



Mobile Phone Policy

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1.0 College Mission Statement

High quality education changes the world, one child at a time.

We prepare our students for life in a diverse world by intentionally integrating students of all abilities, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, from all faiths and none.

We provide a caring and inclusive environment to help our students achieve excellence within a culture of acceptance and understanding.



2.0 Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, parents/guardians, and pupils with the procedures in place regarding Integrated College Glengormley (thereinafter known as ‘the College’).

This policy does not apply to the use of school-based technology including Chromebooks, iPads or laptop computers that will continue to be used by staff and pupils within an educational setting. The use of these devices is covered by the Internet Acceptable Use Policy and these devices have restrictions on Internet or other applications.

The College recognises that many parents/guardians support and encourage their child(ren) to carry mobile technology as this can be beneficial when normal travel arrangements are disrupted and for communicating after school collection times following extra-curricular activities. However, we are increasingly concerned by the reliance on mobile phones throughout the school day and the impact this has on our pupil’s development. This includes pupils being exposed to violence and sexual content, the risk of online bullying, the potential to effect sleep, the impact on young people’s mental health and wellbeing and the impact on their social skills.

This policy has been updated following Department of Education guidance for schools on the personal use of pupil mobile phones during the school day.



2.0 Rationale continued...

Guidance for Schools on Pupils' Personal Use of Mobile Phones and other Similar Devices During the School Day, DENI 2024/14, 3/9/2024 states that:

There are risks associated with children and young people bringing their own personal mobile devices into schools. There is significant potential for misuse, both in terms of low-level disruption in classes and more serious potential for misuse such as bullying and harassment of children and young people as well as staff. Such behaviour is unacceptable in any context. Such inappropriate use of this technology can also detract from their appropriate use in learning and can involve teaching staff, children and young people, and parents in investigations which can cause significant disruption to the school and wider community.

There is also growing evidence to indicate that restricting the use of mobile phones during the school day can have a positive impact on academic engagement and achievement.

Research has found correlations between mobile phone restriction in schools and a range of positive outcomes including reduced bullying, an overall reduction in social media usage, reduced distraction and disruption in lessons and improved academic attainment. Overall, the academic evidence of the positive impact of prohibited use is increasing

The department recommends that Boards of Governors and Principals/leaders should take steps to restrict the use of mobile phones and other similar devices for pupils' personal use throughout the school day, including during lunch and recreational periods.



2.0 Rationale continued...

For the purposes of this policy, all references to ‘mobile phones’ should be taken to include all mobile technology, including mobile phones and smartwatches. This policy operates in conjunction with other policies including: the Addressing Bullying Policy, Examinations Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy, Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and Safeguarding Policy. This policy also applies to pupils during school trips and visits unless other arrangements have been agreed.



3.0 Responsibility

- It is the responsibility of pupils who bring any mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this policy
- The decision to provide a mobile phone to their child(ren) should be made by parents/guardians.
- It is incumbent upon parents/guardians to understand the capabilities of the mobile phone and the potential use/misuse of such devices.
- Parents/Guardians should be aware that if their child brings mobile technology to the College, they do so at their own risk. It is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss or damage. The college cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred.
- Parents/Guardians are reminded that in cases of emergency, the School Reception remains the first point of contact for a child to contact a parent/guardian and for a parent/guardian to contact a child.
- Pupils with additional needs who struggle with anxiety and stress will be allocated a “single point of contact”. In the event of high anxiety and stress, the pupil should go to this member of staff who can facilitate time out, and call home if required.



4.0 ICG Mobile Phone Policy

- Phones should **never be used, seen or heard** and this includes:
 - During lessons
 - In corridors
 - In school canteen
 - During lesson movement
 - During recreational time - before school, break, lunch and after school
 - During educational trips and visits
- Should a pupil decide to bring a mobile phone into school, **it must be switched off and stored in their school bag.**

At no stage are pupils permitted to take photos, record/video themselves or others, in order to safeguard all members of our school community including pupils and staff.

