



Merchant Taylors' School

Ambition | Character | Excellence

MTGS Mobile Phone Policy

1. Purpose

The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that MTGS as a school, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly within school. This Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students. This Policy for mobile phones in conjunction with the ICT and Social Media Acceptable Use policy also applies to students on school buses, during school excursions, residential activities and extra-curricular activities.

2. Rationale

- 2.1. The school recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well.
- 2.2. MTGS accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about students travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to School. It is acknowledged that providing students with mobile phones gives parents reassurance that they can contact their children if they need to speak to them urgently.

3. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to School to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document. Parents should be aware if their child takes a mobile to School.

4. Access to mobile phones within school during the school day

4.1. Students in Years 7 - 9

Mobile phones should be handed in at reception upon arrival to school and then picked up from reception at the end of the school day. Students should not be in possession of a mobile phone during the school day.

4.2. Students in Years 10 and 11

Students should not be seen or heard using a mobile phone during this time. Students are expected to switch off their mobile phones (as opposed to being in 'silent' or 'vibrate' mode) as soon as they enter the school reception and put them in either their bag or locker. Students can check their mobile phones for messages or communication from parents before 8.40am and after 4.00 pm in the reception but they cannot be used for any other purpose.

4.3. Students in Years 12 and 13

Mobile phones should either be switched off or left on 'silent' mode during the school day. Students in the Sixth Form can use their mobile phones when not in lessons provided they are in one of the following designated areas:

- Sixth Form Common Room
- Sixth Form Study Centre

Students may use mobile phones in lessons if permitted by a member of staff for educational reasons.

Students should not be seen or heard using a mobile phone in any other areas of the school, including corridors.

5. Other Acceptable Uses

Exceptions may be permitted only in special circumstances if the parent/carer specifically requests it or if a child needs to make contact with one of their parents. Such requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis and should be directed to the student's Head of Year in the first instance. Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the School Reception remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.

6. Unacceptable Uses

- 6.1. Unless express permission is granted, mobile phones belonging to students in Years 7 to 11, should not be used to make calls, send or post messages, surf the internet, take photos or use any other application during the school day. Students in Years 7 to 11 should only use their mobile phones before or after school and not on the school premises.
- 6.2. It is forbidden for students to use their mobile phones to take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate any member of the School Community, and/or to send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website for public viewing. This includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any member of the School Community without her consent. Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other members of the School Community is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It can be a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced. Students using mobile phones to bully any member of the School Community will face disciplinary action and it may be appropriate for the School to consider involving the police.

- 6.3. Mobile phones are not to be used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to fellow students, staff or visitors to the School. Students must not use photo or video capability on mobile phones which could bring the School's name into disrepute.
- 6.4. Mobile phones must not be taken into any examination situation. Any student found to be in possession of a mobile phone during an examination could be prevented from completing that and other public examinations as a result.

7. Theft or Damage

- 7.1. Students should mark their mobile phones clearly with their names using an indelible ink.
- 7.2. To reduce the risk of theft during school hours, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not advertise that they have them.
- 7.3. Mobile phones that are found in the School and whose owner cannot be located should be handed in to Reception.
- 7.4. The School accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.
- 7.5. The School accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen or damaged travelling to and from School, during School trips, on residential activities and in extra-curricular time.
- 7.6. It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords may not be shared.

8. Escalating sanctions

Breaches of the Mobile Phone Policy will lead to confiscation of the mobile phone by the member of staff. The confiscated item will be taken immediately to the reception/main school office by the member of staff for safe keeping. This will be recorded by the school office.

8.1. 1st Confiscation:

Parents will be notified that their daughter has had their mobile phone confiscated via an email. The confiscated item will be returned to the student at the end of the day. The student will be given a school detention.

8.2. 2nd Confiscation:

Parents will be notified that their daughter has had their mobile phone confiscated for the second time via an email. The confiscated item will need to be collected by the student at the end of school on the following day. The student will be given a school detention. In the event that the student needs to call home, she can either ask to use the phone at reception or a friend's phone outside school.

8.3. 3rd Confiscation:

Parents will be notified that their daughter has had their mobile phone confiscated for the third time via an email. The confiscated item will need to be collected by a parent at their earliest convenience. The student will be given a school detention and will be required to sign a mobile phone contract. The mobile phone contract (see appendix) stipulates that the student will leave their phone at home or hand it in daily to reception. Failure to do this, and then to subsequently be caught using it, will result in more severe sanctions.

Sanctions in cases where it is proven that there has also been an online safety issue will be in line with those outlined in the School's ICT and Social Media Acceptable Use Policy and Behaviour Policy.