



**R.E.A.L. Education Limited**

## **Learner Mobile Phone Policy**

**(R.E.A.L. Education Ltd.)  
(R.E.A.L. Independent Schools, Hinckley)  
(R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision Schools)**



## 1. Purpose

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The Mobile Phone Policy supports our behaviour policy and enables learners to use the technology in a responsible and safe manner. The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that staff, learners, parents and carers take carefully thought through and well informed steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at the R.E.A.L. The sheer power of modern smartphones as an ever-present additional and highly versatile tool for teaching and learning can also not be ignored by a centre of education in the twenty-first century.

This policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety and enhanced learning) can continue to be enjoyed by our learners.

Learners, their parents or carers must understand the expectations before bringing mobile phones onto our sites. This policy also applies to learners during trips, camps and extracurricular activities and covers all learners.

## 2. Rationale

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R.E.A.L. recognises that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety.

R.E.A.L. also recognises the multiple uses made of modern smartphones by young people; many of which immerse them in learning. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently. Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the child's Learning Manager/Provision Manager remains a vital and most appropriate point of contact and can ensure learners can be reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.

## 3. Responsibility

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It is the responsibility of learners who bring mobile phones to R.E.A.L. to abide by the expectations outlined in this document. The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or carers.

Parents/carers should always be aware if their child brings a mobile phone to R.E.A.L. Parents/carers must recognise the high monetary value and attractiveness of mobile phones and other technology. In allowing their children to bring items of such value into R.E.A.L. and whilst we will do everything to mitigate against loss, theft or damage, it is the parents/carers that must carry the risk were there to be such an unfortunate occurrence.



#### 4. Acceptable uses

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Mobile phones and earphones/buds should be switched off or to silent (no vibrate) and kept out of sight at all times throughout the day. A learner may only use a mobile phone in a lesson when it is agreed by a member of staff. Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the child's Learning Manager/Provision Manager remains a vital and most appropriate point of contact and can ensure learners can be reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.

While on R.E.A.L. premises, learners should always use their phone's soundless features when using it for text messaging, answering services, call diversion and vibration alert. R.E.A.L. recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, etc. In lessons, staff may wish to utilise these functions to aid teaching and learning and learners may have the opportunity to use their mobile phones in the classroom. On these occasions learners may use their mobile phones in the classroom only when permission has been given by the staff member and where there is an explicit and communicated learning objective/learning activity. Learners may listen to music in lessons if agreed by the staff member.

#### 5. Unacceptable uses

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Unless permission is granted, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos, videos, listen to music via headphones or use any other application. Devices may be confiscated if being used inappropriately. Mobile phones must not disrupt learning with ringtones, music or beeping.

Whilst learners who become ill during the day may wish to use their mobile phones to contact parents/carers, they must use the established procedure via the staff team. Learners are not allowed to use other learners' phones or equipment. Learners must not use their mobile phones to bully and threaten other students. This is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour and it will be dealt with very seriously.

Learners must not use their mobile phones to pass on/upload messages or to take videos or pictures of acts to slander, bully, denigrate or humiliate another learner. This also includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any learner or staff member. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

#### 6. Theft Damage and Safety

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Learners should mark their mobile phone clearly with their names/or other means of identification. To reduce the risk of theft during the day, learners who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not 'advertise' they have them. It is strongly advised that learners use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other learners, or if stolen). Learners must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords should not be shared. Except where negligence can be proven in



a court of law, R.E.A.L. accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. Lost and stolen mobile phones in the U.K. can be blocked across all networks making them virtually worthless because they cannot be used.

## **7. Inappropriate Conduct**

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Any learner caught using a mobile phone to cheat in exams or assessments will face serious consequences, including removal from that exam and potentially subsequent exams.

Learners with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls.

They should also not be used for any illegal uses such as sharing of nude/semi nude images of individuals under the age of 18.

Learners using mobile phones to bully other learners will face appropriate sanctions according to the behaviour policies.

## **6. Monitoring and Review**

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All members of staff will monitor the use of mobile phones and digital music players in accordance with this procedure.

The Head of Schools and school governors will review the situation on a regular basis to ensure that the procedure is appropriate and workable.