

# **Belfast High School**

## **MOBILE PHONE POLICY**

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Mobile phones are now a feature of modern society and most of our pupils own one. Increasing sophistication of mobile phone technology presents a number of issues for schools:

- The high value of many phones.
- The integration of cameras into phones leading to potential Child Protection and Data Protection issues.
- The potential to use the phone eg for texting whilst on silent mode.
- Cyber-bullying.

It is not realistic to prohibit phones being brought to school, nor is it logistically possible to collect phones in each morning and return them in the afternoon. It is our policy to allow pupils to have a mobile phone with them in school under the conditions outlined below.

1. Pupils may bring mobile phones into school but they must be switched off (not in silent mode) *and only used in an emergency*.
2. Many mobile phones have a built-in camera and these are particularly unacceptable when used in a school environment. The use of a camera phone in particular may lead to the suspension of the pupil concerned.
3. If a pupil breaches these rules the phone will be confiscated and given to the School Principal. Parents will be asked to come into school to collect it. Disciplinary action will be taken against the pupil(s) concerned.
4. Phones **must not** be taken into examinations under any circumstances. All breaches of this rule will be reported to the relevant examinations authority.
5. Mobile telephones with a recording or camera facility should not be used during any School organised activity e.g. school trips to record, take, store or distribute photographs/videos of any other person without his/her permission.

### **Emergencies:**

If a pupil needs to contact his/her parents/guardians he/she will be allowed to use a school phone. If parents need to contact children urgently they should phone the school office and a message will be relayed promptly.

### **Responsibility for mobile phones:**

Belfast High School accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents and pupils to ensure mobile phones are properly insured. This also applies to other items such as MP3 players, iPods etc, which should not be brought into school.