Mobile, smart technology and tracking devices policy

Secondary academies (Years 7 – 11)

Mobile phones, smart technology and tracking devices are each a 'banned item'; the possession of which can lead to sanctions in line with our Behaviour policy and can be searched for in line with our Searching and confiscation policy both available on the policy page of the school website.

Mobile and smart technology

In line with DfE guidance, smart mobile phones are not allowed on school premises, on school transport and during off-site educational visits. We are aware there may be exceptional circumstances with regard to pre-agreed arrangements (including medical needs and SEND).

Statistics published by the government indicate that the use of a mobile phone can: -

- distract a pupil from their learning;
- disrupt the learning of other pupils;
- displace positive activities from prolonged screen time;
- encourage or increase the risk of cyber bullying;
- impede social well-being

www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools

Basic function phones should be switched off before entry to the school and remain switched off and out of sight all day. We take no responsibility for phones that are lost, stolen or damaged.

Tracking devices

Tracking devices (such as air tags, smart tags and similar GPS / Bluetooth tracking technology) and unauthorised recording devices (such as covert voice recorders or recording apps via smart watches) are not permitted in school, on school transport and during off-site educational visits. This is ban is enforced to ensure the safety, privacy and well-being of all members of the school community.

Whilst a parent may consider tracking their own child for personal safeguarding reasons, the mechanics of how these devices work trigger data protection and wider, group safeguarding issues when brought into the school environment.

Tracking devices rely on pinging the Bluetooth networks of surrounding devices belonging to staff (and some students) without their explicit consent.

- Broadcasted locations can compromise the safety of vulnerable children, including those under specific care or protection orders.

- A school trip itinerary, a roster of children, or a student's real-time physical coordinates are highly protected datasets. If a tracking device broadcasts the precise location of school transport, destination or a residential location, it effectively leaks localised group data to a parent's personal device

- Unexpected "unknown tracker" beeping or anti-stalking safety alerts can trigger unnecessary panic, while parental anxiety over minor itinerary deviations disrupts staff management.

Enforcing the policy

Devices that are discovered in school will be confiscated and remain in the school office until Friday. If it is confiscated on a Friday it will remain in the office until the following Friday.

On a Friday a confiscated device will be returned to a parent between 4pm and 5pm by a member of the school community.

If the device is confiscated for a second time the school will keep the phone until the next holiday and make arrangements as to whom it is returned.