

Mobile Device Policy

Students

Policy By:	Mrs Holly Briggs	June 2024
Consultation by:	SLT	June 2024
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Mobile Device Policy - Students

The Henry Beaufort School recognises that the use of mobile devices (eg smartphones, smart watches) form part of everyday life for most people. When referring to mobile devices in this policy, it includes smart phones, smart watches, iPads/tablets, airpods or any mobile device that has the facility to send/receive messages or calls, use the internet, take pictures or recordings.

This policy has been created in partnership with local secondary and primary schools as part of a wider collaboration on safeguarding.

There is no need for students to carry a mobile phone/device in order to fully participate in school life. Home learning should be recorded in Student Handbooks and is recorded on Arbor by subject teachers. This is typically accessed outside of school hours. If students need to access this at school, it can be done via school PCs.

Carrying a mobile device in school is a privilege that can be withdrawn at any time. The purpose of this policy is to define acceptable standards of behaviour and conduct in relation to the use of mobile devices by all students.

The school does not accept liability or responsibility for devices brought on site.

The policy is not exhaustive of all eventualities but will be applied in accordance with the principles of the policy and at the professional discretion of adults in school.

Rationale

Unfortunately, across the country there have been instances where children and young people have been unsafe, so this policy is in place to protect all students whilst in school. Schools do not have the ability to limit children's access to material that is done through their own device and through mobile phone networks.

The situations reported nationally have included:

- Inappropriate content being accessed via a child's own internet connectivity and device.
- Extremist material being accessed via a child's own internet connectivity and device.
- Use of mobile devices for taking inappropriate images.
- Students taking pictures or videos of others – including adults – against their wishes or knowledge.
- The creation of memes, distorting of images and publishing online.
- Using images of other students for the purpose of humiliation bullying via social media.
- Inappropriately sharing personal data online.

The removal of access to mobile devices for students during the school day creates a safer environment where students are protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media. Furthermore, since students are not permitted to use their phones during the school day, they should not feel compelled to be checking for messages from friends who, similarly, should be following the expectations of the school.

Outside of these harmful behaviours, research shows that *"incoming notifications or the mere proximity of a mobile device can be a distraction, leading to students losing their attention from the task at hand"* (UNESCO education report, 2023) and that young people are distracted unnecessarily which can lead to disruption and diversion. By removing these distractions, we enable students to be *"fully present and engaged"* (DfE guidance "Mobile Phones in School", February 2024).

Behaviour that would be unacceptable in person is also unacceptable online including with mobile devices. This policy works in conjunction with other school policies.

- There is *no requirement or expectation* for students at The Henry Beaufort School to have any mobile device to engage with learning during the school day.
- Where the policy states, students are permitted to bring mobile devices.

The School's policy for the use of mobile phones/smart watches is in accordance with DfE Guidance 'Mobile Phones in Schools' (DfE, 2024) and, in the interests of ensuring that learning is not interrupted or compromised by the use of a mobile device.

Specific and further details can also be found in other policy documents including; Online Safety, Anti-bullying, Exams, Safeguarding and Child Protection.

The school supports parents/carers in taking the decision for their child not to have a mobile device or, to limit its use, through this policy.

If students are carrying mobile phones (or similar devices), they must be:

- Switched-off from 8.25am – 2.55pm (school day).
- Not seen on site.
- Not used at any time when on the school site.

By permitting their child to carry a mobile device, parents agree to support this policy.

Students who follow the school's expectations on the use of mobile devices when on site will be permitted to carry them in school. The school reserves the right to rescind this permission where expectations are not followed or, as part of a consequence, to other non-compliance with the school's behaviour policy.

Students' responsibilities

- Students are responsible for the security of any mobile device that is bought into school. The Henry Beaufort School does not accept any responsibility for their loss, theft or damage. The school will also not accept responsibility for any adverse effects on health caused using such devices, whether potential or actual.
- Any mobile device that is bought in to school must be switched off and stored in students' bag between 8.25am and 2.55pm. Any smart watch should be set not to receive messages or and must never be used as a device for recording.
- If a student needs to contact home, this must be done through main reception, the school's welfare officer or with support from a Head/Assistant Head of Year.
- The school will not respond to parental requests received in response to contact from their child during the school day where the student has not used the correct means to make contact or followed the correct process in school for resolving difficulties.

Exceptions to this will be pre-agreed with parents/carers as part of reasonable adjustments for supporting students with SEND.

