Mobile Phone Policy and Procedure

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Heathfield Community College is a phone free environment.

1. Rationale

Whilst mobile phones are a useful accessory in 21st century modern Britain, research suggests that the dependency that students have towards their devices is detrimental to their education and to their emotional well-being. The government has recently recognised this and issued guidance that prohibits the access to mobile phones through the school day. To facilitate this we use a system of lockable phone pouches.

2. Scope

The Pouch system at Heathfield Community College applies to students in Years 7-11 inclusive.

3. Policy Overview

Mobile phones are not to be seen or used in school or school based activities. Every student who brings a phone to school will secure their phone in their own pouch when they arrive at school. It is each student's responsibility to bring their pouch with them to school every day. Students will maintain possession of their own phones in the pouch and will not use them until their pouches are opened at the end of the school day at unlocking stations.

4. Daily process for students who wish to bring a mobile phone to school

As students arrive to school, they will:

1) Turn their mobile phone off
2) Unlock their pouch using one of the unlocking stations
3) Place their mobile phone inside the pouch with the top of the phone showing
4) Students must present the open pouch to a member of staff on duty who will touch the screen to confirm the phone is off. The staff member will lock it and hand it back to the student to put in their bag.
5) At the end of the day, students will open their pouch at an unlocking station, remove their phone, close their pouch and put it in their bag.
6) If staying for any after school activity, the phone remains in the pouch until students leave the site.

* Discreet but regular checks will be scheduled to ensure students are following this policy

5. Consequences for not following the policy correctly

The school will implement consequences for not adhering to the policy. These will include, but are not limited to, issues such as pouch damage / lost pouch / using a

dummy item in the pouch/using a mobile phone during school/using a data-connected smart watch.

If a student damages their pouch, is seen with a mobile phone, or their phone is not securely pouched throughout the day, duty staff will collect the phone/pouch and an email home will be sent in order for a parent/carer to collect the phone at the end of the working school day. Alternative arrangements may be considered through agreement with SLT.

The student will receive a consequence, and this will be logged on Arbor as 'mobile phone confiscated'. If a student has claimed they do not have a mobile phone but is identified as having one later, this will be logged as 'Defiance' and a consequence will be set.

Should a student refuse to place their phone in the pouch, they will be held at the College entrance until either, (a) they place their phone in their pouch, or (b) a parent/carer attends the College to collect the phone.

No student will be allowed into the College in possession of a mobile phone not locked within a pouch.

If a student has deliberately damaged the pouch, this will need to be replaced at a cost of £20. Examples of damage include:

- Ripped fabric
- Cut
- Torn
- Bent/cut pin
- Signs of force to black button on flap.

Forgotten pouch:
If a student forgets their pouch, they must hand their phone in at the start of the day. They will be set a consequence for this. Their mobile phone will be securely stored for the school day and a log will be made on Arbor 'forgotten pouch'. The student will collect their phone at the end of the school day.

6. Exceptions

Students with Medical Needs: On receipt of medical evidence to confirm a mobile phone is needed for medical reasons (such as diabetes), a 'medical pouch' will be issued. These look identical to normal pouches, but have no locking mechanism, meaning that mobile phones can still be accessed.

Students who may require 'check ins' with home will be able to do this by agreement with their pastoral team.

Mobiles phones on trips access to phones on trips will be decided on a case-by-case basis evaluating the advantages against the risks and in line with DfE guidance. The guidance and requirements for each trip will be clearly set out by the Trip Lead and communicated to staff, students and parents in advance.

7. Sixth Form, Staff and Visitor Guidelines

- **Sixth Form students:** can only use their phone in designated areas, as specified in the Sixth Form Handbook.
- **Staff**: Staff are expected to be role models and should limit phone use to necessary situations, or in designated areas such as staff rooms or offices.
- **Visitors**: Visitors, including parents and carers, are asked to turn off or silence mobile phones during school visits to avoid distractions.

8. Liability

The school is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of mobile phones brought onto school premises, or of the pouches. Students bring mobile phones to school at their own risk.

9. Communication with Parents and Carers

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school reception or pastoral staff rather than their child's mobile phone during school hours for urgent matters.

10. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and aligned with the school's goals and the well-being of students.