

# GRANGE ACADEMY



## MOBILE PHONE POLICY

CREATED: JUNE 2024  
TO BE REVIEWED: JUNE 2025

## RATIONALE

The purpose behind this policy is to provide an overview of our position in relation to the use of mobile phones within Grange Academy. It will set out some important research regarding the wellbeing impact on children and young people alongside how mobile phones can be used in some contexts.

While mobile phones can play an important part in securing pupils' personal safety before and after school, there is an emerging body of evidence pointing to instances of mobile phone misuse, loss of learning, negative impact on attainment as well as a decline in young peoples' wellbeing due to the use of mobile phones.

There are growing concerns and links between mobile phone use contributing towards anxiety and a range of other mental health issues which are becoming increasingly common among young people throughout Scotland. As advances in mobile phone technology continue and young people live out more aspects of their life in a digital realm, schools have a responsibility to encourage a healthy balance in mobile phone use. This responsibility has increased in light of concerns from employers about the negative effects of excessive phone use on productivity in the workplace among young workers.

## PISA AND OECD RESEARCH

PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) and The OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) have carried out extensive research regarding the impact mobile phone use is having on young people within and out with the classroom. Below are some extracts of this research in relation to use within schools;

- Manos Antoninis, the author of the 2023 Global Education Monitor report, told the BBC their study found "*Examples of smartphone use in school that is distracting students from learning and increasing risks to their privacy at the same time.*"
- Various studies within the PISA and OECD research clearly highlights that "*Students must be able to concentrate and be given the opportunity to learn well. We know from scientific research that mobile phones disrupt this.*"

Some other high-level areas of concern within this research are as follows;

- "*One big concern is that having mobile phones in class is an immense distraction for some pupils.*" Research has demonstrated that attainment levels have increased following mobile phone bans.
- Psychologists at Rutgers University in New Jersey found that "*Mobile phone devices divided students attention and reduced their ability to retain information, which subsequently hit their exam performance.*"

## PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION – LEARNING FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

At Grange Academy, we are committed to educating our learners on appropriate use of mobile phones. Below is a brief overview of what topics we cover in relation to mobile phone use within the PSE programme.

1. **Body Confidence** – lesson on how popular culture and social media promote stereotypes and unrealistic representations of both women and men and can reflect on how these impact on groups and individuals.
2. **Abuse in relationships** – including digital abuse, how to spot it and what to do.
3. **Sending and sharing images** – lessons where pupils reflect on what they do online, their behaviour and actions online, the risks and benefits of being online and having strategies to deal with anything online that causes them concern.

4. **Sexual harassment** – lessons on what sexual harassment is and developing skills for making decisions about relationships and sexual behaviours, and being able to apply this in difficult situations.
5. **You and Technology** – screen time, social media, trolling, body image, digital footprints, cyber bullying etc.

#### APPROPRIATE USE OF MOBILE PHONES WITHIN GRANGE ACADEMY

Pupils will continue to be allowed to bring a mobile phone to school. This is in response to parental concerns over the safety of their young person travelling to/from school and also in line with Scottish Government advice. The following table will highlight expectations in terms of appropriate use;

RED ZONES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Mobile phones should be switched off and out of sight during lessons</b> to avoid distractions and interruptions to Learning &amp; Teaching. <u>There are no exceptions to this rule.</u> This is the same expectation for earphones/air pods.</li> <li>- <b>Mobile phones should also be switched off and out of sight in PE changing rooms</b> to ensure that pupils' privacy is respected.</li> <li>- <b>Members of staff will also model appropriate use of mobile phones by not using these in classrooms.</b></li> <li>- <b>If a pupil is permitted to leave class to access the toilet, mobile phones should be left in the classroom</b> and not taken to the toilet with pupils.</li> </ul>
GREEN ZONES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- S6 pupils following an Advanced Higher Study Pathway have permission to use their mobile phones during study periods, if there is no other access to ICT facilities. This should be for educational purposes only.</li> <li>- Mobile phones may be used before school, during interval and lunchtime in the street and in areas outside.</li> <li>- Pupils are permitted to use their mobile phones in corridors to check timetables etc. This removes the requirement to do so in classrooms.</li> </ul>

#### MANAGING THE MISUSE OF MOBILE PHONES WITHIN CLASSROOMS

Below is how the misuse of mobile phones will be managed within Grange Academy;

1. Mobile phones should never be seen in lessons, these are distracting to learning. This includes 'checking the time/checking timetables/photographing boards' etc. Mobile phones should be off and away prior to entering a classroom.
2. If a pupil has a mobile phone out in class, they will be given **one** polite warning to put away.
3. If the pupil has a mobile phone out for a second time, the pupil will be asked to place the mobile on the teacher's desk.
4. If the pupil refuses to carry out this instruction, the behaviour will be ignored in order for quality learning and teaching to take place in the class – any confrontation at this point will detract from learning. However, there will then be a referral generated by the classroom teacher to Principal Teacher who will put consequences in place prior to the next lesson, for example, telephone call home to parents/carers, extraction from the next lesson etc.
5. If a pupil persistently refuses to comply with the rules set out in relation to misuse of mobile phones, this will be escalated beyond departmental level and require intervention from Senior Leadership and parents/carers.

## MANAGING THE MISUSE OF MOBILE PHONES OUT WITH CLASSROOMS

All young people have the right to feel safe in school, therefore mobile phones should be used appropriately and not to cause harm to others. Under no circumstances should young people engage in the following;

- Cyber bullying, e.g. using mobile phone platforms to cause upset or harm to other young people.
- Taking videos or photographs of other young people with the intent to share publicly or to cause harm.
- Taking videos when young people are dysregulated or in situations of conflict.

The school will take serious action in relation to the above, and involve our Campus Police Officer, when required.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Question:** *Why are pupils not allowed to take mobile phones to the toilet?*

**Answer:** There is no requirement for this, and pupils have been using mobile phones to arrange to meet up with peers during lessons.

**Question:** *Why would a pupil not be allowed to use their mobile phone in class if it enhances learning?*

**Answer:** Lots of reasons. There is no way to accurately police if pupils are using mobile phones appropriately. There is a lack of equity, whereby not all young people have a mobile phone or access to data. Pupils require to regulate their screen time and lessons will be a mechanism to do so. Most pupils also struggle to ignore messages and notifications when they ping through therefore are distracted from learning, hence impacting on attainment.

**Question:** *Will pupils receive a warning if they are caught using their mobile phones during lessons?*

**Answer:** Yes. However, there should not be a culture where a pupil 'can use their warning' routinely. There is a clear standard and expectation that mobile phones are off and away prior to entering a classroom.

**Question:** *What if a pupil requires access to their mobile phone for Additional Support Needs (ASN)?*

**Answer:** Any pupils with ASN will have a Child's Plan and there will be clear guidance contained within regarding appropriate use of mobile phones, e.g. blood sugar levels etc.

**Question:** *Are headphones permitted to be used in school?*

**Answer:** No. These are distracting to learning and can, at times cause a health & safety issue. As above, if there is a diagnosed ASN required, this will be written into Child's Plans.

## ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

If a parent or carer wishes to contact their young person during the school day, this should be via a telephone call to the school office (01563 549988).

We would greatly appreciate parent/carer support in managing this mobile phone policy. Parents/carers have a particularly important role to play in monitoring and counselling young people on the appropriate use of their mobile phones.

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR MOBILE PHONES

As with all high value items, the school is aware of the potential for theft and the consequences of loss. While we will make every effort possible to track lost or misplaced mobile phones through or

normal lost property procedures, the school does not accept responsibility for the replacement, repair or any damages to mobile phones.