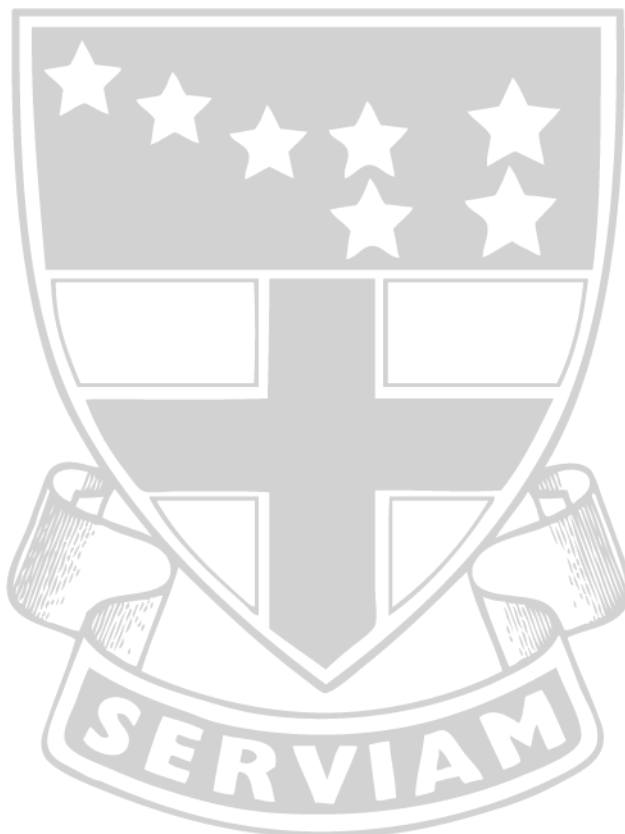# MOBILE DEVICE POLICY

Date of Review: May 2021

Date of Next Review: May 2023

Together we will safeguard your children – our pupils

Mobile Device Policy

Definition :A mobile device is any device which has the capability in school to link to the internet allowing the user to communicate via social media applications

Whilst students are not banned from bringing mobile devices into school, under no circumstances will the school tolerate the disruption of teaching and learning, good behaviour or social order by the use of mobile devices

Rule: whilst in school or in the vicinity of the school (duty areas for staff) no mobile device should be visible or audible.

All mobile devices should be switched off and hidden away in bags for the entirety of the school day including break and lunchtimes.

Any device that is used to take photos or videos inside school without permission will be treated as a breach of the mobile device policy.

Sanction

If students are caught using devices or if a mobile device is seen or heard by staff it will be confiscated and handed to the Headteacher.

The mobile phone will only be returned to the registered parent by the Headteacher in a meeting to discuss with parents their support for the school rules.

Parents can determine the length of confiscation by attending the school to meet the Headteacher at their conveneince.

Devices must be handed over in their entirety. This includes SIM cards.

Refusal to hand over a mobile device is failing to follow the instructions of the Headteacher and will, after confiscation, be dealt with under the normal disciplinary procedures of the school.

<u>The presence of mobile devices.</u>

This policy now states the circumstances under which mobile devices will be confiscated. It is important for parents to understand not only that they are responsible for ensuring their daughter follows this rule but also the circumstances under which a device can and will be confiscated.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of circumstance under which confiscation will occur:

- Any use of a device (either seen or reported) on school premises.

- The presence of a device indicated by an audio sound (of phone call or text or other notification) on school premises.

- The use of a device outside (but in the vicinity of) the school <u>whilst staff are on duty</u> <u>before or after the school day</u>.

- Any pastoral issue that arises in the school that is directly attributed to the use of a mobile device

Sixth Form
Sixth Form students are allowed to bring mobile devices to school, as they have reached an age of maturity which has proven over years of experience to negate the vast majority of factors leading to the banning of mobile devices.

Sixth Form students are to demonstrate prudence in their use of phones in school, not using it on corridors and in sight of main school students, never charging their device at the expense of the school and only using their device in lessons at the express permission and agreement of their teacher. Sixth Form students are encouraged to follow the Sixth Form twitter site for information and are encouraged to form social media study groups as this has proven to benefit the attainment of Sixth Form students.

