



**MERCHANT
TAYLORS'
SCHOOLS**

For Boys and Girls
aged 4 to 18 years

Merchant Taylors' Girls' School Mobile Phone Policy

November 2017
Review September 2018

Rationale:

Merchant Taylors' Girls' School recognises the importance of mobile phones and tablets in society. We also acknowledge that they are a vital means of communication between girls 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 girls 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:

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 pupil or reduce the opportunities which she chooses to take advantage of. It is our expectation that our girls fully involve themselves in the excellent extra-curricular programme to which they have access at lunchtime. It is of concern that some 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 pupils 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 girls 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.
- It is our expectation that mobile phone use is minimal whilst girls are walking around the site. They should not be used in the Dining Room.
- Mobile devices must never be used to photograph or take video footage of girls or staff during the school day, unless under the direct supervision of a member of staff (e.g. in PE lessons, Drama etc.).
- Girls 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.

Years 7- 11

- There is no restriction on girls bringing mobile phones to school.
- They 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.
- Girls 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.

- Girls 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 Formers bringing mobile phones into school.
- Sixth Formers 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 Common Room, or off the school site.
- Sixth Formers may be asked to use their mobile devices by a member of staff as part of an academic lesson.
- Sixth Formers 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 a girl fails to adhere to this policy:

1. In the first instance, a girl will be given a verbal warning, which will be notified to her Form Tutor.
2. A second verbal warning within a week will result in a final warning from the Form Tutor.
3. If a girl is in breach of the policy whilst on a final warning, her mobile phone will be confiscated and passed to her Assistant Headteacher. She must collect her phone at the end of that day. The Assistant Headteacher will email her parents to inform them.
4. Further transgressions could result in school detentions.