

Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Policy

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1.0 Key Information

The **government** issued new **Mobile Phones** in Schools **guidance** on 19 February 2024 encouraging schools to implement a policy prohibiting **mobile phone** use throughout the school day, including break and lunch periods.

Orange Tree School has always adopted a NO mobile phone or device policy throughout the day. The only exceptions would be for medical necessity such as diabetes. Students will not be permitted to use their phones for any other reason including regulation or to listen to music. Orange Tree School have a number of MP£ players for students who need to listen to music to regulate or concentrate.

This policy is for all teachers and students to follow in the school and is written in line with the laws around what is acceptable use for a mobile phone in schools for pupils. All students and their parents/carers who choose to come to Orange Tree School must also agree to follow and support this policy.

This policy means all items deemed electrical personal devices including but not exhaustive to mobiles phones, personal laptops, iPods or music devices, iPads, MP3, MP4 players, headphones, earphones and any portable electronic devices including gaming consoles and other tablets.

2.0 Why do we have this policy?

The staff at Orange Tree recognise that mobile phones and some electronic devices are an important part of young people's daily life and for a variety of reasons including for a long journey to school or used to support safe independent travel to and from school.

However, there are some ways in which mobile phones or electronic devices can be used which can be inappropriate, can harm others or could also cause disruption to learning. Examples of this could be bullying, using them to communicate inappropriately with others, using social platforms, looking at inappropriate websites or taking photos or videos of others without their consent which is all against our safeguarding protocols. They can also disrupt learning or affect social interaction which is an important part of school life.

This policy sets out how students are expected to use their mobile phones or electronic devices during the school day, how they will be responsible for keeping them safe so that we can continue to allow them to bring them into school.

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3.0 If you choose to bring your phone or an electronic device to school.

If you choose to bring your phone or any electronic devices to school, you agree to the rules of this policy.

It is your parent's decision to give you a mobile phone or device and it is important that they understand the risks involved in you having a mobile device. We also suggest that your parents have the appropriate insurance cover for any devices you bring into school.

If you are over the age of 18, the contents of this policy are appropriate to your own device use whilst onsite. It is also your responsibly to make sure you use your devices appropriately and lawfully.

If you choose to bring a mobile phone or electronic device to school, the following will apply:

- The phone or electronic device remains the responsibility of the student, and they understand the rules around this. If it is lost, stolen or damaged, the school will not be responsible and will take no action. If your phone gets lost, stolen or broken it is the responsibility of your parents or you if you are 18 to ensure that they have the correct protection for it to be replaced.
- The phone or device should be clearly marked with the student's full name.
- You should not use your phone or device at all in the school building unless given permission under exceptional circumstances and it must be turned off and locked away all day.
- The phone or device should be switched off before the student enters the school site and not switched on until you have left the school building.
- Phones or devices must either be given into reception on arrival and collected at the end of the day or locked in your school locker. If locked in your school locker, I must be done so immediately on entering the school building and must stay turned off and remain there all day.
- The phone or device should not be brought out at any point during the school day and should only be switched on and used after school when they have left the school building.
- If children arrive after tutor time, they **MUST** hand their phone or device into reception on arrival and will have it returned to them at the end of the day.
- Mobile phones or devices, unless you have special permission, are not allowed to be used to; make calls, send texts, surf the internet, take photos or use apps during the school day.
- You cannot use personal electronic earphones or headphones during the school day without permission.
- If a student needs to use their mobile or device for an exceptional circumstance whilst on the school site, they must get permission from a member of staff and use the mobile or device in front of the member of staff.
- If a student is allowed to take a mobile phone or electronic device on a school visit/residential trip, it will remain the responsibility of the student to follow the rules set out for that trip or activity. The phone will remain the responsibility for the student for the duration of the trip.
- Parents should not be communicating with children during the school day on your mobile or device. If they need to speak with you or give you a message, they will contact the school office.
- Students should not be communicating with parents or anyone else from your mobile phone or device during the school day. If you need to communicate with someone, you must speak with a member of staff, and it will be decided if this is appropriate and how the school will support this.
- You should not be looking at things which are violent, illegal or age inappropriate on your phone and the school are asking that your parents check them regularly for this.

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- If the school think that you have been doing things like taking photos or downloading sexual or violent content on your phone during the school day, we are allowed to check your phone and can take appropriate actions including deleting content which is deemed inappropriate.
- The school can also keep your phone or device and the content if what you have been downloading is shown to be criminal activity.
- Mobiles or devices which are being used to bully or threaten other students is completely unacceptable. If cyber-bullying is happening this can become criminal behaviour and the police would be informed. The agreement you have signed will mean that you could lose your right to have a mobile phone at school.
- You should not use phones to make fun of people, to gang up on people and take videos or photos of people students or staff in or out of school. If you take photos of staff or students without their consent, you will be immediately told to delete them and will have lost the right to have your mobile phone it will be confiscated.
- You should not have any files or content on your phone or device which are violent, degrading, racist, homophobic, transphobic, biphobic, anti-Semitic or abusive. Your phone can be searched for this and it can be deemed as a criminal offence.
- 'Sexting', 'Upskirting', 'downshirting' or sending 'nudes' is a criminal offence and the police would be informed of this and your phone could be confiscated potentially used as evidence.
- 'Ukskirting' and 'downshirting' is taking photos under other people's clothes to try and take photos of their private parts in order to use it for sexual reasons or to make fun of others. This is a criminal offence.

Remember almost all calls, text messages and emails the police can gain access to if they need to.

4.0 What will happen if you break the rules?

If you break the rules of using your mobile phone or device in school, the following will happen:

1. The first time your phone or any electronic device will be taken and put in a secure place for the rest of the day. You can collect it at the end of the day, and we will record that you have had it confiscated.
2. If you have your phone or electronic device is confiscated for a second time this will mean you also will not be able to bring your phone or device to school for a certain period of time. If it is required for travel the phone will be stored in the school office only during the day for the number of days you have been banned.
3. If your phone or device is confiscated for a third time, students will not be able to collect it themselves and parents will have to collect it. There will also will be a meeting to discuss how long you will be not allowed your phone in school. If it is required for travel the phone or device will be stored in the school office during the day for the number of days you have been banned.
4. If you continue to break the rules around phone or device usage you will lose the right to have a mobile phone or device on the school site until it can be discussed again for the next school term or year.
5. Please note, that this includes all devices as listed in part one of this policy.

There may be occasions where a member of staff is required to search a student's bag to look for a mobile phone or device (this will be done in accordance with the DfE guidance on searching and screening):

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- If during a search a mobile or device is found it will be confiscated and locked away in the school office.
- Any phone that is seen or heard during the school day will automatically be confiscated.

The Role of Parents

Parents have an important role in supporting the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and should be encouraged to reinforce and discuss the policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment. Where parents need to contact their child during the school day, they should contact the school office, where staff should be aware of the school's policy on relaying messages and facilitating necessary contact.

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Student Name: _____

If your phone is confiscated and locked away, we will follow the phone rules above.

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Parents/Carers: We agree to support the school mobile phone and electronic device policy

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student: I agree to follow the school mobile phone policy and electronic device policy

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____