

Mobile Device Management Policy

Ormiston NEW Academy



Approved by: Leanne Clarke

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1. Policy Aim

Mobile phones are increasingly being used by students both when at school and at home. However, a significant amount of research, including guidance from the Department for Education, clearly shows the negative impact this can have on student learning, behaviour, and wellbeing. Research tells us the following:

2. Impact of mobile phones on learning:

1. The presence of a smart phone affects attention and concentration, impacting learning and recall [of knowledge]
2. It can take up to 20 minutes for students to refocus on what they were learning after receiving a notification on their device
3. Young people exposed to more than 2 hours of screen time on smart phones per day have worse working memory, processing speed, attention levels, language skills and executive function compared to those who do not.

3. Impact of mobile phones on mental health & wellbeing:

- Research shows there has been an increase in major depression (145% in girls / 161% in boys) since 2010 when smart phones were introduced.
- Rates of self-harm have tripled and rates of suicide have increased by 91% in boys and 167% in girls since 2010
- There has been a 52% Increase in screen time between 2020 and 2022, with 25% of young people using mobile phones in a way that is consistent with behavioural addiction. For example, finding it difficult to control the amount of time spent on the phone and using the phone to the detriment of other enjoyable activities)

We have a duty to create a learning environment which is calm, safe and free from distraction so all students, whatever their background, can learn and thrive. As such, moving forward it is the intention of NEW Academy to support our students to ensure that mobile devices are not to be seen, used or heard at Ormiston NEW Academy.

To achieve this, every student in years 7-11 is assigned a personal Focus Pouch. It is each student's responsibility to bring their pouch with them to school every day and keep it in good working condition.

4. Parents / Carers Responsibilities

- Parents should take the time to familiarise themselves with the school's policies, including any changes or updates that may occur.
- Parents should ensure that their children are prepared for school, including making sure they have their Focus Pouch with them.
- Parents should encourage their children to respect the academy expectation that mobile phones are not used, seen or heard and see this expectation as necessary for a well-functioning learning environment.
- Parents should maintain open communication with teachers and pastoral staff to stay informed about any issues related to their child's meeting of expectations contained in this policy.
- If the school informs parents about an incident of mobile phone misuse, parents/carers are requested to follow up with appropriate discussions at home to reinforce the importance of meeting academy expectations.

5. Daily Pouching Procedure

Every student will need to place their phone inside the pouch as they enter tutor time. Students who arrive late to school will do this before they enter the school via Reception (student will need to show reception staff that phone has been placed in pouch).

1. Students will attend tutor as normal.
2. Phones will be switched off and placed in the Focus Pouch.
3. Pouches will be sealed during tutor time.
4. Students will hold their pouches up.
5. Form Tutors will undertake a visual check.
6. Any issues will be followed up immediately by the YC.

Students keep their phones with them throughout the day, then unlock them on the way out of school at one of the unlocking stations.

6. Medical Pouches

The only exception to this rule is for students who have been given permission by the DSL to use their phone for medical purposes, e.g. to check insulin levels. Students with permission to use their mobile device for medical purposes will be given a Focus Medical Pouch which is secured by Velcro rather than locked, enabling the student to access their phone when needed.

7. Contacting parents during the school day

If a student believes that they need to make an emergency call, they must go to their Year Co-Ordinator and explain why they need to make a call. The call request will be logged on Sims with a record of the reason for the call.

The Year Co-Ordinator will either:

- call the parent/carer on their behalf
- support the student to call their parents/carers using a school phone
- use the unlocking station located in reception to unlock the students Focus Pouch allowing the student to access their mobile phone to directly message their parent/carer.

8. Students who need to leave during the school day

Parents/carers should arrange to pick up their child in advance. If a student needs to be picked up unexpectedly, parents/carers should call the school office. Pouches will be unlocked as the student leaves via reception using the reception unlocking station.

9. Mobile Phone Misuse Pathway

There are clear sanctions in place for students who break these rules, which include:

1. Immediate confiscation of mobile device.
2. Parent/carer will be asked to attend the academy.

3. The mobile device will be returned to the parent/carer at a parental meeting and a banning letter will be given to the parent/carer. This will instruct the student to hand their phone into the academy each morning and it will be returned to the student at the end of the day.
4. Ongoing failure to follow the policy will result in escalation in line with the academy's behaviour pathway.

