

## Appendix 3 - Mobile Phone and Handheld Devices Policy 2024 (for students)

### 1. RATIONALE

Sir Harry Smith Community College recognises that parents may wish their children to have mobile phones for use in cases of emergency (*Smart devices, such as smart watches, that can text, search the internet, make calls etc. are also covered by the same rules if used for these purposes during school hours*). However, mobiles can be used inappropriately, and parents/carers should be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to students having a mobile phone in terms of personal safety, there are also some associated risks such as the potential for theft, bullying and inappropriate contact, including grooming by unsuitable persons.

As a school we strongly encourage our students to talk to each other and develop friendship groups at break and lunchtime, as opposed to using their mobile phones.

**As a result, the use of mobile phones during school hours without staff permission is now completely forbidden, and students found using their mobile phones during school hours will be dealt with in accordance with this policy.**

### 2. PURPOSE

- a. To clarify the school position on mobile phones.
- b. To ensure that staff and parents/carers are fully conversant with the policy and understand the reasons for the policy.
- c. To support our behaviour management policy, which aims for outstanding behaviour and safety of students across the school.
- d. To ensure that student welfare and safeguarding incidents associated with mobile phones are minimised.

### 3. PROCEDURE

- a. Mobile phones are allowed on site (this is defined as inside the school gates) but must remain switched off/on silent during school hours and out of sight unless a member of staff has given permission for a student to use their phone for a genuine reason. This includes breaks and lunchtimes.  
Permissions that may be given include:
  - Accessing educational applications/ teaching platforms, as part of planned learning provision.
  - To inform/assist a staff member in an investigation of a breach of our behaviour policy.
  - To assist the Police and/or Safer School's Officer.
- b. Any student seen with a mobile phone during school hours without permission will have their phone confiscated. Phones must not be seen or heard. They must be kept in students' bags and not in a pocket or item of clothing.
- c. Confiscated phones will be labelled and taken to the student/main reception where the phones will be secured safely.
- d. Students will have a one chance system. On the first occasion only, the student may collect the device from the student/main reception at the end of a school day. After this, all confiscated phones will have to be collected by the student's parent/carer at the end of the day from the

main reception. Should a parent/carer be unavailable to do this, the student concerned will be able to collect their phone after school on the Friday of the week in which the phone was confiscated.

- e. If a student refuses to hand over their mobile phone, this will be deemed as a failure to follow staff instructions and the Behaviour Policy will come into force. The student's parent/carer will be contacted as soon as possible to resolve the behavioral issues and following that they will receive a further sanction e.g. detention.
- f. When a phone is confiscated, parents/carers need to be aware that there may be a time delay before the phone is able to be collected.
- g. Students are allowed to use their mobile phone to contact home relating to safety/transport/home reasons, after homework club, after-school sporting activities and any other extracurricular activity. In this instance staff should allow students to use their mobile phone on the school site if this is appropriate.
- h. Students are allowed to switch their mobile phone on after the end of period 5 and when they have left the classroom to check for messages from home regarding transport. Students will not have their phones confiscated after 3pm.
- i. It is strongly recommended that transport arrangements are sorted before students leave for school, but urgent messages during the school day will be passed on to students via the school office.
- j. Students will receive an explanation of the mobile phone policy and the policy will be placed on the school website for parents/carers to access.
- k. Earphones/air pods or similar headphones should never be seen in school.
- l. The college accepts no responsibility for any personal property brought onto school sites.

#### **4. SIXTH FORM STUDENTS**

- a. Students in the Sixth Form will be allowed to use their phones whilst in the Sixth Form Centre.
- b. In all other areas of the school, Sixth Form students must follow the guidelines as stated in section 2.
- c. Sixth Form students are allowed to use mobile phones for work purposes while in silent study lessons only. This does not apply outside of the Sixth Form Centre.

## **5. Additional information**

- If a member of staff at school has any suspicion that a mobile phone had unsuitable material stored on it, students will be required to hand over the phone to a member of staff and parents will be asked to collect it from a Senior Leader at the College. In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the phone will be handed over to the police for further investigation. Parents will need to recover the phone from the police in such circumstances.
- Any inappropriate or unauthorised use of the camera or phone facilities affecting students or staff will lead to confiscation. Students may be asked to unlock the device in order to show if inappropriate / unauthorised photos or videoing has taken place.

### **Inappropriate taking and use of photographs**

Students taking and/or sharing inappropriate photographs of staff or other students will face serious disciplinary action. In appropriate circumstances, a complaint may be made to the police.