



## Newport Girls' High School

### Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Policy

#### Introduction

The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that teachers, students, parents and carers take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly in school. NGHS accept 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.

#### Purpose

This policy sets out Newport Girls' High School's framework for determining what is 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' use of mobile technology by students while they are at school. The purpose of this policy is to prevent unacceptable use of mobile phones, camera-phones and mp3 players by students, and thereby to protect the School's staff and students from undesirable materials, filming, intimidation or harassment, and distractions during the school day.

**Note: For the purposes of this policy, all references to 'mobile phones' should be taken to include camera phones and mp3 players, even those which do not incorporate communications technology.**

This policy will operate in conjunction with other policies including the *Anti-Bullying Policy* and *ICT Acceptable Use Policy*.

#### Personal Responsibility and Safety

- It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document
- The decision to provide a mobile phone to their child should be made by parents or carers
- 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
- NGHS accept no responsibility for the loss of any mobile phone brought into school.
- Any reported theft or damage of any mobile phone would be investigated in line with the School's procedures.

## **Acceptable Use**

Mobile phones that are brought into school should be stored turned off and out of sight. 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 such requests should be directed to the Headteacher. Communications between parents and students during the school day should only occur through the School's official communication channels and not via student mobile phones, except in emergency situations where mobile phones may be used with the permission of a member of staff.

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. and teachers may wish to utilise these functions to aid teaching and learning and 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.

Specific arrangements for the use of mobile phones during school trips will be communicated to parents and students as appropriate.

## **Unacceptable Uses**

Students are not permitted to use mobile phones at any time during the school day except with the express permission of staff.

Mobile phones must not disrupt school lessons and other educational activities, such as assemblies. Students should not have their mobile phone in their pocket on Silent mode and keep checking it during the school day.

Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

It is forbidden to take photographic images, video or sound recordings of staff or students without their express permission.

Under no circumstances should mobile phones be taken into any examination.

## **Theft or damage**

Students should mark their mobile phone clearly with their names. Mobile phones that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to reception. To reduce the risk of theft, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not 'advertise' that they have them.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

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 must not be shared.

## **Sanctions**

Students who infringe the rules set out in this document will have their phones confiscated by teachers/support staff.

On the first and second infringements of this policy the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher/support staff and taken to a secure place within the school office. 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.

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 may withdraw the agreement to allow the student to bring the mobile telephone to school. The student will be required to take their phone to the school office upon arrival at school where it will be stored in a secure place. The student will be able to collect the mobile phone at the end of the school day. This sanction may be in place for a period of time to be determined by the Headteacher.

If an infringement is repeated, flagrant, or of a serious nature, the matter will be dealt with as a disciplinary issue in line with our Behaviour Policy.

As part of the School's ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy, NGHS reserves the right to confiscate and search mobile phones where there is reasonable suspicion that they may contain undesirable materials including those that promote violence or bullying.

Any student who is caught:

- repeatedly disrupting lessons by using a mobile phone;
- filming another person without permission;
- using a mobile phone to bully other students ;
- using vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone ;
- using a mobile phone to cheat in exams or assessments

will have their phone confiscated. It will be treated as a disciplinary matter as sanctioned by the Headteacher and their parents will be informed.

As set out in the previous section, failure to heed the rules set out in this document may result in an alleged incident being referred to the police for investigation and in the case of external examinations to the examination regulation authorities. In such cases, the parent or carer would be notified immediately.

## **Use of mobile phones to film children**

We would respectfully request that parents and friends do not use mobile phones to take photos and recordings whilst at school events as we then have no control over images of students being posted on the internet. The school will make every effort to take their own photographs and recordings and make these available on a password-protected area such as the Learning Gateway.