



Mobile Phones

Introduction

We embrace technology in all its forms, including mobile phones. However, we also acknowledge that technology as powerful and ubiquitous as phones requires us to set some rules and parameters as to its usage, both by staff and students. We have the following as principles:

- Student and staff personal contact details such as telephone numbers and social media account details must be considered 'protected' and never made publicly accessible to each other. Students should never be able to contact members of staff personally via electronic communication, nor vice-versa.
- Nonetheless, it is sometimes necessary and appropriate for members and staff and students to communicate via phones – especially during emergencies. This must be done in a professionally safe and accountable way.
- We recognise that students 'exist' in virtual social worlds of online communication and social networking, and that while these worlds are less visible to us as guardians than the physical one, problems such as bullying exist within them and we have a duty to treat them as we would in the real world.
- We also recognise that students are, to an extent, 'inseparable' from their phones and that a significant part of their social lives exists online.
- However, in our experience – and given the chance – many students will 'lose themselves' in their phones and not fully engage in the live real-world experience around them. This is a pity, especially in environments such as the Summer School.

Policies and Procedures

- Several key members of staff – including the Director – have 'work mobiles' whose contact numbers are distributed to all students and parents. This is so that in the case of emergency there is always a list of people who can be contacted.
- Upon arrival, the students all register their mobile phone number with us. This is again so that in an emergency we are able to contact any student we need to. These contact details are only stored on the local College network.
- Staff are forbidden to contact – or attempt to contact – any student using their own personal mobile phones. They are also forbidden from attempting to 'follow' or 'befriend' any student on any social media platform, or inviting any student to do so with them.

- We treat the student's behaviour with each other online as equivalent to 'real world' behaviour: online bullying, for instance, is the same thing as bullying face-to-face.
- We encourage our teaching staff to use phones creatively in classrooms; we like it when our students take selfies and upload them to Instagram (and geotag us!); and we understand families like to stay in touch using FaceTime (etc.). However, there are times when we want our students to live 'in the moment' – so occasionally we will look after the student's phones for them while they engage in social, sporting and leisure activities with us.
- We know that parents and students are sometimes anxious to be away from each other, and as a result tend to speak to each other regularly as a reassurance. While this is understandable, we find that too much communication in the first few days is counterproductive.

Student guidelines

- Responsibility for the mobile device lies with the student at all times.
- Student's mobile devices should never be taken to changing rooms.
- Under the guidance of the classroom teacher, students may use their mobile devices for learning purposes during lessons and study during the day with permission.
- Students should not capture media involving others without their consent. Such media should not be posted without consent and even where consent is given, the person posting must ensure that it is appropriate to do so.
- No offensive, discriminatory or threatening language should be used on any postings.
- When students are using mobile devices in our Boarding areas, they should not be used inappropriately and must never be used:
 - i) to capture or send inappropriate words, pictures or other media to others;
 - ii) to hurt or bully others by sending of messages, pictures or other media;
 - iii) to interfere with College property.
- Inappropriate use may result in disciplinary action in line with our code of conduct and discipline guide. In particular, misuse of a mobile device may lead to its confiscation for a period of time usually no longer than a day.
- Bullying through the use of a mobile device is the same as bullying in any other way and will attract disciplinary action.

Additional Information

Should you have any questions, or require additional information about this subject, please contact us direct via email at summer@stedmundscollege.org, or phone on +44 (0)1920 824 348.