

Mobile Phones and Portable Communication Devices Acceptable Use Policy (Pupils)

This Policy applies to the whole school and is published to staff, pupils and parents

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Longridge Towers School is a 3 - 19 school. Whilst understanding that in legal terms, in Scotland a young person is deemed an adult at 16, and in England an adult at 18, the following policy aides the School in the managing of appropriate behaviour and its duties in safeguarding all members of the School community. Therefore, for the purpose of clarity, the term pupil in this context encompasses those who are registered to attend classes regardless of age and legal status as an adult. We expect all pupils to abide by our school rules and policies, irrespective of their age

1. Purpose

1.1. The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school administrators, teachers, pupils, parents and carers take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at school. 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 pupils.

1.2. Longridge Towers School has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, pupils, parents and carers with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.

1.3. Pupils, their parents or carers must read, understand and sign acknowledgement of this Mobile Phone and Portable Communication Devices Acceptable Use Policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.

1.4. The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to pupils during school excursions, and extra-curricular activities both on the school premises and off-site.

2. Rationale

2.1. Longridge Towers School recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well. The ability to communicate face-to-face is an essential skill and the School expects pupils to engage socially with other members of the Longridge community during the school day.

2.2. Personal safety and security

Our school accepts that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents/carers reassurance that they and their child can remain in contact during the journey to and from school. Should parents need to speak to their child urgently whilst in school, the School respectfully reminds parents/carers that this contact should be made through the School Reception on 01289 307584 wherever possible in order that inadvertent disruption to lessons is minimised and the school can, if required, give appropriate pastoral support.

3. Responsibility

3.1. It is the responsibility of pupils 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. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to understand the capabilities of the phone and the potential use/misuse of those capabilities.

3.3. Parents/carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school. It is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss or damage. The school cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use.

3.4. Pupils are responsible for keeping details of their current mobile phone to aid return if lost on the school site.

3.5. Parents/carers are reminded that the use of mobile (e.g. 3G and 4G) internet services are not, and cannot be brought under the control of the school internet filtering system. The School therefore strongly advises that parents/carers ensure that appropriate filters and control are put in place on any device they provide for their son/daughter as the school cannot take any responsibility for content accessed when using these technologies. It should be noted that the use of such technologies may result in the pupil being in breach of this policy. If unacceptable use occurs or inappropriate materials are found to be being inadvertently or deliberately accessed, then appropriate action as outlined in this policy will need to be taken.

4. Acceptable Uses

Whilst in school, phones for Forms 1 – 5 should be switched off and kept in either bags or a locker. Sixth Form pupils are afforded the privilege of retaining their phones during the school day for use in supporting work in the classroom at the subject teacher's discretion. They may also use them in the Sixth Form Common Room. Exceptions may be permitted only in exceptional circumstances if the parent/carer specifically requests it. Such requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis and should be directed to enquiries@lts.org.uk. Please note that Junior Department pupils are not allowed access to mobile phones during the school day. These should be handed into their Form Tutor on arrival at school for safe-keeping and collected when the pupil is leaving the school premises, either for a fixture or to go home.

4.1. Pupils should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to close friends and keeping a note of who they have given them to. This can help protect individual pupils' number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice, text and picture messages. Pupils are also strongly advised to password protect access to their mobile phone, and also to

make use of the auto time lock feature.

4.2. The school recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, MP3 and MP4 playback, blogging etc. Teachers of Sixth Form pupils may wish to utilise these functions to aid teaching and learning and Sixth Form pupils may have the opportunity to use their mobile phones in the classroom. On these occasions pupils may use their mobile phones in the classroom when express permission has been given by the teacher. Pupils who do not have a mobile phone should be given appropriate substitute technologies on these occasions. The use of personal mobile phones in one lesson for a specific purpose does not mean blanket usage is then acceptable.

5. Unacceptable Uses

5.1. Mobile phones should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school. They should be turned off during the school day and stored as indicated earlier.

5.2. Should there be disruption to lessons caused by a mobile phone; the responsible student may face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Headmaster. This may include banning them from having their mobile phone in school.

5.3. 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 the school day. The use of mobile phones is not permitted in the Jerningham Building which houses Early Years and Foundation Stage pupils and staff should only use the provided technology in the course of their duties.

5.4. The Bluetooth function of a mobile phone must be switched off at all times and not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones.

5.5. Under no circumstances should a mobile phone be in a pupil's possession whilst in a changing room. Mobile phones are not to be used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to fellow pupils, staff or visitors to the school. Staff will confiscate immediately any mobile phones found in use in changing rooms.

5.6. Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other pupils is unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated and pupils using mobile phones to bully other pupils will face disciplinary action. Cyberbullying includes engaging in personal attacks, harassing another person, or posting private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, uploading images to a website for public viewing which denigrate and humiliate that pupil, and abusive phone calls. Cyberbullying may be carried out by one pupil or a group of pupils who "gang up" on another pupil. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence it is unacceptable regardless of whether 'consent' was given. **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 police in reported incidents.**

5.7. Pupils must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading, racist 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. **As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police in reported incidents.**

5.8. It is forbidden to use mobile phones to photograph or film any pupil or member of staff without their consent. In the event of this happening, the pupil will be asked and expected to delete those images. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

5.9. Any pupil who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face

disciplinary action.

6. Theft or damage

6.1. It is strongly advised that pupils should mark their mobile phone clearly with their names.

6.2. Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school are expected to leave it in their locker or place in their bag when they arrive at school. It should be switched off and should remain there during the school day. To reduce the risk of theft during school hours, Sixth Form pupils who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not 'advertise' they have them.

6.3. The School accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

6.4. The School accepts no responsibility for pupils who lose their mobile phones while travelling to and from school.

6.5. Mobile phones that are found in the School and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to the School Reception.

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

6.7. Lost and stolen mobile phones in the U.K. can be blocked across all networks making them virtually worthless because they cannot be used. In the event of a loss or theft on school premises, the School Reception will assist in arranging blocking of a phone with the consent of a pupil.

7. Inappropriate conduct

7.1. Mobile phones are banned from all examinations. Pupils are expected to leave their mobile phones, switched off, in their lockers before entering the examination hall or they should hand phones to invigilators on entering the examination hall. Any pupil found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination will have that paper disqualified. Such an incident may result in all other examination papers being disqualified.

8. Sanctions

8.1. Pupils who infringe the rules set out in this document will have their phones confiscated by teachers and the incident will be logged. If the phone is being used inappropriately the pupil must give it to a teacher if requested.

8.2. Where a pupil has a phone confiscated for the second time within a term, parents/carers will be notified and the pupil be given a lunchtime detention. A third offence will require the parent/carer to collect the phone from the School Reception. If, in exceptional circumstances, a parent/carer is unable to attend the school, they may phone and speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team in order to give verbal consent for their child to collect the phone.

8.3. Persistent or serious infringements of this policy may result in a ban on bringing a mobile phone to school.

8.4. In cases where infringements are of a serious enough nature to refer to the police for investigation, parents/carers will be contacted immediately.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Longridge Towers School e-Safety Policy

Longridge Towers EYFS Mobile Phone Policy
Longridge Towers School Anti-Bullying Policy
Longridge Towers School Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy

Covid-19

During the on-going Covid-19 situation, the School will continue to make all decisions in the best interests of the pupils, and in line with current Government guidelines. As such, minor temporary variations may be required in respect of this policy. Such amendments will be shared as appropriate.