



The Astley Cooper School

Part of the East Dacorum Co-operative Learning Trust

11 June 2021

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Dear Parent/Carer

Headteacher: Edward Gaynor

Changes to mobile device policy

Further to my letter dated April 21 consulting with parents/carers on the use of mobile phones within school, I am writing to inform you of the outcome of that consultation and to confirm changes to our mobile phone and personal devices policy. All changes will come into effect from September 2021 at the beginning of the new academic year and the detailed policy will be available for parents to view from our website.

Consultation

We received four written responses to the consultation. In addition, there were a number of unofficial comments on our Facebook page which we also considered. The majority of comments were supportive and understood the need for change. However, a number of people did respond with concerns over the consequences / confiscations, feeling that they were too harsh and that this would leave students without phones for long periods of time, potentially not being able to contact parents. There were also comments relating to students who may have exceptional medical needs who may need access to a mobile phone (ie an app that monitors diabetic glucose levels). We have considered all of these valid comments and have made some alterations to the policy.

Policy from September 2021

Our policy will change so that if phones, headphones or devices are **seen** or **heard** between 8.15am to 3.15pm, they will be confiscated. This will mean that students are not to use them from the moment they walk in to school until they are dismissed at the end of the day. This includes all break and lunchtimes. Phones are still permitted on site but must be kept in bags or lockers, switched off.

It will be down to the organiser of any school trip to decide if mobile devices are allowed on the trip and how they can be used while on the trip or visit.

The canteen will become a device free zone for all students and staff at break and lunchtimes, except the member of staff who is on duty in the canteen at this time.

If a device is confiscated the following tariff of arrangements for the return of the item will be established:

- First confiscation – returned to the student at the end of the day
- Second confiscation – returned to the student by their Head of Year following a conversation with parent(s)
- Third confiscation – returned to the student by their Head of Year following a meeting with parent(s)
- Fourth confiscation – returned to the parent at the end of the week following a meeting with a member of the school leadership team





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- Fifth confiscation – returned to the parent at the end of the week following a meeting with the Headteacher

Any confiscated items will be placed in labelled envelopes in the school office until they are collected.

Where a parent/carer feels there is an exceptional reason why a student may need access to a mobile phone during the day (e.g. on medical grounds) they may apply in writing to the Headteacher providing evidence and requesting special dispensation. Cases will be considered on an individual basis.

Post 16 students and mobile devices

Arrangements for Post 16 students will be different to the rest of the school. This is in light of the evidence at Astley Cooper that these students do use the devices responsibly and sensibly to aid learning rather than for social interaction. Post 16 students will be permitted to use their devices in the study and communal areas of the sixth form and in lessons under the instruction of a teacher. Post 16 students are not to have any devices or headphones visible or heard in any other areas.

Yours sincerely

Mr Daddow
Senior Assistant Headteacher

