a repeat incident will mean that the phone **will be confiscated and parent/carers will be required to collect the phone and meet with the Head of Pastoral.**

If a student hesitates in handing over a confiscated item, they will be internally isolated with the Pastoral Team. If they refuse to hand it over or if they pretend that it was not theirs, then parent/carers will be required to collect the phone and meet with the Head of Pastoral.

To avoid confiscations students should **not** bring mobile phones and electronic devices to school. **Students must ensure that they turn off their phone at all other times.**

If the device goes off accidentally, or is seen on the school site it will be confiscated **immediately**. Please note that SIM cards will only be returned at the end of the confiscation period.

David Lees
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