

BEAUFORT CO-OPERATIVE ACADEMY

Mobile Phone Policy



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Introduction

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones and, in particular, the new generation of smart phones, such as the iPhone, now include many additional functions such as an integrated camera, video recording capability, instant messaging, mobile office applications and mobile access to the internet. These allow immediate access to email, searching for information on the internet and other functions such as access to social networking sites e.g. Facebook, twitter and blogging sites. For many young people today the ownership of a mobile phone is considered a necessary and vital part of their social life. When used creatively and responsibly the smart phone has the potential to support a student's learning and life experiences.

We believe that we should be preparing young people to use modern technology in a safe and responsible way.

Bullying, intimidation and harassment are not new in society; however bullying using a mobile phone represents a new challenge for schools to manage. Examples of misuse may include:

- The deliberate engineering of situations where people's reactions are filmed or photographed in order to humiliate, embarrass and intimidate by publishing to a wider audience such as on Facebook or YouTube.
- Bullying by text, image and email messaging.
- The use of a mobile phone for 'sexting' (the deliberate taking and sending of provocative images or text messages).
- Students posting material on social network sites with no thought of the risks to their personal reputation and sometimes with the deliberate intention of causing harm to others.
- Making disrespectful comments, misrepresenting events or making defamatory remarks about teachers or other students.
- General disruption to learning caused by students accessing phones in lessons.
- Students phoning parents immediately following an incident so that the ability of staff to deal with an incident is compromised.
- Publishing photographs of vulnerable students, who may be on a child protection plan, where this may put them at additional risk.

These regulations contained in this policy make explicit the expectations of the Academy on student use of mobile phones and the restrictions which are placed on their use in the Academy and on Academy grounds. They sit alongside the acceptable use policy for internet use which all students sign and is shared with parents and carers. They also give clear guidance to staff, students and parents about the consequences for breaches of the Regulations.

Clearly any policy that includes approved use of mobile phones must be direct and precise. Also the abuse of this privilege must have clear direct consequences.

- Students should be aware that misuse of their mobile phone will lead to the confiscation of their mobile phone, communication with parents and the imposition of other sanctions up to and including exclusion from Beaufort Academy. If a student commits an act which causes serious harassment, alarm or distress to another student or member of staff the ultimate sanction may be permanent exclusion. Beaufort Academy will consider the impact on the victim of the act in deciding the sanction and parents will be involved. If the offence is serious it will be reported to the Police.

Regulations regarding the use of mobile phones:

1. Phones must be switched off during lessons and in between lesson 1 & 2 and lessons 3 & 4 and be placed in school bags or blazers.
2. Mobile phones are not allowed to be used in the classroom unless at the direct request of a member of staff. *(Staff will never give permission for students to listen to their own music in class even through headphones).* If mobile devices are required as a teaching/learning tool then the teacher will pre-book and use the Academy resources or give permission for mobile phones to be used (this permission will only be for that actual period of time specified by the member of staff and cannot be used as permission for other times).

3. Students must never take photos or video in or out of the classroom on a personal phone except if given express permission by a member of staff to do so as part of a lesson (*it can be a criminal offence and will be dealt with severely*).
4. Students should never upload photos or video of any student or member of staff on to any external network except with the express permission from a member of staff who has undertaken all the necessary checks related to child protection.
5. Students must not use their phones whilst walking along the corridors at any time of the day. This includes the wearing or use of headphones or wireless speakers.
6. Students can only use their mobile phones before 8.30am and during break and lunchtimes. They can access the Internet, listen to music through headphones and play games but at the end of these breaks they must ensure that their phones are switched off and placed in their bags or blazers.
7. Students cannot play music through speakers, leave their headphones hanging out from their shirt, or use the phone as a means of ignoring staff.
8. When talking to a member of staff anywhere the student must put the phone away if requested.
9. Students cannot use a mobile phone in an exam – even as a calculator (as per exam board regulations). Mobile phones must be switched off and placed in the student's bag for the examination period.

Contact with parents/carers

- a. If a student is ill they MUST seek permission from a member of staff to report to the Medical Room. At break and lunchtime students can go to the Medical Room to seek advice and treatment. The only way that any arrangement with home can take place is through the Academy Office or the Medical Room.
- b. Students cannot phone home from their mobile and arrange to go home.
- c. Neither should parents contact students directly to arrange to pick them up.
- d. At no time should students use their mobile to contact parents in relation to illness.

Students failing to follow the regulations related to the use of mobile phones

1. If at any point a student decides not adhere to these requirements related to the use of their mobile phone or refuses to follow the above regulations, a member of staff can confiscate the phone.
2. This will be done by a single verbal request and a student cannot under any circumstances refuse to hand their mobile phone to the member of staff. The phone will be placed in a clear plastic bag along with the details of the student. The student will be given an identification number which they will need to collect their phone at the end of the confiscation period from the Academy Office.
3. A confiscated mobile phone will be placed in the Academy Office to be picked up at the end of the day. For any serious breach of these requirements the student's phone will need to be collected by a parent/carer.
4. The confiscation will be recorded for monitoring purposes
5. If a student has their mobile phone confiscated for a second time the student's phone will need to be collected by a parent/carer.
6. Any further breach of these requirements will see the student banned from using/bringing their mobile phone into the Academy at any time.

Where the phone has been used for an unacceptable purpose

1. The Principal or a designated staff member will have the right to view files stored in confiscated equipment and will seek the cooperation of parents in deleting any files which are in clear breach of these regulations unless these are being preserved as evidence.
2. If required evidence of the offence will be preserved, preferably by confiscation of the device and keeping it secure or by taking photographs of the screen.
3. Advice can be sought from the Local Authority (via INTECH helpdesk on 860 46888) and/or the police (general response number 0845 606 0606 or use the local Police Community Constable).
4. The Academy will consider whether an incident should be reported to the Academy safeguarding officer and/or the police.

Students who are subject to a ban can bring their phone in the morning but must hand it in to the Academy Office by 8.30am and can then collect it at 2.55pm. This ensures that students can still have their mobile phone in relation to safety and security on their way to and home from the Academy.

Disclaimer

Students are not required to have a mobile phone in the Academy and we support parents who make the decision that this is not necessary by ensuring that students are able to use Academy landlines to contact parents if necessary or in an emergency.

Parents can, of course, contact the Academy via the landline and any urgent message can be passed to a student as appropriate.

This policy does, however, recognise that the many of our students do own a mobile phone.

Any student who brings a mobile phone into the Academy does so at their own risk and the Academy will not be held responsible for any loss or damage. It is important that all phones are protected and insured.

This statement of Regulations will be subject to regular review and updating in order to ensure that the personal safety of students and Academy staff is protected and that the learning environment is not disturbed by current or emerging technology.