

Mobile Phone Policy

St David's High School



Adopted by the Governing Body 7th July 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Prohibit the use of mobile phones during the school day

I am writing to you inform you of the changes to the rules regarding the use of mobile phones in school. The changes, alongside the rationale for change and timescales, are set out in this document.

Rationale for the change

Last term, I informed parents/carers that I would review the use of mobile phones in school. The phones have brought many positives to the quality of learning that can take place in lessons, but unfortunately these are now outweighed by the negative impact on students' concentration, behaviour, safety and wellbeing. We recently received guidance from the Department for Education stating that schools should prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. As a school we are in agreement with the Department for Education and are planning to implement the change.

St David's High School has a duty to create an environment that is calm, safe and free from distraction so all students can learn and thrive. Today, by the age of 12, 97% of students own a mobile phone.

Mobile phones are a vital part of life and learning but we are seeing that a greater number of students are becoming addicted to their phones. Their use within the school day has created additional problems for both the student and the school.

- Mobile phones provide an unnecessary distraction, disruption and diversion within the school day. One national survey stated that one in three secondary school pupils report that mobile phones are used in most lessons without permission.
- Bullying unfortunately happens in every school, and by allowing students to have a phone during the school day allows students to use phones as a tool to bully others. By removing phones, we believe that this will have a positive influence on all students making it a safer place. In recent times, for some students, there has been a significant decline in their wellbeing and mental health. Nationally, three in ten students cite making and maintaining friendships and their mental health as a cause of worry, anxiety or depression. By removing mobile phones, students can spend more time staying active and socialising face-to-face with their peers; activities which have a positive impact on wellbeing.

Headteachers and leaders in schools where phones have been prohibited have reported that after removing mobile phones from the school day, the whole culture of the school changes for the better. The environment becomes safer, protecting students not only from the short-term distraction of a notification but also the background noise of their

lives outside school. Without their mobile phone at school, students have the headspace and calm to focus on their lessons.

The approach to be taken.

The school is proposing to follow a 'never used, never seen or never heard' approach. This means that the school adopts a policy where students keep possession of their mobile phones only on the strict condition that they are never used, seen or heard – with consequences for breaching this that are sufficient to act as an effective deterrent. It is important that, as a school, we enforce this policy vigorously, consistently and visibly, to the effect that mobile phone use is prohibited throughout the school day.

We have taken into consideration the impact of students not having access to a phone in lessons to support their learning. Over the next few years we will look to mitigate against this impact, through the use of additional technology. We believe that the gains from prohibiting the use of mobile phones outweigh the impacts on learning.

Summary

Years 7-11 from 1st September 2024

- Students are allowed to bring a mobile phone to school but they must never be used, seen or heard in the school day.
- Students will not be allowed to use mobile phones upon entering the school grounds at the start of the school day and leaving the school building at the end of the school day.
- Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
- Students are not permitted to listen to music during the school day. Any device used to do so will be confiscated, along with the mobile phone that it is connected to.
- Students in Y7-11 are not permitted to use smart watches.
- Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.
- Students needing to use mobile phones for medical purposes will be issued a medical use card from their Head of Year. Permission must be sought before using the phone and it may only be used for the sole purpose of meeting the medical need.
- The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones or similar devices that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while students are travelling to and from school.
- Use of mobile phones during sporting fixtures, school trips and or educational visits will be communicated by the trip leader to parents.
- Parents/carers wishing to pass an urgent/non-urgent message to their child during the school day, should call the school office. A member of staff will communicate with the student during the school day and act accordingly.
- Students needing to contact a parent/carer during the school day should request to use the phone in the Main Office. Students will be asked to give a reason for contacting home.
- Students who have any immediate worries or concerns during the school day, should speak to a trusted member of staff to help resolve the issue.
- An escalation of sanctions that we plan to use with students are detailed in the table below.
- The school has been given the power to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty. The law protects staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to items they have confiscated as a sanction, providing they have acted lawfully.
- Students will not be permitted to bring gaming devices into school.

Mr S Richardson
Headteacher



Chair of Governors
Mrs C Jenkins

Sanctions – If a mobile phone or is used, seen or heard in school in Years 7-11

Mobile phone or associated device is used, seen or heard

1. The student will have the phone or associated device immediately confiscated and taken to the Office at the earliest opportunity.
2. The student will collect the phone from the office at the end of the school day.
3. The confiscation will be logged.
4. If a student has had more than one confiscation within a week, parents will receive an email communication from the Head of Year.
5. Where confiscations are persistent, the Head of Year will implement a Behaviour Plan. The behaviour plan for persistent offenders will include the need for parents to collect the phones. (This will be implemented after two incidents per term.) They will not be returned to the learner at the end of the day. If they cannot be collected that day, they will be stored securely until it is convenient for parents to collect.

Mobile phone or associated device is used, seen or heard but the student refuses to hand the mobile phone to the member of staff

1. Refusal to hand the phone or associated device to the member of staff will result in the student being placed in the NET and the parents will be required to collect the phone. Further sanctions will be considered.
2. Persistent refusal to hand in the mobile phone or associated devices will result in escalated consequences in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. This may include handing the mobile phone in to a member of staff each morning.