

ELECTRONIC MOBILE DEVICE POLICY



KING EDWARD VI ASTON SCHOOL

Educational excellence for our City

Responsible Board	Curriculum and Welfare Committee
Policy Officer	S Hall
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1. Definition of Electronic Mobile Devices

For the purposes of this policy, 'Electronic Mobile Devices' means any of the following: mobile phones, smartphones, personal laptops/netbooks, iPads / tablets, iPods, mobile gaming devices, digital cameras, smart glasses etc.

2. Purpose

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

King Edward VI Aston School has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile devices that provides teachers, students and parents guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile devices during school hours.

Students and their parents or carers must read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile devices into school.

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

3. Rationale

Students travel to our school from all over Birmingham and the surrounding area. This means that students are often travelling for long periods of time and over long distances each day and it is perfectly understandable that parents would wish to be able to stay in contact with their sons as a result. We acknowledge that providing a child with a mobile device gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently during their journey to and from school.

The school also recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted and ever increasing part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well and safely.

4. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile devices to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.

The decision to provide a mobile device to their son should be made by parents or carers. It is incumbent upon parents to understand the capabilities of the device and the potential use/misuse of those capabilities.

Parents should be aware that if their son takes a mobile device to school, it is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss or damage. The school cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use. It may therefore be prudent for students only to bring in mobile devices that are strictly necessary, and consider carrying cheaper mobile phones, in the interests of both cost and security.

Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school reception remains a vital, effective and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way. Passing on messages through school reception also reduces the likelihood of disrupting lessons inadvertently, and ensures that staff are aware of any situations arising in school, allowing us to support the student.

5. Acceptable Use

Mobile devices should be switched off and kept out of sight between 8.40-3.35. When the bell goes, mobile devices should be switched off. Students may use mobile devices outside of these times, outside of school buildings or in the canteen only; however, this is subject to change without notice at the discretion of SLT.

Parents are requested that in cases of emergency they contact the school so we are aware of any potential issue and may make the necessary arrangements.

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.

There are times when it may be acceptable to use a mobile device in school. SLT retain the right to adapt these acceptable times as necessary. The times for acceptable use will be solely at the discretion of staff and for that one situation only.

6. Unacceptable Use

Unless express permission is granted by a member of staff, mobile devices should not be used during the school day (8.40-3.35) - to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos, play games or use any other application. This applies during school hours and during other educational activities.

Mobile devices used before school (until 8.40) and after the school day (after 3.35), should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school (see below).

Mobile devices must not disrupt classroom lessons with ring tones, music or beeping. They should be on silent or turned off during the school day. If a lesson is disrupted, the device may be confiscated for at least the duration of the lesson, a behaviour point will be issued, and other sanctions may also apply in accordance with the School Behaviour Policy.

Should there be more than one disruption to lessons caused by the same student's mobile device, the responsible student may face further disciplinary actions.

Using mobile devices 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.

It is forbidden for students to "gang up" on another student and use their mobile devices to take videos and pictures of acts which may denigrate and humiliate that student and/or then send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website for public viewing. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile device to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

Mobile devices are not to be used any way that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to fellow students, staff or visitors to the school.

It is completely unacceptable to take a picture or video of a member of staff or any student without their permission, as is recording video or audio during lessons. The school rules also state that it is unacceptable to take pictures of any student or staff member while in school, while representing the school (any school trip or fixture) or on the school bus – this is to protect any student or staff member from any form of harassment and to prevent any images from being posted online or on social media.

Mobile devices are banned from all examinations. Students must place mobile devices in their bags or lockers before entering the school. Any student found in possession of a mobile device during an examination may have that paper disqualified, as determined by the examination board. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified, potentially for a number of years.

Students must ensure that files stored on their devices 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.

For Health and Safety reasons students must not charge mobile devices in school with chargers that have been brought in from home.

7. Theft or Damage

To reduce the risk of theft, students who carry mobile devices are advised to keep them well concealed and not 'advertise' they have them.

Mobile devices that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to the Main Reception in the new building.

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

All students who bring a mobile phone into school should have a location App loaded onto their phones (e.g. "Where's my iPhone") to aid in its recovery if it is lost.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile devices. Lost and stolen mobile phones in the U.K. can be blocked across all networks making them virtually worthless because they cannot be used. The School will provide information upon request to assist students in understanding how to block their phones.

8. Sanctions

Misuse of mobile devices will be dealt with, depending on the offence, in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, E-Safety Policy or a combination of all three.

The School has the right to, and will when appropriate, confiscate and search mobile devices where there is a reasonable suspicion that they may contain undesirable materials including those that promote pornography, violence or bullying, or have been used to disrupt teaching or break school rules.

Students who infringe the rules set out in this document could face having their devices confiscated by teachers. If the device is being used inappropriately the student must give it to a teacher if requested:

- a) For a minor offence the device may be confiscated and returned to the student either at the end of the lesson or at the end of the school day, at the discretion of the member of staff.

The phone will be kept in a locked drawer/office and the member of staff will specify where and when the student should collect their phone.

- b) If the incident is more serious the device may be given to the student's Head of Year or a member of the SLT, for the incident to be investigated further. The mobile device may be collected at the end of the school day or parents will be contacted if this is not to be the case.

- c) Heads of Year and members of the SLT may, at their discretion, confiscate mobile phones for longer than the end of the school day and require parents to collect them, depending on the offence.

Repeated infringements of this mobile device code of conduct may result in a ban on bringing mobile devices into school.

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 would be notified immediately.

9. Related Policies

School Behaviour Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Care and Control Policy

E-Safety Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Safeguarding and Child protection Policy