

# THE ASTLEY COOPER SCHOOL



## Mobile Devices Policy

Updated July 2022

Headteacher: Mr S Orsborne

St Agnells Lane, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 7HL

Tel (01442) 394141

Fax: (01442) 401407

E-mail [admin@astleycooper.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@astleycooper.herts.sch.uk)

## 1. Introduction

This policy encompasses Digital Technologies including the internet and electronic communications including the use of mobile devices such as phones, headphones, earpods, laptops, iPods, Kindles, smart watches, tablets, and other wireless technology. This policy was introduced in light of increasing concerns around the time staff were taking to resolve issues around social media and the detrimental impact this is having on student's mental health and learning.

It takes into consideration the Department for Education (DfE) guidance [click here](#), it is so important for students to focus on their education while in school and therefore this guidance on mobile devices during the school day removes any ambiguity around this. Exam regulations do not permit any mobile devices and adherence to this is critical which the students will also be well prepared for. The school also has an obligation to ensure students are educated about being safe online and further information on this can be found in the E-Safety and Data Security policy

## 2. Key stage 3 and 4 (Years 7 to 11)

Phones and other devices including personal laptops, fit bits, smart watches and headphones are not to be seen or heard on site from 08.15 until after 3.15pm. The site refers to all buildings, grounds, pathways and playground areas that form Astley Cooper School

## 3. Post 16

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

## 4. Devices on trips

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

## 5. Staff

Staff are not to use mobile phones for personal reasons around the school site or within classrooms where they are coming in to contact with students. The only exception to this is where a member of staff is on duty and may use a mobile phone in an emergency or completing school based work.

## 6. Consequences for misuse

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

- The device will be handed to office staff. Parents/Carers will receive a text message informing them that their student has a 30 minute same day detention. Once the detention is completed the student may collect their device from reception.

## 7. Special Consideration

Parents / carers can apply to Astley Cooper School for special consideration to not adhere to the policy. Such requests will be looked at on a case by case basis and would normally but not exclusively relate to issues around disability, SEND or medical issues. Any request must be made in writing to the Headteacher. An email request or phone request will not be considered.

## 8. Astley Cooper School 1:1 Device Scheme

If you have a device through the school's 1:1 device scheme, these can be brought into school for use during lessons if a specific request has been made by the teacher. They should not be seen or used during the school day (08:15 to 3.15pm) for any other reason. Post 16 should follow their specific guidance.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Can my child still bring their phone to school?**

Of course! Many of us are parents and we appreciate why you would want your child to have a phone on the way to or from school. They just need to be kept out of sight – for example in bags or lockers – and not used until 3.15pm

### **What if I need to contact my child at school?**

In an emergency simply phone the school office on 01442 394141 and the message will be passed to them. In fact, this is actually quicker than trying to contact them directly

### **What if my child feels that they urgently need to contact me? They might need me to drop something in that they have forgotten**

Realistically, these occasions occur very rarely, if at all. Our staff are trained and equipped to handle the vast majority of issues that can arise on any school day. However, if they desperately need to contact you before 3:15pm, they approach their head of Year / Form tutor or the School reception

### **I am concerned about my child's phone being confiscated. How can I help them to avoid this?**

The easiest way to avoid any problems is to encourage your child to get into a strict routine of turning their phone off as they approach the school. It should then be placed out of sight

### **Is the school allowed to confiscate my child's phone?**

Yes, the school is legally allowed to confiscate a phone

### **My child has left their phone on and needs to turn it off. What should they do?**

Any member of staff can be approached about this. The student should be prompt and honest and ask the member of staff if they can turn their phone off. Speaking to a member of staff first will avoid any potential conflicts

### **You are supposed to be preparing children for the world of work. Doesn't possession of a phone prepare them for the real world?**

As a society, we are only now becoming aware of the full scope of what young people have been accessing online over the last few years. There is no wider place in the working world for toxic comments, threats, access to explicit material and inappropriate filming. We have been moved to a position where we feel that our students have to be protected from these issues, as have many other secondary schools across the UK. Our existing ICT resources give us all of the real-world applications that we need. We also note that many workplaces are introducing phone restrictions of their own, so in this respect, we are preparing our young people in a realistic way

**Won't this be detrimental to their education in certain lessons?**

No. Astley Cooper has a good level of ICT capacity. We also have a bank of laptops, which can be booked by any teacher and used in lessons as and when mobile technology would be of benefit

**As the restriction ends at 3:15pm, can phones be used on site after that time?**

Yes, although we will take the necessary steps if we feel that they are being used to promote negative interaction between students

**What if my child needs to tell the time?**

There are clocks in every room. If a child has difficulty reading a clock face, they could always ask either other children or staff. Cheap digital watches are also readily available

**Does this restriction also apply to i-Watches?**

Yes

**How will I find out if my child is in detention?**

If this is the case, you will always be contacted via the details that you have given us. If in any doubt, do call the school and we will verify for you

**What if school needs my child to do something after school?**

We will always contact you if this is the case

**Doesn't this inhibit access to Google Classroom?**

There should never be any need to access this app - or any others that we use - during the school day. Access should be part of a routine at home. We would strongly recommend that students check Google classroom before leaving for school in the morning and when they first come home after school.

**What about access to my child's timetable?**

This should be checked at home, when the student is preparing for the school day ahead. Students should have stuck their timetable into a planner or folder, or at least made a note of it in a safe place. If this is a change for your child, we would recommend that you have one timetable on display at home, one kept in a safe place at home and one in the student's bag. They can then make a note of what they need for the day ahead