



Conyers School

*Perseverando
Through
Perseverance*



The 1590 Trust incorporating Conyers School and Sixth Form, Bader, Bewley, Kirklevington, Layfield and Levendale Primary Schools

21 May 2024

Dear Parent,

Re: Personal Digital Technology Policy – June 2024 onwards

From Half Term 6 onwards, all personal digital technology will not be permitted at Conyers.

As you may be aware, last half term, we completed a full evaluation of our school. This involved surveys and panel discussions with staff, students, parents, and governors.

Following our whole school review, a significant area of focus for us, is the use of personal digital technology. Based upon feedback and research-informed guidance produced by the DfE, we have taken the decision to implement a new digital technology policy which will take effect from 3 June 2024.

All personal technology will no longer be permitted. Any devices seen or heard will be confiscated. This includes mobile phones, smart watches, headphones, speakers etc.

Accompanying this letter, we have provided detail of our rationale, and the approach we will take when personal technology is discovered.

We firmly believe that this is the right decision from both the education and mental health perspective of all students. Your support in working with us to make this significant change, will be very much appreciated. Should you have any further questions, please contact conyers@conyers.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Coleman
Deputy Headteacher

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Personal Digital Technology Policy – June 2024

Rationale

At Conyers we are committed to promoting an environment that prioritises the learning, mental health and wellbeing of our students. With this in mind, we have taken the decision to implement a 'not seen, not heard' personal digital technology policy across the school.

Our approach is in line with guidance published by Department for Education in February 2024. We believe that this policy will contribute positively to the overall wellbeing of our students, promote healthy habits, and create a conducive learning environment in terms of:

1. Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing:

- Excessive social screen time and constant connectivity have been linked to increased stress, anxiety, and reduced sleep quality among students.
- By limiting social and passive use of mobile technology use during school hours, we aim to provide students with a much-needed break from digital distractions, allowing them to focus on their studies and mental wellbeing.

2. Development of Social Skills and Communication:

- Prohibiting mobile technology encourages students to engage in face-to-face interactions, fostering the development of crucial social skills and communication abilities.
- By promoting real-life connections, we aim to cultivate a supportive and inclusive school community.

3. Focus on Learning and Avoiding Distractions:

- Personal mobile technology can be a major source of distraction in the classroom, hindering students' ability to fully engage with their learning.
- By removing this distraction, students can better concentrate on their studies, leading to improved academic performance.

Personal Digital Technology Protocols

All digital technology (including mobile phones, smart watches, headphones, personal tablets not connected to school systems, and other personal portable technology) are not permitted to be used anywhere on site by students in Years 7 – 11. Sixth Form students are expected to only use devices in Sixth Form specific social spaces.

As students arrive on site, devices must be fully **powered off** (not placed on silent) and placed in bags (not pockets or kept anywhere on a student's person). Devices cannot be used at any point whilst on school site. This includes during lessons, between lessons and social times. Devices can only be switched on and used as students leave at the end of their school day.

There is no requirement for students to bring personal technology to school. Conyers is not responsible for devices brought to school. We therefore advise students to leave devices at home.

The following protocols outline our policy and the consequences for non-compliance:

STAGE 1: Immediate Confiscation:

- If a student is seen with a device, they will be requested to hand it over immediately. Their details will be recorded, and the device will be stored in Reception.
- Students can collect their device from Reception at the end of the school day.
- Repeat offences will result in devices not being returned to students. Instead, devices will be confiscated and parents will be required to collect devices on behalf of their child. This will be considered a serious behaviour concern and escalated sanctions will be issued in line with the school behaviour policy.
- Refusal to hand over a device will escalate to stage 2. Escalated defiance / refusal behaviours will escalate to stage 3.

STAGE 2: Refusal Referral and Same Day Detention:

- If a student refuses to hand over their device, this will be referred to the Pastoral team to investigate.
- The response team will visit the student to confiscate the device and a **same day** after-school detention will be issued. Parents will be informed.
- Continued refusal will escalate to stage 3.

STAGE 3: Immediate Suspension:

- Students who refuse to hand over their device or demonstrate escalated defiance / refusal behaviours to the will be suspended in line with the school behaviour policy.
- Suspension will require a reintegration meeting with parents.

Wider Arrangements

Checking Processes: Periodic checks may be conducted to ensure any devices are in school and switched off. If any mobile devices are found not in bags or switched on during the school day, the above process will be enacted.

Communication with home by students: If necessary, communication with parents can be facilitated through Student Reception. Parents are encouraged to contact or deliver messages via Reception.

Medical exemptions: Students with medical exemptions, where similar Apps/monitoring systems cannot be linked to iPads (e.g. diabetes monitoring) will be issued with a 'green mobile access card' to permit use in school for medical purposes only.

Sixth Form are directed to not use mobile phones whilst moving around the site or during lessons. Sixth Form should only use their devices in Sixth Form social spaces or during non-study room study periods.

Staff: Other than school related business, staff are encouraged not to use devices in student facing spaces.