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1 July 2022

Dear Parent/Carers, Students and Staff

Thank you to those who participated in the consultation relating to Stanground Academy becoming a 'no mobile phone' school for students from Monday 4 July 2022. The consultation has confirmed that the majority of parents/carers (78%) who participated, support the drive to reduce mobile phone usage throughout the day and minimise disruption to teaching and learning and 100% of staff are in full support of the Academy introducing a 'no mobile phone' policy during the school day. With this support, we can confirm that from Monday 4 July, Stanground Academy will become a 'no mobile phone' school for students, between the hours of 8:30am and 3.00pm (or for as long as students remain on school site).

We have listened to the concerns of parents/carers and students and would like to reassure them that we fully understand and support the need for students to carry their mobile phones to and from school for their personal safety and for the peace of mind. We also understand and appreciate the concerns raised about parents/carers needing to be able to contact their child/children and vice versa during the school day and that currently, this is often difficult because staff are unavailable or uncontactable. At present, the majority of our pastoral team staff spend a disproportionate amount of time dealing with issues relating to anti-social behaviour and conflicts between students, often relating to mobile phone misuse and cyber-bullying. This takes them away from being readily available to pick up calls and answer queries as they come in. We anticipate a significant reduction in mobile phone concerns and issues from Monday 4 July and as a result, this will free up staff time to be more proactive, respond to calls/queries sooner and have more time to support students better with mental health, well-being, social and emotional support and focus on academic progress.

With regards to students giving their feedback, we received responses from 102 students across all year groups of which 40% stated they were not in support of reducing mobile phone usage throughout the day in order to minimise disruption to teaching and learning. Everyone's feedback and comments have been very helpful and have given us a better understanding of what steps we need to take to ensure the implementation of this policy is a success for all stakeholders.

### **Mobile phone usage changes from Monday 4 July 2022**

Research has shown that mobile phone usage during the school day is detrimental to progress being made at school. These are the key reasons:

- Mobile phones are being used in lessons, ring tones and message alerts are sounding which is directly impacting on teaching and learning and distracting students from their work.

- Students are using their mobile phones in between lesson change overs. This is impacting lesson start times, punctuality, and attendance. Students arrive late whilst they 'take the call' or respond to a message which is causing direct conflict between students and staff.
- During social times, students are losing the desire to communicate positively with each other and develop and establish friendships as well as build and strengthen professional relationships with staff. This is hindering social and emotional development and impacting on their confidence to speak up and be heard.
- Excessive mobile phone usage can have a detrimental effect on student's mental health and wellbeing.
- Inappropriate mobile phone usage is a concern across the Academy and the frequency of which students being challenged by staff is increasing.
- Mobile phones are being used to access social media platforms. Some students are using the messaging tools within these platforms to send and receive hurtful and unpleasant communications. This has led to a disproportionate amount of time managing and dealing with this anti-social and unacceptable behaviour, taking the focus away from teaching and learning.

### **Changes that will occur from Monday 4 July 2022**

#### **'See it, Hear it, Take it'**

- Before a student enters the school gate, their phone must be switched off and placed in their bag or a pocket. If a phone is placed in a pocket, it must not be seen.
- This phone is now to remain in a bag/pocket until the end of the school day and until the student has exited the school site.
- Sixth Form students will be allowed to use their mobile phones in the Post 16 Study Room ONLY. They are not allowed to use them in any other part of the Academy building at any time. We trust that our Post 16 students will always act as positive role models to our younger students.
- Ear Pods or any other type of headphone (wireless or wired) will not be allowed in school.
- Smart watches can be worn providing the linked phone is switched off, or it is on airplane mode.

#### **The sanctions of breaking these rules are as follows:**

**Any student seen with their phone/ear pods/headphones, during the school day** will have their device(s) confiscated and locked away in the school safe. If this is the first offence, students may collect their item(s) from a senior member of staff at the end of the school day – from 3:20pm (main office).

**If it is the second offence** the phone/ear pods/headphones will be confiscated and locked away in the school safe. Parents/carers will need to come to the Academy to collect it (this will be after 4:00pm on any day of the week).

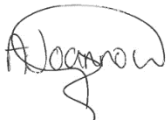
**Subsequent (third or more) offences** will lead to the phone/ear pods/headphones being confiscated and locked away in the school safe. A meeting will be called with the student's parent/carer post 4.00pm. The device will be returned to the parent/carer and an agreement will be made where the student will be required to surrender their mobile device to their House/Year Team leader at 8:35am daily, for the remainder of the half term. Further sanctions may be put in place for repeat offenders, including after school corrections and community service.

**If a student refuses to surrender a device to a member of staff** this will be referred to a senior leader. In these instances, the phone will be confiscated, and the student will be placed

in a correction until 6.00pm. Parents/carers will be notified. We trust that parents/carers will support the Academy in these instances as escalation to this stage is a direct reflection of a student being defiant.