Examples of misuse include:

- Pouch Damage or Lost Pouch - the pouches are very robust, but if a student damaged the pouch, they would be held responsible for damaging school property, so parents/carers would be charged for a replacement at a cost of £25

Examples of damage include:

- Ripped fabric
- Cut
- Torn
- Bent/cut pin
- Signs of force to black button on flap
- Damage to the black ball

10. Phone seen, used or heard during the academy day

If a student is found in possession of a mobile device outside a Focus Pouch, or if it is heard from inside of a pouch during the school day, the phone will be confiscated, and the Mobile Misuse Pathway will apply.

11. Forgotten pouch

If a student forgets their Pouch, their phone will be confiscated and the office will call home to remind the parent/carer of the policy. The phone will be returned to the parent/carer at the end of the school day. The Mobile Misuse Pathway will apply.

12. Imitation Unlocking Magnets

If a student is found in possession of an unlocking magnet, or a similar strength magnet used to unlock the pouches, this will be considered a serious offence, and could lead to a suspension.

13. Accidental Damage

If a pouch breaks by accident, the student should notify the academy immediately explaining what happened. If any damage is spotted at a pouch check it will be considered intentional unless the student has raised it previously. The academy will replace the pouch in this instance.

14. Regular Mobile Device and Pouch Checks

Pouch checks will be conducted regularly by SLT using a mobile unlocking station to ensure that students are adhering to the Mobile Device policy and that pouches have not been damaged.

Checking procedure:

1. SLT to select two males and two females
2. Students asked to accompany member of staff outside of room with their Focus Pouch
3. SLT to use a mobile unlocking station to check that the mobile phone is (a) in the pouch and (b) is switched off
4. Students to return to class.

15. Suspicion of possessing a mobile device

Mobile phones including headphones are a prohibited item within the academy and therefore the academy's search procedures will apply including the use of a metal detecting wand. If a prohibited device is found the Mobile Misuse Pathway will apply.

16. Searching, screening and confiscation with Students

The below is based on guidance from the Department for Education; Searching, screening and confiscation (2018).

Academy staff can search students with their consent for any item. They do not need to get written consent. The Principal and staff authorised (Level 3 DSL trained) by the Principal have the power to search students or their possessions, without consent, where they suspect the student has a "prohibited item".

If a student refuses to co-operate with such a search schools can apply an appropriate disciplinary penalty which would include isolating the student or suspending them from school.

17. Searching without a student's consent

Only the Principal or member of staff authorised by the Principal can conduct a search without a student's consent.

The person conducting the search must be the same sex as the student being searched, and another staff member must be present.

Authorised staff members can search for certain items without a student's consent, including:

- Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to property
- Any prohibited item which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for

Searches without consent can only be carried out on the school premises or where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of a student, for example on school trips.

18. During a search

Under law:

- The person conducting the search may not require the student to remove any clothing other than outer clothing
- A student's possessions can only be searched in the presence of the student and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.
- Schools are able to search lockers and desks for any item provided the student agrees. If the student does not consent, it is possible to search a desk or locker but only for the prohibited items
- Members of staff can use reasonable force when conducting a search for prohibited items, but cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules

19. Confiscation

Prohibited items include:

- Mobile phones
- Headphones

If a mobile phone is confiscated/banned the following procedure must be followed:

The member of staff who has confiscated the phone should:

1. Add an appropriate sanction onto SIMs
2. Take confiscated item to reception to be locked away in a labelled envelope

20. Monitoring Procedures

This policy will be reviewed by the Principal and the Local Governing Body annually. At each review, the policy will be approved by the Principal.

21. Sharing the Mobile Phone Policy

- This policy will be shared annually in September with students, parents, staff and volunteers
- Any updates will be shared as and when they occur
- New parents and students on admission will be provided a copy alongside the Home Academy Agreement
- These procedures will form an essential part of induction for all NEWA staff and volunteers