



Mobile Phone Policy
for staff, visitors, volunteers and students

2021- 2022

This policy provides clear guidance on the use of mobile phones in school by both staff and students

Introduction

Values Academy has a clear policy on allowing students to bring mobile phones into school and this policy makes explicit reference to camera mobile phones.

Camera Mobile Phones

Camera mobile phones are now the norm and a built-in digital camera enables users to take high resolution pictures. These can be sent instantly to other mobile phone users or email addresses. They can also be posted on the internet or in chat rooms.

There is a potential for camera mobile phones to be misused in schools. They can become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against students and/or teachers.

Staff policy

Staff use of mobile phones during their working day should be:

- outside of their contracted hours
 - discreet and appropriate, for example, not in the presence of students
- Mobile phones should be switched off and left in a safe place during lesson times.

The school cannot take responsibility for items that are lost or stolen.

Staff should **never** contact students or parents from their personal mobile phone or give their mobile phone number to students or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a student, they should use the school telephone in the office.

Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or students, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.

With regard to camera phones, a member of staff should never use their phone to photograph a student(s) or allow themselves to be photographed by students.

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff, the school and the Local Authority. Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy is likely to result in the enforcement of the Whistleblowing Policy and associated procedures.

Parent, Visitors or Volunteers In School Policy

Adults either in school or accompanying children on school trips should not use their cameras or mobile phone cameras to take pictures of students unless it is at a public event such as Sports Day or Summer Fair and of their own children.

Adults, visitors or volunteers in school should only use their mobile phone within the confines of the school office or staff room. Personal cameras and mobile phone cameras should not be used to take pictures of children. If parents and carers who accompany children on a school trip are asked by the teacher to take photos as a record of the educational visit, they will be issued with a school camera. Parents and carers accompanying children on school trips should not use their mobile cameras to take pictures of children.

Student Policy

While we fully acknowledge a parent/carer's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone to school if they travel to and from school without adult supervision, Values Academy discourages students bringing mobile phones to school due to the potential issues raised above.

Parents and carers are advised that Values Academy accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into school or school grounds.

The decision was taken on 7th January 202 that mobile phones, earphones, headphones, smartwatches and other similar electronic devices with internet connectivity, must not be used, seen or heard during school hours. This policy will become effective from **Tuesday 7th January 2020**. We believe that this step in limiting the use of mobile phones fosters greater positive social interaction amongst students, in particular at break and lunchtimes. It has a positive impact on the wellbeing of students, as well as benefiting them academically. If students need to bring a mobile phone into school, they must switch it off and store it in an allocated secure safe when entering the school site in the morning.

If a student's mobile phone is used, seen or heard:-

- The device will be confiscated and kept securely.
- Parents/Carers will be contacted if a device has been confiscated.

On the first confiscation, students can collect the device between 2pm and 2.30pm on the day on which it was confiscated from the school office/School Leader.

For the second and subsequent confiscations, the device will need to be collected by a parent/carer between 2.30pm and 4pm on the next school day following the confiscation. This will include if the device is confiscated on a Friday.

If there is a third confiscation, a meeting will be arranged between the School Leader and a parent/carer to discuss expectations and further sanctions.

If confiscation occurs on the last day of a half term, parents/carers may collect the device at the end of that school day.

Any defiance towards staff when a phone is confiscated, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to our Behaviour Policy.

If a student is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other students or staff, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to our Behaviour Policy.

If images of other students or staff have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of the School Leader. (Please see more guidance on sexting in our Child Protection Policy).

Should a student be found to be using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a phone into school.

We ask that parents and carers should talk to their children about the appropriate use of text messages as they can often be used to bully students.

Should parents and carers need to contact students or vice versa during the school day, this should be done via the usual school procedure of contacting the school office via phone or email.

The policy supports the Health & Safety, Anti bullying, Child Protection, Safeguarding and Internet/E-safety policies. This policy will be monitored and reviewed as required but at least every two years.

Next Review; September 2022