

DOWN HIGH SCHOOL

POLICY ON MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones have become increasingly ubiquitous in recent years and it is recognised that most of our pupils own one. Such devices can be very useful in terms of personal safety, but it is also the case that the increasing sophistication of mobile phone technology presents a number of issues for schools:

- The high monetary value of many phones means that there is a risk of loss, damage or theft
- The integration of cameras and Internet facilities into phones present potential Child Protection and Data Protection issues.
- The potential to use the phone in appropriate situations, such as the classroom (e.g. texting whilst on silent mode). This is disruptive to learning and teaching.
- Cyber-bullying.

It is not realistic to prohibit phones from being brought to school, nor is it logistically possible to arrange for mobile telephones and other devices to be deposited, stored and collected.

It is the school's policy to allow pupils to have a mobile phone with them in school under the conditions outlined below.

1. Pupils may bring mobile phones into school but these **must** be switched off (not in silent mode) between 8.30am and 3.20pm. This regulation also applies to iPods and MP3 Players in all environments with the exception of 6th Form study areas.
2. If a pupil breaches these rules the phone will be confiscated by a teacher and handed into the Main Office, where the pupil's name and the date of the offence will be recorded. It is the pupil's responsibility to collect the phone at the end of the school day.
3. If a mobile phone is confiscated for a **third** time, a letter from the Headteacher will be posted home, informing the parent(s) of the third confiscation and notifying them that, in the event of the mobile telephone being confiscated for a fourth time, the parent(s) will have to come into school to collect it and will meet with the Headteacher or (if unavailable) a designated Vice-Principal.
4. Mobile phones **must not** be taken into external examinations under any circumstances. Examination Boards reserve the right to take severe action against any candidate who disregards the well-publicised rules governing the integrity of examinations.
5. Students **must not** use mobile phones or other electronic devices during field trips, excursions or other associated school activities except during social/recreational time. The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones or other electronic devices that have been brought on such trips by pupils.

Emergencies:

If a pupil needs to contact his/her parents/guardians he/she will be allowed to use a telephone in the Main Office. If parents need to contact children urgently they should phone the office (028 44612103) and a message will be relayed promptly.

Responsibility for mobile phones:

Down High School accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents and pupils to ensure mobile phones are properly insured. This also applies to other items such as MP3 players, iPods etc.

Publication of the Down High School Mobile Phone Policy:

It is important that pupils and parents are made aware of the seriousness with which Down High School views the inappropriate use of mobile telephones and other technologies. For this reason, the mobile phone policy will be made available to parents from September 2010.