

Soar Valley College

Mobile Technologies Policy

Soar Valley College recognises that mobile phones (and other electronic devices such as smart watches) are now an important part of most people's lives and more young people now own and carry such a device. In response to this we feel it is necessary to outline our policy on the use of mobile phones (and other devices) to ensure students remain safe and that learning at Soar Valley is not interrupted.

Underpinning our stance, is the belief that as well as drawing clear boundaries, the role of a school extends to include helping all students to understand the social and moral issues associated with owning new technologies.

We continue to promote online safety and educate our students on appropriate use of these devices and make it extremely clear that cyber bullying is not tolerated at Soar Valley (for example through our PSHE curriculum, ICT curriculum, tutor periods, assemblies etc.). Further guidance for students on how they can keep themselves safe is outlined in the student planner. Parents also have a key role in educating their child that owning such a device brings with it a set of responsibilities to ensure everyone remains safe. Our school website contains guidance, including top tips specifically to support parents with this.

Alongside the use of mobile technologies for social use, we as a school recognise that these new technologies can be utilised to support student learning. We have consulted with wider research, national guidelines and conducted our own in school trials. From all of this we found that our older students (Key Stage 4) use their mobile technologies in a much more responsible and purposeful manner and therefore we have made the decision to have separate Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 policies.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9)

- Students in KS3 are **NOT** permitted to be in possession* of a mobile phone (or other related electronic devices) whilst on the school site. This includes before and after school, lessons and social times.
- KS3 students seen to be in possession of such a device will have it confiscated from them.
- The member of staff who confiscated the device will hand it in to the main office at the first opportunity where it will be placed in the school safe.
- Students will **NOT** receive the device back at the end of the school day.
- A message will be sent to parents on the day it is confiscated to inform them that their child has had their device confiscated (their Form Tutor, Head of Year and Associate Head of Year will also be informed).
- The device will be returned to the student at the end of the next school day (where a phone is confiscated on a Friday, the student may have it returned on the same day).
- Students who refuse to hand over their device will face severe sanctions in conjunction with our school behaviour policy.

*It is important to be aware that possession includes not only using the device (phone call, messaging, use of internet, checking the time etc.) but also simply having it out and in view.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11)

Students in KS4 are permitted to be in possession of a mobile phone whilst on the school site. However, students must adhere to the clear rules set out below;

- Mobile phones should only be seen and used in class if directed to do so by a teacher
- Volume on phones should be switched to 'silent' with no vibrate alerts, unless directed otherwise.
- If their phone is seen in class and permission has not been granted then it **WILL BE** confiscated.
- Where permission has been granted to support learning, they should only be used as directed and students should not be checking messages, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram etc. If they do, it **WILL BE** confiscated.
- Any misuse of the device that may bring harm to others (e.g. taking pictures of someone without permission or anything that constitutes cyber bullying) will result in confiscation and will be dealt with using the school's behaviour policy.
- If a student's phone is seen and/or heard anywhere else in school (including headphones), then it **WILL BE** confiscated.
- The member of staff who confiscated the device will hand it in to the main office at the first opportunity where it will be placed in the school safe.
- Students will **NOT** receive the device back at the end of the school day.
- A message will be sent to parents on the day it is confiscated to inform them that their child has had their device confiscated (their Form Tutor, Head of Year and Associate Head of Year will also be informed).
- The device will be returned to the student at the end of the next school day (where a phone is confiscated on a Friday, the student may have it returned on the same day).
- Students who refuse to hand over their device will face severe sanctions in conjunction with our school behaviour policy.

KS4 students are not required to bring a phone to school or use them in lessons if they/parents do not wish.

Parental support

We are fully aware that many parents wish for their child to carry a mobile phone for safety reasons and in some cases students use the technology to store bus tickets. Due to this we offer a service where students may hand their phone into student reception at the start of the day where it will be placed in the school safe. The phone can then be collected at the end of the school day.

On rare occasions (emergencies) some students feel it necessary to contact parents. Where this is the case students should see their Tutor, Head of Year or Associate Head of Year where they can receive support to contact parents if it is deemed necessary.

We ask parents to support us by not contacting their child via their mobile device during the school day. If there is an emergency, parents should contact reception directly and they will ensure messages are passed on.

Students who persistently flout the rules set out above will face alternative arrangements and will receive appropriate sanctions. To ensure school rules are adhered to and that learning is not disrupted, we appreciate the support of parents in doing so.

Whilst the Governors give permission for mobile phones to be brought in to the school, responsibility for the device rests with the student and the school will take no financial responsibility for loss or damage.