

## CARRICKFERGUS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

### MOBILE PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY



<b>Carrickfergus Grammar School policy on:</b>	<b>Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices</b>
<b>Date ratified:</b>	June 2019
<b>Date implemented:</b>	August 2019
<b>Date to be reviewed:</b>	June 2020

This policy has been devised with the primary purpose of safeguarding all members of the school community, and particularly the adults and children who work and study within the school premises on a daily basis. It is everyone's right to feel safe within our school environment. However, when students freely use electronic devices such as smart phones which contain cameras and access to social media applications on school premises, it significantly compromises the school's ability to safeguard the school community effectively.

Use of electronic devices for learning purposes can, on occasion, bring educational benefits within a supervised and very controlled classroom environment. However, use of mobile phones and electronic devices at all other times during the school day, including break and lunch and between classes, can distract students from a focus on the core purpose of learning and may significantly limit opportunities for social interaction.

This policy reflects the above rationale.

1. Students may bring mobile phones onto school premises but these must remain invisible and be switched off between the hours of 8:00am and 3:30pm. This policy also applies to other electronic devices, including smart watches which send as well as receive text messages and which interact with social media applications.
2. Mobile phones and all other electronic devices, if brought into school, should be kept switched off, not on silent. They should be kept in bags or lockers where they are not visible. Use of mobile devices at break and lunch and between classes is strictly forbidden, as indicated in the timeframes outlined in point 1.
3. Watches which send as well as receive text messages and which interact with social media applications must not be worn in school, not least due to strict national guidelines on testing, assessment and examinations.

4. Senior students from Year 11 upwards may on occasion, and only under the strict direction and supervision of a class teacher, be permitted to use a smartphone to research, document, capture or record learning in a controlled classroom environment. Mobile phones may not be used in private study, either in the Grainger Centre or elsewhere.
5. If a student uses an electronic device in a classroom or study environment, or a phone is audible or visible, outside of the conditions outlined in point 4 above, the device will be confiscated and a detention will be issued due to the fact that learning and teaching has been interrupted. Confiscation guidelines as outlined in points 6 and 7 will apply.
6. If the device is visible / audible at any other time such as break and lunch, between classes and after 8:00am / before 3.30pm, the phone will be confiscated by a member of staff and handed into the Main Office, where the student's name and the date of the breach will be recorded. On the first confiscation, a parent may collect the phone between 3:30pm and 5pm the same day. Should this not be possible, the phone will be retained overnight and returned to the student at the end of the following school day. If confiscated on a Friday and not collected by a parent, this means that it will be returned on a Monday.
7. On subsequent confiscations, no parental collection will be permitted and the phone will automatically be retained overnight and handed back at the end of the following day. Repeated breach of this policy will also result in an escalation of sanctions, in line with school policies.
8. Mobile phones, smartwatches and any other similar electronic devices (e.g. ipods, MP3/4 players) must not be taken into external examinations under any circumstances. Examination Boards reserve the right to take severe action against any candidate who disregards the well-publicised rules governing the integrity of examinations.
9. It is absolutely forbidden to take a photo, video or audio recording of a member of staff or pupil using a non-school device. School-owned devices such as digital cameras will be available for such occasions.
10. Use of phones and other electronic devices during off-site educational visits will be at the discretion of the members of staff leading the trip.

#### **Contact to and from home**

- Students are not permitted to use their mobile phones to contact their parents/guardians while in school between the hours of 8:00am and 3:30pm.
- If a student has an issue, they should alert a member of staff in school who will make a professional judgement call on next steps.
- If a student needs to contact their parents/guardians urgently, they will be allowed to call from the Main Office.
- If parents need to contact children urgently, they should phone the Main Office (028 93363615) and a message will be relayed. Parents are asked not to message, call or receive calls from their child while students are on the school premises.

- The school reserves the right to sanction a student who has used their phone to contact home about an issue, without first speaking with a member of staff in school about it.

### **Responsibility for mobile phones**

Carrickfergus Grammar School accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents and students to ensure mobile phones are properly used and insured. This also applies to other electronic items.