- Smartwatches are permitted but pupils should ensure that the Bluetooth connection is disabled during the hours of 8.40am and 2.35/3.30pm. Pupils should not receive or send messages via their smartwatch during the day otherwise this will be dealt with as misuse of technology.



4.0 ICG Mobile Phone Policy continued...

- Any further contravention will require the pupil to leave their phone at Reception or with the Head of Year/Senior Leadership Team before 8.40am each day for a specified period of time. It will be placed in a locked cabinet and may be collected at 2:35/3.30pm. It is the pupil's responsibility to collect their mobile phone.
- Any parent who has an urgent message can contact our school office on 028 9083 7223. The Pastoral team will work in partnership with pupils and parents/guardians if there is repeated misuse of mobile phones, to help resolve this issue, in line with the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- The Principal may revoke a pupil's privilege of bringing or using a mobile phone whilst at school.



5.0 Procedures and Guidelines

During Lessons

- If a pupil uses a mobile phone or smartwatch during a lesson contrary to this policy, they will be asked to switch it off and put it into their bag..
- If a pupil fails to comply, they will be asked to place their device on the teacher's desk until the end of the lesson.

PE Department practical lessons

- Pupils will line up outside the PE department and should arrive prepared to hand over mobile phones prior to entering the PE changing rooms – this applies to all pupils whether participating in practical activities or not.
- Pupils will place their phone into a box/tray and the member of staff will store all phones securely in a filing cabinet within a locked office within the PE department.
- Pupils will receive their phone at the end of the lesson upon leaving the lesson.

During corridor movement and recreational time:

- If a pupil uses a mobile phone or smart watch in the corridors or during lesson movement or at break or lunch,, they will be asked to switch it off and put it into their bag/blazer.
- Where pupils refuse to cooperate, staff will record this incident and liaise with Head of Department/Head of Year and follow the Behaviour Blueprint.



5.0 Procedures and Guidelines continued...

It should be noted that:

- Where pupils refuse to cooperate, staff will follow the Behaviour Blueprint.
- Pupils may be exempt for medical reasons and evidence to support this should be shared with Mr Gault, Assistant SENCO.



6.0 Use of Phones in external examinations

Under JCQ regulations (internal and external), mobile phones, smartwatches and electronic devices are banned from all examinations.

Ideally, pupils sitting public examinations should leave their mobile phones, smartwatches and electronic devices at home on the day of the examination. However, if a pupil brings any of these devices into school on the day of the examination, before the examination begins, pupils **MUST** switch the device off, place the device(s) in a clear plastic bag on their examination desk and this will be removed before the examination begins and returned at the end of the examination. Any pupil found in possession of any electronic devices during an examination, in line with JCQ regulations, may have that paper disqualified. Such an incident may result in all other examination papers being disqualified.



7.0 Misuse of Mobile Phones

Pupils with mobile phones must not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using any of their phone's functions, including messaging, phone calls, photographs, videos, audio recording, or by any other means available to them through available apps.

Pupils using mobile phones to bully other pupils will face disciplinary action in line with School Policy up to and including expulsion. (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 school may consider it appropriate to involve the PSNI.)

Pupils must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading, racist, sectarian, homophobic 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.

It is a criminal offence to use mobile technology to menace, harass or offend another person. Students should never attempt (or pretend) to capture a live broadcast, or make a recording of any member of staff member – this includes a still image (photograph), video or audio recording. Pupils using mobile technology to do so will face disciplinary action in line with School Policy up to and including expulsion.



7.0 Misuse of Mobile Phones continued...

If a member of staff has concerns over misuse of a mobile phone including a pupil capturing a live broadcast or make a recording of any pupil – this includes a still image (photograph), video or audio recording - the teacher will contact parents and confiscate the phone and store it securely in the Main Office. The Designated Teacher will be informed and where appropriate follow-ups will be led by the Safeguarding team and Pastoral team.



8.0 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually (or as required) by the Board of Governors and will be kept under review by senior members of staff who will keep Governors informed of any difficulties that may arise



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