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| **Policy Number** | **SG12** | **Originator** | **Nigel Troop** |
| **Issue** | **4** | **Authoriser** | **Kate Stradling** |
| **Date** | **01/09/2024** | **Type** | **Safeguarding** |
| **Review Date** | **31/08/2025** | **Location** | **Wessex Lodge School Policy File** |

**AS MOST DEVICES ARE MULTI-PURPOSE, THIS POLICY APPLIES NOT ONLY TO MOBILE PHONES, BUT ALSO TO ANY OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICE CAPABLE OF PLAYING OR RECORDING MUSIC OR VIDEO CLIPS OR CAPABLE OF TAKING PHOTOS.**

**1.Rationale**

Generally, problems with mobile phones fall into three categories – text, speech and images. “Texting” enables students to 'talk' from any distance, from anywhere and at any time and gives them an outlet for personal and interpersonal interactions that may create or add to a range of problems which can have a negative impact on individuals. Extreme examples reported in the national press include 'cyber bullying'.

Camera and video phones combined with wireless technology enable students to make still images or videos of themselves or others and 'send' them to other phones or post them on the internet. Sometimes these can be candid images that have been taken without the consent or even knowledge of the person(s) involved. Occasionally, it can be with malicious intent.

Students with 'wireless' or blue tooth phones also can have unrestricted access to the internet and are able to download material from other similar devices. Many internet sites aim their content (text, music, images and videos) at young people who can download or upload files and then share them by sending them to other mobile phones. On some sites acceptable material, such as songs, cartoons or 'amusing' videos, are presented alongside unacceptable material putting vulnerable young people at risk.

At the extreme end there are a number of aspects of law that may apply to the misuse of mobile phones and other digital devices. In the most serious cases there may be a crime involved – for example, an incident being filmed might be an assault or breach of the peace. The misuse of phones might be an offence under the Communications Act 2003, if it involves a message that is grossly offensive or is of an indecent, obscene or menacing character.

These technological developments combined with the ever-changing world that our young people are growing up in present new and unprecedented challenges for schools.

We recognise that use of student mobile phones on site may put students at the risk of:

1. CCE and CSE.
2. Bullying.
3. Disruption of lessons
4. Increased risk of leaving the school site without permission

Our mobile phone policy aims to deal with these problems in school by banning the use of mobile phones during the school day. In particular, pupils are not allowed to use them at all on the school site at any time, for any purpose. If they are brought into school they must be handed in to the office.

1. **Aim of the policy**

The aim of this policy is to outline the management of mobile telephones of students in school.

1. **Policy**
   1. **Use of phones**

* We recognise that many of our students have long journeys to school and that a mobile phone may provide entertainment e.g. music to occupy them during the journey. It is the responsibility of the taxi driver/escort to determine use on the journey to/from school.
* Once students arrive on site **All students must hand their phones in** to the reception area on arrival at school.
* Phones will be stored in a secure storage area in the school site offices.
* Phones will be returned to students at the end of the school day as they leave the school site.
* In the event of a student not handing in their phone or adults suspecting that a phone has not been handed in the I and E team will speak with the student to check. It may be that the student requires some assurance or is anxious about an issue and appropriate support will be offered.
* In the event of the student continuing to refuse to hand their phone in parents/carers will be contacted and may be asked to collect their child from school or agreement given to their child been transported home by the school staff.
* An appropriate meeting with student and parent/carer will then be held to reinforce the school rule around mobile phones.
* As part of the PSHE programme all students will receive education on the potential dangers of mobile phones and the reasons for the school policy and how it seeks to keep them safe.
* As part of safeguarding procedure any concern re mobile phone use by students must be reported to the DSL via Sleuth concerns.
  1. **Responsibility**
* Parents and carers are advised that WLS accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into school or school grounds.

1. **Equality Impact Statement**

All relevant persons are required to comply with this policy and must demonstrate sensitivity and competence in relation to diversity in race, faith, age, gender, disability and sexual orientation. If you, or any other groups, believe you are disadvantaged by this policy please contact the Regional Director. Acorn Education and Care will then actively respond to the enquiry.

 This policy is written by Nigel Troop

Signed:        Date: 01/09/2024

This policy is quality assured by Kate Stradling.

Signed:       **Kate Stradling**          
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