NORTHAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL

MOBILE DEVICE POLICY

(Incorporating GDST Guest Access / BYOD protocols)

Rationale

The changing nature of the internet and the way it is accessed via mobile devices on a number of platforms has led the GDST to review how students use digital equipment in schools. Students often have their own devices for accessing the internet and allowing them to use these for educational purposes in school is seen as a positive development which will help develop their independence as learners. There is, however, a need to ensure that the school helps to educate pupils on appropriate use, etiquette and social norms.

The GDST has instigated the Guest Access protocol which allows any internet enabled device with wifi capability to use the enterprise wireless points in school, hence a BYOD (bring your own device) is in place. This allows for monitored access to the internet via individual login and provides the same, or enhanced, level of filtering as is provided on the network.

While this is not an exhaustive policy document, it does aim to complement the GDST core Online Safety and Acceptable Use policy, as well as the school's existing procedures and guidelines relating to student conduct. It follows a consultation to investigate pastoral and safeguarding concerns and outlines the responsibilities of the school, students and parents in ensuring that this protocol is used safely to enhance teaching and learning opportunities.

Access to Devices

Students in Year 4-13 are required to bring a device into school that will be able to access the cloud computing platforms used in the GDST as a minimum. The school does not undertake to maintain or repair such devices and they are brought into school at the insurance risk of the family.

Pupils must be aware that their devices will be treated like any other learning resource and teachers will have the right to view work and websites being accessed.

The school does not recommend a particular device, but for full benefit wifi access is required and pupils must have access to applications for word processing, spreadsheets and presentations. Pupils must access GDST approved platforms for school purposes, including Google Classroom, Firefly and Outlook as these are recognised safe working environments for GDPR.

In Junior School
Year 4 to Year 6 pupils are asked to bring a device in as per the BYOD policy, in other years in junior school all mobile devices for learning are supplied and managed by school. Pupils in Year 5 & 6, as well as younger girls who travel on school buses, may bring a mobile phone to school but this is kept in a locked cupboard within the office until the end of the school day.

Loan devices
In certain circumstances the school may agree to lend a school device to a pupil. Where pupils are in receipt of a means-tested bursary, on request, they may be allocated a loan device for as long as the bursary remains in place. In exceptional cases, loan devices may be allocated, on request, to students for a period of up to one school half term. This may be renewed in circumstances allowing for a further half term at the discretion of the Head and Director of Finance and Operations. Reasons for such a loan may be linked to the availability of a preferred device or other practical considerations.

All loan devices must be returned to the IT Operations Manager on a regular basis to ensure they are maintained and kept up to date, and in good physical condition.

Headphones
Students should not generally use headphones or earbuds for listening to music during lessons, unless this is required by the teacher as an integral part of the lesson. Nor should pupils wear headphones when moving around the school building or in the dining room. There is no evidence that listening to music improves concentration levels, in fact, the opposite is more likely to be true.

In Late Prep earphones may be used for modern languages, music homework and other educational purposes. In Late Stay, students are welcome to listen to music if they wish.

USE OF PERSONAL MOBILE PHONES BY PUPILS

Schools should be a haven for pupils where the environment is focused on learning and development. Excessive exposure to social media sites has been shown to have negative effects on young people's wellbeing and phone use is inextricably linked to this. In addition, excessive use of mobile phones can inhibit opportunities to socialise face to face and generate stress for young people.

However, the school recognises that parents feel the need for their children to have access to a mobile phone for communication home. This helps with safeguarding and child protection especially in the long dark winter months. We support this approach wholeheartedly.

As an educational establishment, we must also be aware of the negative impact that excessive mobile phone usage can have on the learning and social interactions of young people. There have been many reports in the media of research which has proven that these detrimental effects exist and of schools where restrictions on mobile phone use have seen an improvement in academic achievement.

We wish to strike a balance between the convenience of having a mobile phone and patterns of use which may impede the academic progress of a pupil or reduce the opportunities which they choose to take advantage of. As part of the Confidence and Challenge (COaCH) Programme, we strongly encourage all Year 7 and Year 8 pupils to develop their skills and challenge themselves to try something new by attending at least two clubs or activities each week. It is our experience that many of them are not doing this as they are spending the majority of their lunchtime on their mobile phones.

To that end, we have set out a tiered approach to mobile phone usage on the school site, recognising the fact that Sixth Form pupils will have more experience and maturity and will have learned about moderate use of mobile phones as they have progressed through the school.

Mobile phone best use policy for pupils in Year 7 to 11:
- Pupils are allowed to bring mobile phones to and from school to always ensure their personal safety.
- Pupils must not use their mobile device anywhere in school during the school day, except under the specific direction of a member of staff. **There is a no mobile phone policy at school from 8am to 3:35pm.** Parents are asked not to text or call their children on mobiles during the school day. If they need to relay a message to their children, they should contact the school reception, and that message will be passed on.
- In addition, mobile phones are not permitted at after school clubs and at Late Prep (4:00pm to 5:00pm).
- If a pupil brings a phone to the school, then on arrival it must be switched off, kept out of sight and locked in the pupil's locker throughout the school day. In any case, it should not be seen or heard (including vibrate) throughout the school day. On the rare occasion that a teacher might allow mobile phones to be used for educational purposes, there will always be an alternative that does not require their use (for example, a laptop could be used for recording video even if this is not as high quality as a phone might allow).
- The phone can be switched back on when needed during permitted time or upon leaving the school site, but not during any period of social time such as break or lunch.
- Mobile phones are not permitted to be used in the school toilets or changing rooms at any time.
- Headphones and earphones, including wireless devices such as AirPods, are not permitted to be used in school, unless instructed to do so by a member of staff.

