



Corby Business Academy

Academy Way
Gretton Road
Corby
Northamptonshire
NN17 5EB

Tel: 01536 303120

Email: enquiries@corbybusinessacademy.org

Web: www.corbybusinessacademy.org

Principal: Simon Underwood

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are very much looking forward to welcoming students back to the Academy on Monday after what we hope was an enjoyable and restful break for you all.

At the end of last term, we asked you to complete a survey on mobile phones as part of our policy review. The wealth of research into the detrimental impact of mobile phones on learning and as well as the safeguarding risks they pose is growing and conclusions align with the concerns you expressed in the survey. The most recent studies in educational research suggest that increased mobile device usage:

- **Reduces** reaction time, task performance, learning enjoyment, knowledge retention and academic outcomes.
- **Increases** poor behaviour, academic dishonesty, anxiety, bullying and poor-quality sleep.

Our staff and parent surveys also highlighted that 73% of teachers and over 57% of parents believe that mobile phones have a negative impact on student learning. Furthermore, 90% of staff at the Academy feel that our current policy is not consistently implemented, and it is therefore right that we address this now.

With 90% of parents reporting that they understand and are satisfied with the currently policy, we have made very few changes, but focussed on making our expectations and procedures more explicit. This will be reinforced with training for staff to ensure a consistent approach, student assemblies on the first day back and a commitment to ensuring personal development education supports all students to be able to regulate engagement with their devices safely and appropriately. The updated policy can be found on the next page, but some key highlights are:

- Any mobile device (including headphones) seen or heard in the school building during the school day will be confiscated by staff.
- They should be stored in bags or the pockets of outside coats before students enter the building.
- Devices can be used at break and lunch time in outside spaces ONLY.
- Repeated failure to meet expectations will require parents/carers to collect confiscated phones.
- Sanctions will be issued in line with the existing behaviour policy.

We appreciate you taking the time to reinforce these expectations with your child before they return to school so we can have a purposeful and productive start to the new term and year.

If you wish to discuss further, then please contact me via email at kerry.prior@corbybusinessacademy.org. Thank you for your continued partnership.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K. Prior
Senior Vice Principal

Mobile Phone Policy Update (January 2024)

Rationale:

At Corby Business Academy we understand that mobile phones are an integral part of life for our students in the 21st Century, but that they can also pose significant risk to student safety, student learning and staff time.

As an institution striving for the best academic outcomes for our learners, the rationale for our approach is underpinned by current research and government guidance. The banning of mobile phones from school premises adds up to the equivalent of an extra week's schooling over a child's academic year. Research published by the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics. "Communication: The Impact of Mobile Phones on Student Performance" found that after schools banned mobile phones, the test scores of students aged 16 improved by 6.4%. According to Beland and Murphy, a phone ban produced improvements in test scores among students, with the lowest-achieving students gaining twice as much as average students. The ban had a greater positive impact on students with special education needs and those eligible for free school meals, while having no discernible effect on high achievers.

Our most recent parental survey also indicates that 97% of our parents allow students to bring devices to school. Over 90% of parents cited the reason for this to be essential communication in emergency or during transport to and from school. Therefore, whilst we won't 'ban' phones on site, our expectations around their storage and use are tight to secure the greatest educational benefit.

Expectations and Procedure:

- Students are allowed to bring mobile devices to and from school to always ensure their personal safety.
- Corby Business Academy operates a 'See it, Hear it, Lose it' procedure for the use of all electronic devices within the school building.
- Students must not use a mobile device, smart watch or electronic device-including headphones-anywhere in the school building during the school day.
- This restriction is always in place while students are in the school building, this includes when students enter and leave at the end of the day. It is also in place during enrichment clubs.
- If a student chooses to bring their phone to school, then on arrival it should be switched off/on silent and kept completely out of sight, in a school bag or outside coat pocket. This needs to happen before students enter the building. It should not be seen or heard (including vibrate) from the moment students step inside and then throughout the school day.
- Any child found using or known to have used their phone during the school day will have the phone confiscated and returned at the end of the school day via reception where it will be held. Parents will be informed via EduLink when a phone has been confiscated.
- Phone confiscation will be tracked and if the child is a repeat offender, the school will request a parent/carer to come in and collect the phone from the school.
- Any refusal to hand a phone over to members of staff will result in a follow up sanction in line with the school's Behaviour policy. This would constitute a Stage 2 for 'Refusal to comply' and be escalated to the Senior Leadership team.
- Students will be able to contact home by approaching their Head of Year/Student reception/staff on duty/staff running clubs if they require to speak with their parent/carer during the school day.
- We will ensure that any important messages are relayed to students through the day if parents/carers leave a message at reception.

Break and Lunch Exceptions:

- Students will be able to access their devices during their break and lunch only. This must only occur in the designated outside break areas (outside seating and astro turf). Mobile devices need to be out of sight before students re-enter the building when the above expectations and procedures resume.
- Use of devices as at break and lunch must be appropriate. Any filming, photography, access to inappropriate sites or hurtful messaging will result in this privilege being removed for these individuals.

***Please note that if a member of staff does not physically see the phone, but it can be heard then this can still be confiscated. Any exceptions for students using devices for medical reasons or as part of an EHCP will be communicated with parents.**