

## Mobile Phone Code of Conduct

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### Introduction

Students and their parents/carers must read and understand the Mobile Phone Code of Conduct as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.

Students and their parents/carers must read and understand Acceptable Uses as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.

“Mobile phone” is used throughout this document but refers to any type of digital device e.g. watches, ipads or tablets, which use the same technologies.

### 1. Rationale

**1.1** Fortismere School recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well.

**1.2** Personal safety is vital and it is the school’s responsibility to make sure that students feel safe so that they can engage in their learning and develop as responsible caring young adults.

### 2. Purpose

**2.1.** The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school staff, teachers, students and parents/carers take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at school. This Mobile Phone Code of Conduct 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.

**2.2.** Fortismere School has established the following Mobile Phone Code of Conduct for mobile phones that provides school staff, teachers, students and parents/carers, guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones on the way to and from school, during school hours and after school.

**2.3.** Parents/carers should familiarise themselves with the Digital policy (found on the school website) regarding safety of digital devices at home.

**2.4.** The Mobile Phone Code of Conduct also applies to students during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities both on the school site and off-site.

### 3. Responsibility

**3.1.** Key stage 3 and key stage 4 students are not permitted to use or handle any type of mobile phone at school, including watches, ipads, tablets, or any similar device that uses the same technologies. Students must abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.

**3.2.** Parents/carers should be aware that if their child takes a mobile phone to school, it is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss or

damage. The school will not accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use.

**3.3.** Any mobile or electronic device that is brought into school must be switched off and kept out of sight in a school bag. Such devices must not be kept in students' pockets. If devices are seen they will be subject to confiscation.

**3.4.** It is the responsibility of all students to ensure that they do not use or handle their mobile device until they have left the school premises. This applies during extra- curricular activities, twilight lessons and after school clubs.

**3.5.** Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office is the first point of contact and office staff can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way. Passing on messages through school reception also reduces the likelihood of disrupting lessons inadvertently. This also applies for clubs and activities that take place after school hours.

#### **4. Acceptable Uses**

**4.1.** Key stage 3 and key stage 4 students are not permitted to use or handle any type of mobile phone at school, including watches, ipads, tablets, or any similar device that uses the same technologies.

**4.2.** Students that have formally approved access arrangements may bring their laptops to school for the purpose of completing school work. It is the parent/carer's responsibility to understand the capability of the machine and to ensure that it is not misused. If these devices are misused, sanctions will apply. Students must password protect the device and not share it with other students.

**4.3.** The school recognises that 6th form students (key stage 5) who are developing into young adults should be allowed to use digital devices. The school recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, MP3 and MP4 playback, blogging etc. At key stage 5, teachers may wish to utilise these functions to aid teaching and learning and students may have the opportunity to use their mobile phones in the classroom. On these occasions students may use their mobile phones in the classroom when express permission has been given by the teacher. The use of personal mobile phones in one lesson for a specific purpose does not mean 'blanket usage' is then acceptable.

#### **5. Unacceptable Uses – a reminder for students when not in school**

**5.1.** Mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos or use any other application during educational activities, for example school trips.

**5.2.** Using mobile phones to bully or threaten other students is totally unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence, it is unacceptable regardless of whether 'consent' was given.

**5.3.** It is forbidden for students to join together to target any student, individual or member of staff; to use their mobile phone to take videos/images in order to denigrate and humiliate an individual. Sharing, sending or uploading images/videos to other students or individuals, or making them publicly available is strictly prohibited.

This also includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any student, individual or member of staff without their consent. It is 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.

**5.4.** It is unacceptable to take a picture of a member of staff without their permission. In the event that this happens the student will be asked and expected to delete those images. Examples might include at a school function or going home.

## **6. Inappropriate Conduct**

**6.1.** Mobile phones are banned from all exams. Any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an exam will have their paper disqualified. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified.

**6.2.** Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language transmitted through a mobile phone will face disciplinary action.

## **7. Sanctions**

**7.1.** Students who infringe the rules set out in this document will have their phones confiscated by school staff. The incident will be recorded.

**7.2.** Phones will be given to the school office in the wing where the phone is confiscated and will be placed in a bag labelled with the student's name, the name of the teacher who confiscated the phone, the date and time. Phones will be kept securely.

**7.3.** Parents/carers will be notified and students will not be permitted to collect their phone. Parents/carers will receive an email from the school to confirm which reception office is holding the phone and that they may collect the phone no earlier than 3.30pm – 4.00pm on the following school day. Parents/carers will need to sign for the phone.

**7.4.** Parents/carers unable to collect the phone after 48 hours may nominate another adult to collect the phone on their behalf. Parents wishing to do this will need to contact the school office mentioned in the email they receive. They will be asked to identify who will collect the phone, and provide a disclaimer to cover any issues that might occur once it is handed over to that person. School staff will ask to see I.D. from anyone who is not a parent/carer who has come to collect a phone.

**7.5.** Any further infringements of the Mobile Phone Code of Conduct may result in a ban on school trips or school activities.

**7.6.** As set out in the previous section, failure to heed the rules set out in this document may result in an alleged incident – of a serious nature - being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent or carer would be notified immediately.

**7.7.** Failure to hand over a phone that is seen on the school site will result in an immediate C4. In the C4 isolation room the student will be expected to hand over their phone immediately. Refusal to hand over a phone once in C4 may result in a fixed term exclusion. Students who persistently breach policy are at risk of being referred to C4 or in more serious cases of persistent breaches fixed term exclusion may be considered.

## **8. Theft or damage**

**8.1.** The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones or devices if they are bought into school.

**8.2.** Mobile phones that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to north or south wing office.

**8.3.** The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Fortismere Digital Policy
- Fortismere Behaviour Policy
- Fortismere Anti-Bullying Policy
- Fortismere Safeguarding Policy

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Governing Body Curriculum Committee.

Policy date	January 2017
Review date	January 2019
Responsibility	Zoe Judge