Police Support
Whilst the rules for mobile devices have changed our role and responsibility in educating and preventing the misuse of social media by students remains an important role in the life of the school. To that end the school will be continuing its substantial work on child protection related to social media and fully utilising the school's Police Liaison Officer in cases where social media use raises a concern.

It is important for students and parents to understand both the supportive and legal role of the SPLO and as such their role begins in serious cases firstly to warn the "offender". However, if the behaviour continues they may decide to prosecute under the Protection of Harassment Act 1997, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 or the Malicious Communications Act 1998. This will result in a Criminal Bureau Record being created which will stay with your child for their lifetime.

When is an offence committed?

- Protection of Harassment Act, 1997 – an offence is committed by any person who causes alarm, harassment or distress to another person
- Malicious Communications Act, 1988 – an offence is committed when, by using any communication technology, the information sent is threatening, abusive or malicious.
- Sexual Offences Act, 2003 – an offence is committed when sending any image that may be indecent in its nature; includes explicit pornography, child pornography or offensive images that someone finds unacceptable because of the indecent nature portrayed.

Parents

Our role of education is equally important for parents who are often unknowing and unwilling partners in social media problems. With the ever improving technologies matched with ever improving desires from children to own them parents are often the victim of pressure from their daughter to purchase phones and other devices without sadly taking the correct precautions to ensure that those devices do not end up causing severe challenges to the nature of family life. The following advice is something that all parents should heed:

Parental Support (guidance from CEOP - Child Exploitation and Online Protection)

Privacy Settings - Most social networking sites, like Facebook, now give your child a lot of control over what they share and who they share it with. Through a site's 'privacy settings' you are able to control:

Who can search for you – this means that when people search your name on a site, your profile does not come up.

Who sees what – this means that you can control the information you share, like your photos or 'wall' posts. You can usually restrict this to friends only, friends of friends, certain groups of friends, or everyone. We would recommend that for young people it is restricted to friends only.

Who can post information about you - Some sites enable others to 'tag' photos of you or share other information about you, like your location. Many sites enable you to restrict people's ability to do this.

It is important that you stay up-to-date with the privacy settings that your child uses and help them stay in control of their profile. For more information about privacy settings in Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/help/privacy

Parental Controls - As a parent or carer it can be difficult to monitor what your child is up to online. Most parents and carers trust their children online, but it can be easy for a child to stumble across things that might upset or disturb them.

Filtering and moderation packages are a good way to stop the majority of inappropriate and harmful content coming into your home. They are a tool to help you set and change online boundaries in line with your child's development.

There are some great packages out there, some are free and some come at a cost. Make sure you get one that suits your family's needs and budget.

How can this help?
Every parental control package is different, but most provide services such as:

Filtering – content to restrict access to particular sites, such as pornographic websites.

Time limits – restrict the amount of time your child can be online, or set periods of time where your child can access certain sites.

Monitoring – where you are informed of certain sites that your child is attempting to gain access to.

Reporting – where you are provided with information about what sites your child has used.

Where do I get them?
There are three main levels for applying parental controls.

Internet Service Providers (ISPs). These are the organisations that pipe the internet to your home (like Virgin Media, Talk Talk, Sky and BT). All of the major ISPs provide parental control packages. These can allow you to apply controls across all of the devices that access the internet through your home connection – such as laptops or games consoles.

Devices that connect to the internet. Most computers, mobiles and games consoles now come with parental controls that can be applied. For example, within Windows and the Mac operating systems, there are parental controls that can be set for individual devices.

Software. There are a wide range of packages available to buy or sometimes download for free – always look for reputable companies and check out reviews online.

Does this make my child safe?
Parental controls will never make the internet 100% 'safe'. They should not be used as a substitute for communicating safety messages to your child. Make sure that you talk to your

child about their behaviour online and remember, your home is not the only place they will be accessing the internet! (look at the navigation bar).

Never ask your children to set these settings.

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