



# Castle Donington College

## Pupil's use of Mobile Phone/Electronic Devices Policy

Date agreed by the Full Governing Board

12<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Date for review

May 2023

Signed by Chair of Governors

*This College follows Guidance and Advice given by the Local Authority and Government when writing policies; in light of this, changes may need to be made after the adoption of this policy and prior to the review date.*

## **Introduction**

This Policy outlines the expectations of the College of pupil use of all personal devices to include, but not limited to, mobile phones, tablets and other electronic equipment.

Mobile phones and, in particular, the new generation of smart phones and devices, now include many additional functions such as an integrated camera, video recording capability, instant messaging, mobile office applications and mobile access to the internet. These allow immediate access to email, searching for information on the internet and other functions such as access to social networking sites e.g. Snapchat Facebook, Twitter and blogging sites.

For young people today the ownership of a mobile phone/electronic device is considered a necessary and vital part of their social life. When used creatively and responsibly the smart phone has great potential to support a pupil's learning experiences.

This policy aims to prevent incidents where the inappropriate use of a mobile phone/electronic device is a feature of poor conduct in the College. This is particularly difficult to address if it is part of bullying. Bullying, intimidation and harassment are not new in society; however, bullying using a mobile phone/electronic devices represents an emerging challenge for schools to manage.

**Parents and pupils should be clear that misuse of mobile phones/electronic devices will not be tolerated.**

## **Acceptable use of a mobile phone/electronic devices in College by pupils**

Pupils are allowed to bring mobile phones/electronic devices into the College. If they choose to do so, it is on the understanding that they agree with the following limitations on its use, namely:

- **The mobile phone/electronic device must be kept out of sight in College at all times.** This means in a locker or bag. Not a pocket.
- Mobile phones/electronic devices must be switched off in all classes, corridors and other areas during teaching time. It is not acceptable for phones merely to be put on silent or pager/ vibrate mode.
- Mobile phones/electronic devices must be switched off at all informal times during the College day, including break and lunchtimes, and remain off whilst pupils are on the College premises. It is not acceptable for mobile phones/electronic devices merely to be put on silent or pager /vibrate mode.
- No pupil may take a mobile phone/electronic device into a room or other area where examinations are being held.
- The security of the mobile phone/electronic device will remain the pupil's responsibility in all lessons including PE/gym lessons. Loss or damage to a mobile phone/electronic device is the pupil's responsibility.
- If asked to do so, content on the mobile phone/electronic device (e.g. messages, emails, pictures, videos, sound files) will be shown to a teacher or adult without delay.

## **Unacceptable use of a mobile phone/electronic devices by pupils**

The College will consider any of the following to be unacceptable use of a mobile phone/electronic devices and a serious breach of the College's Behaviour Policy resulting in sanctions being given. This list provides examples of misuse but are not exclusive. 'Misuse' will be at the discretion of the Principal with members of the Senior Leadership Team:

### **In College**

1. Responding to or making calls or text without knowledge or permission of College staff.  
In an emergency pupils may use the College phone at reception.
2. Photographing or filming staff or other pupils without their knowledge or permission
3. Photographing or filming in toilets, changing rooms and similar areas
4. Bullying, harassing or intimidating staff or pupils by the use of text, email or multimedia messaging, sending inappropriate messages or posts to social networking or blogging sites
5. Refusing to switch a mobile phone or electronic device off or handing over the mobile phone or electronic device at the request of a member of staff
6. The deliberate engineering of situations where people's reactions are filmed or photographed in order to humiliate, embarrass and intimidate by publishing to a wider audience such as on Facebook or YouTube
7. The use of a mobile phone/electronic device for 'sexting' (the deliberate taking and sending of provocative images or text messages)
8. Pupils posting material on social network sites with no thought to the risks to their personal reputation and/or the reputation of the College and sometimes with the deliberate intention of causing harm to others
9. Making disrespectful comments, misrepresenting events or making defamatory remarks about staff or other pupils
10. Disruption to learning caused by accessing a mobile phone or electronic device in lessons
11. Pupils phoning parents immediately following an incident so that the ability of staff to deal with an incident is compromised
12. Publishing photographs of vulnerable pupils, who may be on a child protection plan, where this may put them at additional risk
13. Using a mobile phone/electronic device that belongs to another person, for any of the above