From September, we plan to introduce several lunchtime clubs and activities to engage students during social times, which we hope will encourage new friendships to form and give some support to students who need it the most. Based on the feedback from the parent/carer and student consultations, we have put together a document of "Frequently Asked Questions" which I hope will cover the initial questions you may have. I write with confidence that based on responses from our survey, most parents/carers will be relieved that this change is being implemented and feel it is long overdue. I hope you will take the opportunity to talk to your child/children about this change so that the transition is smooth.

Yours faithfully



**Mrs Andry Joannou**  
**Deputy Principal**

## Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. My child has a medical condition which requires them to access an app on their phone to manage their condition. Will this be allowed?

*Yes. We will issue students with known medical conditions on file with a 'mobile phone exemption' pass. Students will need to share this pass with staff when using their phone during the school day.*

Q2. Can my child bring his/her phone to use on the journey to/from school?

*Yes. We fully understand and support the need for students to carry their mobile phones to and from school for their personal safety and for the peace of mind of parents/carers. Mobile phones must be switched off before entering the school gates in the morning and placed in a bag/pocket for the duration of the day. They must remain in bags/pockets until students leave the school site at the end of the day.*

Q3. What will happen if my phone is seen or heard during the school day?

*We will operate a strict 'No Mobile Phone' policy across the Academy. We will use the phrase 'See it, Hear it, Take it'. The best way to avoid having your phone confiscated and to avoid unnecessary sanctions is to ensure it remains in your bag/pocket at all times.*

Q4. Can I use my phone at break or lunchtimes?

*No. We will operate a strict rule of 'See it, Hear it, Take it' during the school day. This includes at break and lunchtimes, inside and outside.*

Q5. Can Post 16 students use their phones around the Academy?

*Post 16 students will be allowed to use their mobile phones in the Post 16 Study Room ONLY. They are not allowed to use them in any other part of the Academy building at any time. We trust that our Post 16 students will always act as positive role models to our younger students.*

Q6. Why are we becoming a 'No Mobile Phone' school?

*Research has shown that mobile phone usage during the school day is detrimental to progress being made at school. These are the key reasons:*

- Mobile phones are being used in lessons, ring tones and message alerts are sounding which is directly impacting on teaching and learning and distracting students from their work.*
- Students are using their mobile phones in between lesson change overs. This is impacting lesson start times, punctuality, and attendance. Students arrive late whilst they 'take the call' or respond to a message which is causing direct conflict between students and staff.*
- During social times, students are losing the desire to communicate positively with each other and develop and establish friendships as well as build and strengthen professional relationships with staff. This is hindering social and emotional development and impacting on their confidence to speak up and be heard.*
- Excessive mobile phone usage can have a detrimental effect on student's mental health and wellbeing.*
- Inappropriate mobile phone usage is a concern across the Academy and the frequency of which students being challenged by staff is increasing.*
- Mobile phones are being used to access social media platforms. Some students are using the messaging tools within these platforms to send and receive hurtful and unpleasant communications. This has led to a disproportionate amount of time managing and dealing with this anti-social and unacceptable behaviour taking the focus away from teaching and learning.*

Q7. Will staff be allowed to use mobile phones?

*Staff are permitted to use their phones for professional purposes to access Class Charts, TEAMS, Outlook, SIMs, for 'On-call', and to call other staff eg, senior leaders, safeguarding team, attendance team, site support, admin support, ICT support, as well as emergency services as required, to ensure the smooth running and health & safety of all around the Academy.*

Q8. How can I contact my child or parent/carer during the school day?

*We appreciate that there will be occasions when urgent messages need to be passed to students from parents/carers and vice versa. In these situations, we ask that this is done by contacting main reception on 01733 821430 or through contacting the House Team/Year Team offices. In urgent situations, students can with permission from their class teachers go to their House Team/Year Team offices to request an urgent call be made to parents/carers.*

*The House teams will triage such requests and will always act to ensure the personal safety of any child in these situations. Our Deputy Heads of House are full time pastoral staff so should be your first point of contact. Our Heads of House are teaching staff so have teaching commitments throughout the day.*

**Attenborough**

Deputy Head of House - lbrown@stangroundacademy.org

Head of House - lwalton@stangroundacademy.org

**Bronte**

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Deputy Head of House - sgoodale@stangroundacademy.org

Head of House - chenderson@stangroundacademy.org

**Academy Office** - enquiries@stangroundacademy.org

01733 821430

Q9. Can I use my mobile phone during a lesson if a teacher says we can, E.g. Kahoot?

*Yes, but only if instructed to do so by the class teacher. We understand and appreciate the benefit of using mobile devices in lessons in these instances. However, anyone who is seen using their mobile device in lessons other than at times clearly stated by the class teacher will have their device confiscated, 'See it, Hear it, Take it'.*