

Smart Device Policy

Smart devices are a distraction to students in school. There has been significant coverage in the news in recent months over the use of smart devices in schools and how this affects the learning within school and how they can lead to bullying and inappropriate web usage. Many schools are deeply concerned about the effect smart devices are having on children's ability to socialise with each other. There is no need for a child to use a smart device for communication purposes during the school day.

Ofsted recently announced that it had updated its inspection handbook to include its oversight of schools' handling of sexual harassment, abuse and violence among pupils, after the publication of its recent report, which found incidents were so common that many pupils did not bother to report them. Unfortunately, smart devices such as mobile phones, smart watches and tablets are often used inappropriately. Within schools we have thorough filters on IT systems to prevent students from accessing inappropriate information on the school system. They also filter all internal communications (e.g. student emails) for use of any concerning language e.g. relating to bullying, self-harm, prejudice etc. This is for the safety of all students. Unfortunately, we cannot monitor smart devices in the same way. Pupils use them to photograph or video situations without consent, therefore, for the safety of students, smart devices are to be kept in pupil's bags switched off whilst on school premises.

From September 2023, where schools do not have adequate measures in place to protect pupils, safeguarding will be regarded as ineffective and the overall grade is likely to be "inadequate", Ofsted said. The education secretary has previously said that mobile phones can act as a "breeding ground" for cyberbullying, and earlier this month the head of Ofsted highlighted their use in the sexual harassment and abuse of schoolgirls.

Implementation

To manage expectations and make sure everyone adheres to the policy, the policy will be delivered consistently and through consultation with parents and pupils. A Smart Device policy is written to ensure that all students are safe from online harm at OLCC, no smart devices are to be seen or used by pupils on the OLCC site.

- To ensure that pupils, staff are fully safeguarded against incidents involving the use of smart devices.
- To ensure that all staff fully understand the position of the school in order to consistently implement it.
- To ensure that parents are fully aware of the change and the reasons for the changes.

Expectations

Smart devices can be brought into OLCC, and stored in pupil's bags. Smart devices can be used to communicate with parents on the way to and from OLCC.

- **Smart devices must be switched off and in bags, whilst in the school building and during school hours until the school site has been exited. This includes break time and lunchtime and before and after school.** Headphones and portable speakers should not be seen. In case of emergency, pupils should alert a member of staff who will assist with the issue raised.
- All mobile phones (devices) seen or heard by any member of staff will be confiscated whether this is being used or not. Mobile phones must not be seen or heard on the school site. Any mobile phone seen will be confiscated immediately and returned to the pupil's parent, once they have completed the 1-hour same day detention. Pupils who do not complete the detention, will not receive the device until the detention is served. Parents will be informed. Phones will be stored securely in the OLCC safe and labelled with the name and form of the student. OLCC is not liable for loss or damage. If the pupil does not complete the detention and the parents arrives to collect the device, it will not be returned.

Repeat breaches of the school's position will result in more serious sanctions being given through the escalation process. Parents will have to collect the device from school for repeat incidences and therefore it may not be possible to return the phone on the day it is taken. For further escalation (third confiscation) devices will be returned the next school day, therefore a Friday confiscation will be returned Monday. Failure to hand in the device to any member of staff will result in students receiving a detention followed by a Unit day. Pupils will be issued with a basic handset in order to safeguard their journey to and from school.

During extra-curricular events / fixtures where transport may need to be arranged, mobile phones can be used to contact parents/carers for reasons relating to transport regarding the activity. Young carers will be expected to give their phone to the pastoral team at line up if they are required to check it during the day, for which they will be supervised. A list of young carers will be distributed termly by the DSL.

Device out - hand device over receive phone at 4pm when parent collects.

Fail to hand device over – detention and Unit for the day until 4pm.

Repeated use of device/breach of policy device will be kept securely overnight and a device ban.

Refuse Unit – Formal suspension with Unit day to be repeated on return to school.

	Sanction	Consequence
First confiscation	Smart device stored in OLCC Lock Box returned after detention to parent at 4pm	Detention & parent must collect smart device at 4pm
Second Confiscation	Smart device stored in OLCC Lock Box, 1-hour detention, device returned to parent, the following day at 4pm	Detention & parent must collect the smart device at 4pm the following day
Third Confiscation	Smart device stored in OLCC safe, 1-hour detention, device returned to parent the following school day at 4pm	Detention & parent must collect at 4pm following day. Mobile phone must be handed in each day.

The school has the right to make exception in extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the Head teacher

Statutory guidance for dealing with electronic devices

Section 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 : Statutory guidance for dealing with electronic devices

*The member of staff must have regard to the following guidance issued by the Secretary of State when determining what is a “good reason” for examining or erasing the contents of an electronic device: In determining a ‘good reason’ to examine or erase the data or files the staff member should reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break the school rules. **This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person’s mobile phone if it has been seized in a lawful ‘without consent’ search and is prohibited by the school rules** or is reasonably suspected of being, or being likely to be, used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property. **Where a teacher disciplines a pupil by confiscating an item, neither the teacher nor the school will be liable for any loss or damage to that item. Equally, there is no statutory liability on schools for items that go missing in other ways.***