



Staff Member Responsible:	PTA/JMI
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Approved by Governors:	14.10.25
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Required on Website:	No

The Gilbert School

Mobile Phone/Personal Electronic Device Policy

Rationale

At The Gilbert School, we recognise that Mobile Phones/Personal Electronic Devices are an important part of everyday life for our students, parents, carers and staff as well as the wider school community. The school recognises that mobile technology is now an integral part of our culture and can be of considerable value when used appropriately.

Mobile Phones/Personal Electronic Devices can also cause very significant harm when used irresponsibly and so this policy has been implemented to help us give every 'Gilberdian' the safest and most productive educational experience we can.

Aims:

- To ensure students can learn without the disruption caused by the compulsion to repeatedly check notifications.
- To ensure that students can learn and interact with peers in lessons, unstructured time and on the way to and from school free from the fear that they may be filmed and subsequently bullied.
- To ensure that all stakeholders are clear that mobiles phones/electronic devices brought onto the school site that we suspect is being used to harm either the owner or others will be searched for files using powers invested in us by the Education Act 2006.
- To ensure that students, parents/carers and staff are clear on the school's power of confiscation invested in us under the Education Act 2006.
- To minimise safeguarding and data protection risks associated with unsolicited images/videos data being distributed.
- To minimise the risk of theft, loss or damage.
- To encourage appropriate use of technology in the classroom and in the wider community.
- To ensure students and parents communicate with the school and each other using the correct procedure.
- To ensure students are compliant with the rules and regulations of internal formal examinations and JCQ for Public Examinations.

Definitions:

The term Mobile Phones/Personal Electronic Devices in this policy denotes mobiles telephones and smart mobile phones. The term Electronic device in this policy denotes EarPods or buds, Smart Watches, iPods, iPads, MP3/MP4 players and any similar portable electronic device that can be used to communicate with others or store data including images, videos and/or sound files. As technological development is constant, the school retains the right to decide what constitutes a Mobile Phone/Personal Electronic Device.

The School's Jurisdiction

Schools are permitted to confiscate property from students under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Staff have the power to search students' devices, as set out in the Department for Education's (DfE) guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows school staff to search a student's device if we have reason to believe it contains inappropriate material, if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or harm to others. Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and may involve the police or other agencies as appropriate. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to: Sexting, upskirting, threats of violence or assault, abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation or identity.

Rules:

The rules for appropriate use of Mobile Phones/Personal Electronic Devices at The Gilberd School is clear and simple:

1. Students are allowed to bring Mobile Phones/Personal Electronic Devices on their journey to and from school to ensure their personal safety. Improper use on the journey to and from school will be considered a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and may result in sanctions.
2. On arrival at the school site, all Mobile Phones/Personal Electronic Devices must be switched off and placed immediately into students' school bag (Smart Watches**). They **must not** be kept in any part of students' uniform including a zipped blazer pocket.
3. Mobile Phones/Personal Electronic devices (Smart Watches**) must remain in a student's school bag whilst the student is on the school grounds and must not be accessed during the school day.
4. Any student who is required to contact home may do so via the year office or Student Reception (we respectfully ask that parents/carers also contact their child via the school office should they need to do so).
5. A student suspected of having a mobile phone/ personal electronic device including a Smart Watch on their person during an examination will be searched at the end of the examination. Should they breach JCQ regulations, the relevant examination board will be informed.

Consequences of breaching rules:

Any student found using their Mobile Phone/Personal Electronic Device (Smart Watches**) during the school day will have the item confiscated and a message will be sent home to inform parents/carers. All confiscations will be recorded on Go4schools.

An escalating scale of confiscation will be used:

1. Mobile Phone/Personal Electronic Device Confiscation 1:

The device will be confiscated until a parent/carers can collect the device from Main Reception.

2. Mobile Phone/Personal Electronic Device Confiscation 2:

The device will be confiscated until a parent/carers can collect the mobile device from Main Reception and attend a meeting with the Head of Year.

3. Mobile Phone/Personal Electronic Device Confiscation 3 (or a serious breach of this policy):

The device will be confiscated until a parent/carers can collect the device from Main Reception and attend a meeting with the Head of Year and a Senior Member of staff. The student will need to hand their device to the year office each day for the rest of the term. Failure or refusal to hand in the item will result in further sanctions.

Any refusal to comply with a request to hand over a device to a member of school staff will be considered defiance/persistent defiance and sanctions will be applied accordingly, including suspension (internal or external) or permanent exclusion.

**Smart Watches may still be worn on a student's wrist. However, these must be placed on aeroplane mode and/or disconnected from the internet. If a member of staff has reason to believe a student is using their Smart Watch for any other function than telling the time, this will be considered as a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and may result in sanctions.