

MOBILE PHONE POLICY



GLENIFFER HIGH SCHOOL



Mobile Phone Use in Gleniffer High School

VISION

IN LIGHT OF THE EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGY, GLENIFFER HIGH ACKNOWLEDGES THE SIGNIFICANT ROLE THAT MOBILE DEVICES, PARTICULARLY SMARTPHONES, PLAY IN THE LIVES OF OUR STUDENTS.

IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE GUIDANCE PROVIDED BY RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL CHILDREN'S SERVICES, WE ARE COMMITTED TO FOSTERING A RESPECTFUL AND RESPONSIBLE APPROACH TO MOBILE PHONE USE WITHIN OUR SCHOOL.

THE OVERARCHING VISION, AS OUTLINED IN THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S "GUIDANCE ON MOBILE PHONES IN SCOTLAND'S SCHOOLS" (UPDATE 2024), CALLS FOR SCHOOLS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO CULTIVATE A CULTURE OF CITIZENSHIP THAT PROMOTES THE BENEFICIAL USES OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGY FOR LEARNING WHILE SAFEGUARDING OUR COMMUNITY AGAINST POTENTIAL MISUSE.





CONTEXT

Mobile technology has become an essential aspect of students' lives, with many bringing their devices to school. When utilised appropriately, these tools can enhance teaching and learning experiences, aiding in communication and social interactions. However, it is equally important to recognise that such technology can present significant challenges. The need to remove barriers to learning, provide a sense of security for parents and pupils, and create opportunities for educators to use mobile devices effectively is imperative.

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a framework for developing a local school policy that encourages safe and responsible use of personal mobile technology while addressing any instances of inappropriate use. This includes the possibility of restrictions on mobile phone use, intended to protect both students and staff from potential harassment and abuse arising from misuse of technology. Additionally, we aim to foster positive relationships and behaviours in the digital realm, equipping our students to become responsible digital citizens.



PRINCIPLES

Our guiding principles focus on achieving a balance between the benefits and risks associated with mobile technology. We emphasise the importance of a whole school community approach in developing our policies, ensuring consistency in expectations and the handling of unacceptable behaviour. This consistency is crucial in helping children and young people understand that poor conduct is not acceptable, irrespective of the environment in which it occurs—be it online or offline.



SCHOOL POLICY



Our policy on mobile phone use at Gleniffer High seeks to balance these competing interests while ensuring a safe and nurturing learning environment. As part of our approach, students will be required to store their mobile phones in designated boxes at the beginning of each lesson. Upon entering the classroom, pupils will place their phones in these boxes, allowing teachers to maintain a focused and undistracted atmosphere conducive to learning. This practice not only minimises potential distractions, but it also empowers students to take responsibility for their own devices. At the end of each lesson, students will retrieve their devices, reinforcing their accountability and ensuring they remain engaged in the learning process.

We acknowledge that our approach must respect the rights of children as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). All decisions regarding mobile device use will be made with the child's best interests in mind, ensuring that their voices are heard and considered. Furthermore, as students navigate their academic responsibilities and social lives, we want to minimise the potential for disruptions that can arise from unsupervised mobile phone use.

It is imperative to state clearly what constitutes unacceptable behaviour with mobile devices within our school. Unacceptable behaviour, whether online or offline, is not tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, bullying, harassment, and the sharing of inappropriate content. We have established firm consequences for pupils who misuse their phones, which will be subject to our school's positive relationships and behaviour policies.

SCHOOL POLICY



These policies clearly outline how incidents will be dealt with, including agreed consequences and sanctions. Consistency in applying these policies is key to the successful implementation of our approach, ensuring all students understand the expectations and repercussions of their actions. To promote a safe environment, it is essential that incidents of misuse are reported. Pupils are encouraged to report any instances of inappropriate behaviour by a peer to a teacher or member of staff. We have implemented clear protocols outlining the support available in school for both staff and students who are subjected to harassment using mobile phones. This ensures comprehensive support and intervention when necessary, fostering a community where safety and respect are paramount.

It is essential that our policy encompasses three key areas: digital rights and responsibilities, digital etiquette, and safe and secure use of mobile devices. This will ensure that our students are informed about acceptable use, the importance of privacy, and the need for respectful interaction within the digital landscape. Furthermore, our policy will incorporate elements of curriculum support by raising awareness of online safety and responsible usage among students, staff, and parents alike. Engaging parents in discussions around mobile phone use, including guidance on how to converse with their children about safe practices, will be integral to our approach.





IMPLEMENTATION

Gleniffer has operated a “no phones in class” policy since January 2024. On occasion, staff may allow and even encourage learners to use mobile phones as part of a learning task. However, there is no requirement for young people to carry a mobile phone for learning.

We believe that proper communication and enforcement of these policies are vital. All staff will be trained to apply the regulations consistently and communicate the rationale behind them to students and their families. Regular reminders at assemblies and within classrooms will reinforce these expectations, and it will be decided collectively how to handle any cases of non-compliance should they arise. The effectiveness of our policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure its relevance and success in fostering a safe educational environment.





EMERGENCY CONTACTS

In the case of emergency, pupils should contact a member of staff who will facilitate communication with parents or carer. Parents who need to make urgent contact with their child should contact the school office. Any unwell pupils or required absences should follow the school procedures and protocols.

EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to this policy may be made for pupils with specific needs, such as young carers or those with medical conditions. The parameters of any exceptional arrangement will be agreed on by all relevant stakeholders and managed on a case-by-case basis.



SUMMARY



* In summary, Gleniffer High is dedicated to creating a school culture where mobile phone technology enhances, rather than hinders, the educational experience. By fostering a respectful and responsible attitude towards mobile devices and implementing a clearly defined system for their management, we can empower our students to navigate their digital environment safely and responsibly. Through this comprehensive approach, our pupils will be better prepared for future success in an increasingly connected world while ensuring that the school environment remains a place rooted in learning and respect.