



EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Education, Communities & Organisational Development
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Dear Parent/Carer

Mobile Phone Use Policy

You will be aware from the media last week that Scottish Government has released mobile phone guidance on 15 August 2024 which is available on their website - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/mobile-phone-guidance-scotlands-schools/>. This guidance provides helpful advice for us and we will be working with our Head Teachers to further develop our guidance in due course.

Mobile devices/smart watches have become a significant distraction for those who own them and to those around them. Even when on "silent" these devices still often light up or make subtle noise during lessons with incoming messages or alerts. When completely silenced, a child or young person's desire to know if any calls or messages have come in, can lead to a constant checking of their phones when they should be concentrating on their lessons.

In addition, significant evidence suggests mobile phones are at times being used by groups of children and young people to communicate during learning time and make plans to simultaneously leave lessons. This leads to those involved missing out on valuable learning experiences and has a hugely detrimental impact on their learning and ultimately their attainment and achievement. Many of our schools have already created guidance which dovetails with the national messages with some primary schools already getting children to hand in their phones first thing and collecting them at the end of the day. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's school if you are unaware of their policy.

As we review our own guidance we will not be imposing an outright ban on bringing mobile phones into schools as this would not be appropriate or measured recognising that they can be a supportive learning tool with many learners using applications and tools. For some children and young people, a phone is a necessity to support them for a number of reasons including for medical purposes. Most local authorities acknowledge that mobile phones have a part to play in securing children and young people's personal safety before and after school and on journeys to and from school. However, the school office remains the main point of contact for parents/carers in the event that you may need to contact your child during the school day.

We will write to you again when our guidance has been adopted by the Council as policy and through the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) which includes officers from Education, Teaching Unions and Professional Association representatives. In the meantime please discuss with your child(ren) acceptable use of mobile phones and their responsibility not to use them inappropriately.

Wishing all children and young people a positive year ahead.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne Cross
Head of Education (Chief Education Officer)