



**MERCHANT  
TAYLORS'  
SCHOOLS**

For Boys and Girls  
aged 4 to 18 years

# Mobile Phone Policy

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## **MERCHANT TAYLORS' BOYS' SCHOOL MOBILE PHONE POLICY**

### **Background**

Merchant Taylors' Boys' School recognises the importance of mobile phones and tablets in boys' lives. We also acknowledge that they are a vital means of communication between boys and their parents in the case of an emergency or when travel plans change.

We have installed a WiFi network across the school site and encourage boys to "Bring Your Own Device" so that they can access the internet via our network – our expectations for this are set out in our ICT Acceptable Use Policy. Increasingly, mobile devices will become a resource in lesson planning and delivery.

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:

<http://www.theguardian.com/education/2012/nov/27/should-mobiles-be-banned-schools>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-20511309>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/11828052/Sir-Michael-Wilshaw-Any-head-worth-their-salt-should-stand-up-and-ban-mobiles.html>

The aim of this policy is to strike a balance between the convenience of having a mobile phone and patterns of use which may impede the academic progress of a boy or reduce the opportunities which he chooses to take advantage of. It is our expectation that boys in the Lower School will engage with at least two weekly activities at lunchtime. 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.

This policy sets out a tiered approach to mobile phone usage on the school site, recognising the fact that older boys will have more experience and maturity and will have learned about moderate use of mobile phones as they have progressed through the school. Also included is a section which sets out the school's expectations of staff in terms of their mobile phone usage on site.

### **General Principles**

- The school does not set out to prohibit boys from bringing mobile phones into school. Instead, this policy restricts their use during the school day. For the purposes of this policy, mobile phone usage includes the use of a mobile device as a telephone, for text messaging, for access to the internet & social media and as a music player.
- Mobile phones should never be used while boys are walking around the site, nor in public areas (Dining Room, Sports Hall, Library, Williams Hall etc)
- Mobile devices must never be used to photograph or take video footage of boys or staff during the school day, unless under the direct supervision of a member of staff (e.g. in PE lessons, Drama etc).
- Boys will have access to their phones at the end of the school day, should they need to make contact with parents over travel arrangements etc.
- Boys gain more privileges as they get older and become more experienced in acceptable use of mobile phones.

### **Lower and Middle School (Years 7- 11)**

- There is no restriction on Lower and Middle School boys bringing mobile phones to school.
- Lower and Middle School boys may have access to their phones at break time and during the lunch break. However, this usage must only take place within their form room.
- Lower and Middle School boys may be asked to use their mobile phones by a member of staff as part of an academic lesson – they must switch off the phone and return it to their blazer pocket at the end of this lesson.
- Lower and Middle School boys may use their phones on the school bus on journeys to and from school. At the end of the day, they may use their phone outside the school gates to contact their parents or on their homeward journey.

### **Sixth Form**

- There is no restriction on Sixth Form boys bringing mobile phones into school.
- Sixth Form boys may have access to their phones at any time during the day, but this must be discreet. In practice, this means restricting use to times when they are in their form room, in the Sixth Form Centre, or off the school site.
- Sixth Form boys may be asked to use their mobile phones by a member of staff as part of an academic lesson – they must switch off the phone and return it to their blazer pocket at the end of this lesson.
- Sixth Form boys may use their phones on the school bus during journeys to and from school. At the end of the day, they may use their phone outside the school gates to contact their parents or on their homeward journey.

### **Sanctions**

Escalating sanctions will be applied if boys fail to adhere to this policy:

1. In the first instance, a boy will be given a verbal warning, which will be notified to his Form Tutor. "Chits" will be available in the CR to enable this process to happen easily.
2. A second verbal warning within a week will result in a final warning from the Form Tutor
3. If a boy is in breach of the policy whilst on a final warning, his mobile phone will be confiscated and passed to the Group Tutor. The boy must collect his phone from his Group Tutor at the end of that day. The Group Tutor will email the boy's parents to inform them.
4. Further transgressions may result in school detentions.

### **Staff**

Many staff use their mobile phone as an integral part of their working day. Teaching staff may communicate with parents or staff at other schools. Caretakers and the Nurse are on call throughout the day and use their mobile phones for immediate contact with colleagues who may not be able to speak to them directly. However, we must model the behaviour which we expect of our pupils. To that end, staff use of mobile phones must be discreet and, wherever possible, conversations must be conducted in an office, an empty classroom or the Common Room.

Staff must never use their mobile phones as a means of communication or for browsing the internet during lesson time. However, mobile phone use during lesson time is acceptable in the context, and as an integral part of, a BYOD lesson.

Staff must never use their mobile phone to photograph boys. If photographs are required, a school camera should be used or, preferably, photographs should be taken by a member of the marketing department.