

# **Tarbert Academy**

## **The Use of Mobile Phones in School**

### **Introduction**

A policy which simply prohibits pupils from taking mobile phones to school would be regarded as unreasonable. Many parents / carers would be concerned for health and safety reasons if their child were not allowed to carry a phone.

A number of the features of modern mobile phones can be used to support learning and teaching:

- Integrated digital cameras
- Electronic calendars

School policy must take account of the benefits to be gained by appropriate use within the classroom.

### **Background**

The carrying and using of mobile phones raise a number of issues including the following:

- They are valuable items that may be stolen.
- Their use can render pupils and staff subject to potential bullying.
- Even when in silent mode texts can undermine classroom discipline.
- Mobile phones with integrated cameras could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images.

While accepting the value of mobile phone technology, it is essential that pupil use of mobile phones does not impede teaching, learning and good order in classrooms.

### **Policy Statement**

#### **Pupil Use of Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones are not to be used within the school building, i.e. they are to be switched off as soon as the pupil enters the school building and may only be switched on when leaving. This means that pupils can only use mobile phones outside the school at break and lunchtimes. The only exceptions to this would be:

- in an emergency with the approval of a member of school staff. The Head Teacher may, with discretion, allow any member of staff to approve such requests or may nominate a specific person to consider such requests.
- in-class use of appropriate features supporting learning and teaching with the specific permission of the class teacher.

If a member of staff is aware that a pupil is using a mobile phone in the school building then the phone will be confiscated until the end of the school day when the pupil may retrieve it from the school office.

If another offence is committed by the same pupil then the phone will be confiscated and only returned:

- to that pupil's parent or carer in person.
- to the pupil following contact with the pupil's parent or carer.

Phones that are confiscated will require to be held in a secure place in the school office. The school cannot take responsibility for phones that are stolen or damaged while at school in pupils' care.

If there is a further infringement, parents / carers will be informed that the pupil must hand in her phone to the school office at the start of the school day and collect it at the end of the school day for a specified period of time. The period of time will reflect the number of infringements, the level of misbehaviour, the well-being of other pupils/staff and level of effect on the order and discipline of the school.

Emergency contact to and from parents / carers must always be made through the school office.

Pupils who feel unwell must always contact home via the school office and not use their mobile phone. This allows the office staff to monitor the pupil while they wait to be collected. It also avoids pupils leaving the school without a record being made.

If a pupil uses a phone to bully another pupil e.g. to send threatening and or abusive texts, the phone will be confiscated and the parents / carers informed of the matter. It may also be reported to the police. The phone will be returned to the parents / carers and the pupil will not be permitted to be in possession of a phone on school premises again.

If such threatening or bullying incidents involving school pupils occur outwith school then the parents / carers of the victim will be advised to contact the police.

Under no circumstances can a camera phone be used in the school grounds to take a photograph or video of a fellow pupil or member of staff.

### **Staff Use of Mobile Phones**

Staff are allowed the appropriate use of mobile phones.