Sanctions
- If a pupil is seen using their own phone during the school day or if it rings in a lesson, the phone will be confiscated until the end of the day. The pupil will take their phone to School Reception (escorted by a member of staff if practical) and hand it in for safekeeping to be returned at 3:35pm. Parents will be informed via School Reception. Pupils will be asked to sign for their phone, upon collection.
- If a pupil has their phone taken from them more than three times in one term, parents will be asked to collect it and the pupil will receive a detention supervised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team, on a Friday evening after school.

Persistent infringements of this policy might also result in a pupil being asked to hand in their phone at the start of every school day or them being banned from bringing a phone to school entirely. This decision would be made by the relevant Head of Year in consultation with the Deputy Head Pastoral.

For Sixth Form pupils, we expect them to understand that the permitted use of mobile phones including headphones is a privilege accompanied by the expectation of responsible use. Mobile phones and other personal electronic devices must only be used in the Sixth Form area, but not anywhere else on site. It should never be seen or used during private study periods in classrooms, the library or other main school areas. Mobile phones should not be used or visible in a public place within the school, such as school corridors, lunch queue, dining room and assembly.

We do not allow the **tethering** of devices to mobile phones as this can circumvent the school's internet filtering system, which is there for the protection of pupils from inappropriate websites. Pupils should use the GDST Guest wifi system to access the internet on their devices while in school.

The use of **mobile messaging software** or sites such as WhatsApp, Snapchat, Instagram etc. is forbidden on student devices during school hours as outlined above. This links to tethering as many of these apps only work if attached to the pupils' phones. Pupils should use school email to communicate with each other and teachers for educational purposes.

Teachers will monitor pupil use of devices in lessons and at lunch/break times and breaches of the rules on messaging will be followed up with the appropriate sanctions processes, including possible confiscation of phones.

In accordance with statutory guidance for dealing with electronic devices, the school reserves the right to confiscate or examine a device where there is a *good reason to suspect the data or file on the device in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break the school rules*

Where it becomes necessary to confiscate a device the student will be asked to deliver it to Reception where it will be stored securely for the duration required. Devices will not be kept by the school overnight and students will be able to retrieve their property in time for their return journey home.

Bullying and Online Safety Issues
Devices can immediately be confiscated if there is evidence or good reason to suspect that pornographic images are held on them. In this case, police advice must also be sought.

Similarly, devices can immediately be confiscated if there is evidence or good reason to suspect that online bullying has taken place.

Pupils are taught about appropriate use of mobile devices and social networks via the Digacy programme, in PSHE lessons and through our wider pastoral programme. We take cyber-bullying and misuse of devices very seriously and pupils can expect a sanction under our Anti-Bullying and Rewards and Sanctions Policies for sending inappropriate or unkind messages, misusing or sharing without permission other people's data (including photographs/videos). Pupils also receive information from the local Police force about the legal consequences of online bullying and harassment.

Internet access
Access to the internet in school must be in line with online safety and GDST Acceptable Use Agreements. If students use sites which break these policies, devices may be removed during school hours and/or examined for evidence. Please refer to the following for further information.

1 https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00024-2012 *Screening, searching and confiscation – Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies*

Students and staff have a duty to notify the IT Operations Manager of any unsuitable websites that may be used and staff should remain vigilant when students are using the internet in classes.

Security and compliance
Students bring their devices into school at their own risk, however, lockers are provided and these should be used to store devices when they cannot be carried around school. The devices should be named or engraved. The school can take no responsibility for devices which are lost and damaged and were not locked away. Pupils should always lock devices in their form room locker when they go to PE and Games and should not leave them in changing rooms which are not secured.

Photos and videos should only be taken with staff permission and the resulting work used within the school only. Where work is displayed either in printed format or electronically in public areas, or published in printed documents or to the internet, standard vetting procedures must be followed to ensure permission to use images has been received from parents.

Students should not distribute photographs, online or otherwise, of other pupils or staff without their permission. Students should bring their devices in, fully charged if at all possible, however, safe charging can take place in the classroom for junior pupils and the ELC for senior pupils, as long as chargers are in a good state of repair and have received a visual check by a teacher or the IT Operations Manager.

Social Media App Reminder
Parents should be aware of the age restrictions attached to social media applications, such as Snapchat, Instagram, Tiktok and the like. The age restriction for most social media apps is 12 or 13 years of age. It is worth noting that the age restriction for Whatsapp users is 16 years of age. Whilst we cannot prevent students from using social media apps, we would encourage parents to discuss these age restrictions with their children, so that

they fully understand the dangers associated with them. This is particularly pertinent for apps where image or video sharing is the main purpose.

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