

The Leigh Academy Mobile Phone and Handheld Device Acceptable Use Policy



Mobile Phones and Handheld Devices

Rationale

This policy sets out what is 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' use of handheld devices including mobile phones by the whole academy community (students, staff and visitors) while they are at the Academy or undertaking academy activities away from school.

This applies to all individuals who have access to personal and/or work-related handheld devices within the broadest context of the setting. It includes children and young people, parents and carers, practitioners, managers, volunteers, students, governors, visitors, contractors and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

It is to be recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many handheld devices that will give the most cause for concern; and which should be considered the most susceptible to potential misuse. Examples of misuse include the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

It must be understood that should handheld devices be misused, there will be a negative impact on an individual's safety, dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not to be considered exclusive to children and young people, so the needs and vulnerabilities of all must be respected and protected.

Mobile phones and handheld devices can also cause an unnecessary distraction during the academy day and are often to be considered intrusive when used in the company of others.

The purpose of this policy is to prevent unacceptable use of mobile phones, camera-phones and other handheld devices by the academy community, and thereby to protect the Academy's staff and students from undesirable materials, filming, intimidation or harassment.

1. Protocols

- 1.1 Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices brought into school are the responsibility of the device owner. The Academy accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.
- 1.2 Student mobile phones, which are brought into the academy, must be turned off (not placed on silent) and stored out of sight on arrival at school. They must remain turned off and out of sight in lessons unless students are required to use them to support their learning at the direction of the teacher. Staff members may use their phones during school break times. All visitors are requested to keep their phones on silent.
- 1.3 The recording, taking and sharing of images, video and audio on any mobile phone is to be avoided; except where the Principal has explicitly agreed it otherwise. Such authorised use is to be monitored and recorded. All mobile phone use is to be open to scrutiny and the Principal is to be able to withdraw or restrict authorisation for use at any time if it is to be deemed necessary.
- 1.4 The Academy reserves the right to search the content of any mobile or handheld devices on the academy premises where there is a reasonable suspicion that it may contain undesirable material, including those which promote pornography, violence or bullying. This is in accordance with the Department for Education Policy on Searching, Screening and Confiscation at School Policy (Ref: [DFE-00034-2014](#))
- 1.5 Where parents/carers or students need to contact each other during the school day, they should do so only by telephone through the relevant College Admin.
- 1.6 Mobile phones and personally-owned devices are not permitted to be used in certain areas within the Academy, e.g. changing rooms and toilets.
- 1.7 Mobile phones and personal handheld devices will only be used during lessons or formal academy time as part of an approved and directed curriculum-based activity with consent from a member of staff.
- 1.8 Mobile phones and personal handheld devices should not be used to play personal music during lessons or formal academy time and should therefore not be connected to any Academy device for purposes of charging batteries.
- 1.9 No images or videos should be taken on mobile phones or personally-owned mobile devices without the prior consent of the person or people concerned.

2. Students' use of personal mobile phones and handheld devices

- 2.1 Students will be reminded regularly of the acceptable use of mobile phones and handheld devices during the academy day. Inappropriate use of mobile and handheld will be dealt with as per The Academy Rewards and Consequences Policy.
- 2.2 If a student breaches the academy policy then the phone or device will be confiscated and will be held in a secure place in the main Academy office. Mobile phones and devices will be released to parents or carers in accordance with the school policy.
- 2.3 Phones and devices (including smart watches) must not be taken into examinations. Students found in possession of such a device during an exam will be reported to the appropriate examining body. This may result in the student's withdrawal from either that examination or all examinations.
- 2.4 If a student needs to contact his or her parents or carers, they will be allowed to use a phone in their College Admin office. Parents are advised not to contact their child via their mobile phone during the academy day, but to contact the academy office.
- 2.5 Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to trusted friends and family members. Students will be instructed in safe and appropriate use of mobile phones and personally-owned devices and will be made aware of boundaries and consequences.
- 2.6 Students, under the instruction of their teacher may use their mobile phones and handheld devices to store or record their work. The Academy is not responsible for any work stored on mobile phones and handheld devices.
- 2.7 Students may use their mobile phones and handheld devices for personal use during break and lunchtimes provided that students follow the protocols outlined in section 1. Students may not use mobile phones and handheld devices in the restaurant during lunchtimes.

3. Staff guidelines for the use of personal devices

These guidelines are designed to support staff and to remind staff of the responsibility they have with regards to the Safeguarding of students. All staff new to The Academy undergo detailed Leigh Academies Trust Safeguarding training and the use of mobile devices is covered as part of this Professional Development.

- 3.1 Staff should avoid using their own mobile phones or devices for contacting students, young people or their families within or outside of the setting in a professional capacity.
- 3.2 Mobile phones and personally-owned devices should be switched off or switched to 'silent' mode.
- 3.3 If members of staff have an educational reason to allow students to use mobile phones or a personally-owned device as part of an educational activity the use of the device should be monitored carefully by the member of staff authorising the student to do so.
- 3.4 Staff should not use personally-owned devices, such as mobile phones or cameras, to take photos or videos of students and should only use work-provided equipment for this purpose.
- 3.5 If a member of staff breaches the school policy then disciplinary action may be taken.