- Any mobile phone must be kept out of sight – including at break and lunchtimes.
- Mobile devices must never be taken into an examination room, or into an area where an exam is taking place in accordance with JCQ regulations.
- If a user of a mobile device receives any form of communication that could cause offence to themselves or others, be harassing in nature or menacing, students should report it to an adult in school immediately.
- If a student is found to have used their device during the school day without permission from an adult in school, a consequence will be applied.

It is a criminal offence under Section 43 of the Telecommunications Act 1984 and the Malicious Communications Act 1988 to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. The school will involve the police should such an action occur either between students or students towards adults.

Parental responsibilities

- If a student needs to contact home, this can be done via main reception, the school's welfare officer or with support from a Head/Assistant Head of Year.
- If a parent needs to get an urgent message to their child during the day (8.25am to 2.55pm), please do not use your child's mobile phone but instead, contact the school office on admin@staff.beaufort.hants.sch.uk or 01962 880073
- By allowing their child to carry a device to school, parents are agreeing to support this policy in practice.

Unacceptable use

The Henry Beaufort School considers the following to be examples of unacceptable use of a mobile device and a serious breach of the school's behaviour policy:

- Bullying, intimidating or harassing any member of the school community by text, email, social media or social media messaging.
- Photographing or filming adults or other students without their knowledge or permission
- Photographing or filming in toilets, changing rooms or similar areas of incidents on the school site.
- Posting photos, images and footage on social media, which puts the school into disrepute.
- Refusing to turn off or hand over mobile device at the request of an adult in school
- Using a mobile device in a way that undermines the good functioning of the school e.g. meeting up with peers, asking to leave lessons for the toilet and instead using a device or meeting with friends etc.
- Using a device to contact others during the school day as this causes disruption to teaching and learning.
- Using a device to contact parents/carers instead of through the usual routes of support for all students in school.

Consequences

Parents will be contacted if there has been a breach of the policy. Consequences will be given in response to the breach and be proportionate to the severity of the behaviour. Students are

aware that unacceptable behaviour involving a mobile device will result in confiscation of the device, communication with parents/carers along with any other consequence deemed necessary.

- The school is within its rights to confiscate a mobile device if the school's policy has not been followed and by allowing their child to carry a device to school, parents are agreeing with this policy in practice.
- If a mobile device is confiscated for the third time, parents are required to collect it from school at end of the day.
- Students and parents must be aware that if a mobile device has been used in any way linked to suspected criminal activity, then the police will be informed immediately.

If a student uses a mobile device to cause alarm, distress or any form of harassment towards another student or adult within the school community then this may lead to a permanent exclusion. The impact on the victim will always be considered.

Confiscation Procedure

If a mobile device is confiscated during the school day, then it will be returned at the end of the school day at 2.55pm. The student will be told that it can be collected from Main Reception, where it will be stored and locked away in the school safe for security. The confiscation will be recorded on Arbor. A process is in place to ensure that the device is returned to the correct person.

If there are repeated instances where a mobile device is confiscated due to a student not following the expectations, then it will be necessary for a parent/carer to collect the device in person, every third confiscation.

A serious misuse of a device may lead to an extended ban on bringing a mobile device into school, which will be at the discretion of the Headteacher. Where it is needed for travel to and from school an arrangement will be made such that this is possible, or parents will be required to provide a device that can only facilitate phone calls or text messaging that can be handed to reception on arrival and collected at the end of the day.

Safeguarding

Where there is belief that a device forms part of a wider safeguarding concern then these devices will be confiscated, and the above procedure followed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed immediately. Parents will be informed that the device has been confiscated. If it is believed that a device may contain images or information that may be of a criminal nature or endangering the safety of a student or adult, then the device will not be returned to the student or parent until directed by the police. Any issue relating to safeguarding or potential safeguarding concern will be referred to Children's Services and the police.

Reasonable Adjustments

In a limited number of cases, a reasonable adjustment to this policy may be applied through an agreement between parents/carers and the school. In such cases, these will be recorded on a child's medical care plan and/or through their SEND notes and Student Passport:

- A child using a mobile device to monitor diabetes

- A child using a mobile device to support a specific learning need as recorded through the SEND register.

On occasion, students may be permitted to carry a mobile device on a school trip. This will be communicated as part of the arrangements for the event.

Use of Devices for Curriculum

Students may sometimes be permitted to use their mobile device as part of a learning activity. In such circumstances, expectations around safe use will be made clear to students by class teachers and if a student does not have their own device, provision will be made for an alternative by the school.

Further information

[Technology in education: GEM Report 2023 | Global Education Monitoring Report \(unesco.org\)](#)

[Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Linked Policies

Exams Policy

Positive Behaviour Policy

Anti bullying Policy

Relationship Sex Education Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Child Protection Policy