### **Out of College**

14. Using the mobile phone/electronic device outside College hours to intimidate or upset staff and pupils will be considered a breach of this policy, in the same way as unacceptable use which takes place in College time
15. Using a mobile phone/electronic device outside College hours in such a way that it undermines the stability or reputation of the College and compromises its ability to fulfil the stated aim of providing 'a clear moral and ethical lead'

## **Dealing with breaches**

Misuse of a mobile phone/electronic devices will be dealt with using the same principles set out in the College Behaviour and Exclusions Policy, with the response being proportionate to the severity of the misuse.

Pupils are aware that serious misuse may lead to the confiscation of their mobile phone/electronic device, communication with parents and the imposition of other sanctions up to and including exclusion from College. If the offence is very serious, it will be reported to the Police.

Pupils and parents are notified that appropriate action will be taken against those who are in breach of the acceptable use guidelines, following the College's Behaviour and Exclusions Policy. In addition, pupils and their parents should be very clear that the College is within its rights to confiscate the mobile phone/electronic device where the policy has been breached.

Using the mobile phone/electronic devices outside College hours to intimidate or upset staff and pupils or undermine the stability of the College in any way will be considered a breach of this policy in the same way as unacceptable use, which takes place in College time.

Pupils and parents should be aware that the Police will be informed if there is a serious misuse of a mobile phone/electronic device where criminal activity is suspected

If a pupil commits an act, which causes serious harassment, alarm or distress to another pupil or member of staff the ultimate sanction may be permanent exclusion. The College will consider the impact on the victim of the act in deciding the sanction.

## **Confiscation**

**The College is within its rights to confiscate a mobile phone/electronic device where the guidelines have been breached and/or if a mobile phone/electronic device is seen, heard or misuse is reported.**

If a mobile phone/electronic device is confiscated, the College will make it clear for how long this will be and the procedure to be followed for its return.

Where a mobile phone/electronic device has been confiscated, it is not automatically returned to the pupil at the end of a lesson, break or lunchtime. It is usual that a confiscated device will returned at the end of the day. This will ensure that the confiscation can be correctly recorded and that the phone is kept securely.

Where it is deemed necessary to examine the contents of a mobile phone/electronic device this will be done by a designated member of staff. Any examination of the contents will be properly recorded in case it later becomes evidence of criminal activity. The record will include the time, who was present and what is found.

## **Confiscation Procedure**

If a mobile phone/electronic device is confiscated by an adult in College then:

- At the discretion of the adult, the mobile phone/electronic device may be returned at the end of the lesson. More usually, the pupil will be informed that the phone can be collected at the end of school day from Reception with permission from the Principal, member of the Senior Leadership Team or Head of Year.
- The confiscation will be recorded on Go4Schools as a behaviour incident for monitoring purposes
- The College will ensure that confiscated devices are stored securely and in such a way that they are returned to the correct person
- In the case of repeated or serious misuse, the mobile phone/electronic device will only be returned to a parent/carer who will be required to visit the College by appointment to collect the mobile phone/electronic device. However, there may be occasions (for example safeguarding, shift patterns, transport issues) where a parent cannot collect the device and it may be returned to the pupil at the end of the confiscation period. This will be at the discretion of the Principal.
- Where a pupil persistently breaches the expectations, following a clear warning, the Principal may impose an outright ban from bringing a mobile phone/electronic device to College. This may be a fixed period or permanent ban. In such cases the device will be handed over at the start of the day and returned to the pupil at the end of the day
- Where the phone has been used for an unacceptable purpose, the Principal or a designated staff member will have the right to;
  - view files stored in confiscated equipment and if necessary seek the cooperation of parents in deleting any files which are in clear breach of this policy unless they are being preserved as evidence.
  - download/copy/store files if it is reasonable to expect the footage/ photos will need to be preserved as evidence of the offence or suspected offence. This will be done with the owner present.
- Senior Leaders will decide whether an incident should be reported to the Police or a safeguarding referral made.
- College leaders will monitor repeat offences to see if there is any pattern in the perpetrator or the victim, which needs further investigation.