



William Edwards School

Mobile Phone Policy

From September 2023

The school recognises that parents often wish their child to have a mobile phone in their possession for the journey to and from school and for emergencies. Therefore, the school allows pupils to have mobile phones in their possession in school but they are not to be used in lessons (unless it is part of a planned lesson activity), at break times or when moving around the school. However, mobile phones can be used inappropriately and are potentially targets for theft and bullying. We have, therefore, adopted the following policy, which will be rigorously enforced.

- Mobile phones should **not** be used on school premises and pupils should keep them switched off and out of sight.
- Pupils who ignore this policy and use a mobile on school premises without permission will be required to hand over their phone to a member of staff. The mobile phone will be returned to the pupil after school on the first confiscation. If pupils persistently breach our mobile phone regulations, the phone will be confiscated and parents will be asked to collect it from the school office.
- If a member of staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone has unsuitable material stored on it, the pupil will be required to hand over the phone to a member of staff and parents will be asked to collect it from a senior member of staff. The content of this phone may be examined by senior members of staff or House Leaders. In a circumstance where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the phone will be handed over to the police for further investigation. Parents will need to recover the phone from the police in such circumstances.
- Pupils remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses or damage. The school do not take any responsibility for phones that are confiscated.
- Any failure to comply with the above guidelines may result in normal disciplinary action being taken, up to and including the consideration of permanent exclusion of the pupil concerned.
- Filming pupils or incidents either inside or outside of school in uniform is forbidden and any incidents will be taken seriously according to our policy. Extreme incidence of filming could result in a permanent exclusion. The school reserve the right to decide what they feel is inappropriate filming and will sanction accordingly.
- All pupils take full responsibility for expensive equipment they bring to school e.g. phones, airpods etc. During certain lessons pupils must hand their valuables to the teaching member of staff for safety. An example of this is during a Physical Education lesson. If pupils choose to look after their own phones etc., the school will take no responsibility if they go missing/stolen.

- Parents should be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to pupils having mobile phones in terms of personal safety there are also some associated risks such as potential for theft, bullying and inappropriate contact, including grooming by unsuitable persons.
- All emergency contact between pupils and parents/carers must take place via the school office, pupils accepting calls or communicating via their phones during the school day to parents will be liable for any relevant sanctions deemed appropriate by the member of staff.
- If students are found using their phone outside during social time they will have their phone confiscated. Again, parents should note we cannot and do not accept responsibility for loss or damage to phones or other electronic devices that are brought into school or that have been confiscated.
- The same processes outlined here will also apply to Airpods and all other forms of earphones

Advice on Safe Use of Mobiles

Pupils using mobile phones need to be careful and keep them in a safe place.

- Pupils should not give out their number or friends' numbers to people they do not know, especially in Instant Messenger or Chat Rooms.
- Pupils should keep their security code or PIN number private.
- If pupils get texts which upset them, they must not reply but keep a record and tell parents or the school.
- In serious cases you can report it to the police. If pupils receive a rude or embarrassing image or text about someone they must not forward it to others.
- Pupils must not distribute sexual images of other young people as this is harassment and could be illegal. If they receive something like this they must tell you or a member of staff immediately.
- Pupils must ask permission before taking a picture of their friends and think before sending it on. Once pictures have been sent they have lost control of it and it could become public before they know it.
- If pupils are receiving harassing or threatening messages outside of school, we encourage the parents to alert the appropriate authorities as these are not always matters the school can deal with. The school will then assist the identified authorities with any investigations.
- See Kidsmart at www.kidsmart.org.uk for:
 - Information on staying safe
 - Leaflets
 - Interactive games.