

Acceptable Use for Mobile Phones

<p>Accountability:</p> <p>Trustee Committee: Safeguarding Committee SLT:</p> <p>Revised Date: 4th July 2025 Ratified Date: Review Date: November 2025</p>	<p>Ratified by: Safeguarding</p> <p>Committee Chair of Trustees:</p>
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1. Purpose

1.1. The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school administrators, teachers, students, parents and carers take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at schools. This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students.

1.2. The Academy has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, students, parents and carers guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.

1.3. Students, their parents or carers must read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy before students are given permission to bring mobile phones to school.

1.4. The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school excursions, residential and extra-curricular activities.

2. Rationale

2.1. Personal safety and security

Maplefields Academy accepts that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently.

3. Responsibility

3.1. It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.

3.2. The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or carers.

3.3. Parents/carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school.

3.4. Permission to have a mobile phone at school while under the school's supervision is contingent on parent/guardian permission in the form of a signed copy of this policy. Parents/carers/school may revoke approval at any time.

3.5. Pupils are responsible for keeping the school informed of their current mobile phone number.

4. Acceptable Uses

4.1. In Key Stage 1, 2, 3 and 4 mobile phones should be switched off and handed into staff when they arrive in the morning and they will be locked away securely until the end of the school day. In Key Stage 5 students are still to hand their phones in to their tutor but they are allowed to use them during break and lunchtimes if they so wish. Exceptions may be permitted in certain circumstances if there is a clear educational benefit. For example; if the phone is being used as part of an E-safety programme. Such requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis and should be directed to the head teacher.

Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains the first and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way. Parents/carers are not expected to make calls directly to their children during the normal school day unless this is part of an agreed plan.

4.2. Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to friends and keeping a note of who they have given them to. This can help protect the student's number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice, text and picture messages.

5. Unacceptable Uses

5.1. **Unless express permission is granted**, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos or use any other application during school lessons and other educational activities, such as assemblies.

5.2. The Bluetooth and Wi-Fi functions of a mobile phone must be switched off at all times and not be used to send images, files or messages to other mobile phones.

5.5. There is an understanding that some parents/carers will choose to purchase unlimited data however this should not be shared with any other device including mobile phones/games consoles etc. The use of 'Hotspotting' is not allowed. (This is also covered in item 5.2)

6. Theft or damage

6.1. The Academy accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

6.2. Students in KS3, KS4 or younger who bring a mobile phone to the Academy should hand it to a member of staff on arrival to the school building for it to be locked away. It will be returned at the end of the school day. Students in KS5 are still to hand their phones in but are permitted to use their phones at break and lunch times but they are to do this at their own risk (See 4.1)

6.3. Mobile phones that are found in the Academy and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to front office reception.

6.4. Students should mark their mobile phone clearly with their names.

6.5. The Academy accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from Maplefields Academy.

6.6. It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords may not be shared.

7. Inappropriate conduct

7.1. Any student/s caught using a mobile phone to cheat in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Head Teacher and the exam board. Cheating in this manner may lead to an individual being banned from all formal exams by the exam boards. *This is not a decision that the school can reverse.*

7.2. Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Head Teacher.

7.3. Students with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls. Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Headteacher.

[It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action as sanctioned by the Head Teacher is deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.]

8. Sanctions

8.1. Students who infringe the rules set out in this document could face having their phones confiscated by teachers.

8.2. On the first infringement of this policy the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher and taken to a secure place within the school. The student will be able to collect the mobile phone at the end of the school day and a record will be made of the incident. A phone call will also be made to the parent/carer to inform them of the incident.

8.3. On the second infringement the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher and taken to a secure place within the school. Parents will be notified and the pupil will not be permitted to collect the phone without a parent/carer's consent. If a parent/carer is unable to attend the school they are permitted to phone and give verbal consent for their child to collect the phone and must speak to a member of the leadership team or student support. The incident will be recorded.

8.4 On the third infringement the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher and taken to a secure place within the school office. Parents will be notified and the pupil will not be permitted to collect the phone without a parent/carer present. After the third infringement the school will withdraw the agreement to allow the student to bring the mobile telephone to school.

8.5. As set out in the previous section, failure to comply with the rules set out in this document may result in an alleged incident being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases the parent or carer would be notified immediately.

9. Links to other policies

9.1 E-Safety Policy

- Section 6.3 - Examining electronic devices
- Section 8 - Pupils using mobile devices in school
- Section 10 - How the school will respond to issues of misuse
- Appendix 1: acceptable use agreement (pupils)

Parent/Carer Permission

I have read and understand the above information about appropriate use of mobile phones at Maplefields Academy and I understand that this form will be kept on file at the Academy and that the details may be used (and shared with a third party, if necessary) to assist identification of a phone should the need arise (e.g. if lost, or if the phone is being used inappropriately).

I do/do not (*please delete*) give my child permission to carry a mobile phone to Maplefields Academy and understand that my child will be responsible for ensuring that the mobile phone is handed to a teacher on arrival and used appropriately and correctly while under the Academy's supervision, as outlined in this document.

Parent/Carer Name (print) _____

Parent /carer signature _____

Date _____

Student name (print) _____

Mobile phone number _____

Student signature _____

Date _____