

## HANDHELDS & MOBILE DEVICES

The group explored the issues related to the use of handhelds in the classroom. They then moved on to discuss specific issues related to mobile phone use for teaching and learning.

### **What is a Handheld or Mobile Device?**

The group identified what we consider to be included in the category. Mobile devices are all Phones and Smart Phones. Handhelds are any portable device that students use which can access the internet: iPads, iPods, Asus eee pads, Nintendo DS, e-readers like a Kindle, Blackberry Playbook, Nintendo Ds, Sony PsP etc.

### **Why use Handhelds & Mobile Devices?**

Three main reasons were identified by the handhelds practitioner research group.

**Finance:** With less funding available in the UK schools are needing to review how they are spending their money. Phones and handhelds are effectively a 'free tool' that can be used by schools.

**Teaching & Learning:** All skills within the current curriculum subjects encourage reflection on learning and evidence of progression. Handhelds offer this whilst allowing students to build research and revision skills, in preparation for exams. They also encourage students to become more independent learners (every school could evidence this) enabling the teacher to provide more focussed and efficient support to students in classes.

**Communication:** Using and harnessing handhelds can promote engagement in some small groups. But with research being published daily, in all countries, showing how those within the work place and school students use technology as a tool, handhelds and their use can promote better communication channels within the school community (parents, students and teachers) and the local community.

### **Guidelines**

Within the discussions, the group identified some basic guidelines about using handhelds. These are below split into 2 categories; guidelines for schools and guidelines for teachers.

### **SCHOOLS**

#### **Do:**

- Have a clear and comprehensive policy on the use of handhelds. This helps teachers, parents and students be clear about the acceptable use and sanctions involved (see appendix for current policies in use in schools)  
See appendix
- Keep parents informed! Write a formal letter to parents explaining the use of handhelds in school and why they are being used, along with the policy (including rewards and sanctions)  
see appendix

- Link your policy to other school policies; bullying, internet use, social networking etc. It should be clear that any behavior on a handheld that is not acceptable when spoken or written, is equally unacceptable when any form of new media is being used.
- Ensure your students have a lockable area to cover insurance issues (i.e. lockers or a locked classroom at lunchtimes) to store their handheld.
- Encourage a working group of students and teachers to work and research together, reviewing the way handhelds are being used to enhance learning and teaching within the classroom.
- Being with a small trial and then roll out the the whole school. Each school is different and will experience separate teething problems. Make sure these have all be trialled and tested, and they are covered in your policy.
- Expect a small spike in bullying reports. Once this is an acceptable tool to use, students are more likely to report bullying which has already been occurring, when it is clear the same sanctions and rules apply, this will reduce again.
- Consult the students! They often have more knowledge and ideas than the teachers! And once included, they will encourage and 'police' policy for you too!
- Be clear that equipment is brought in at the students own risk, and offer to provide a small amount of equipment for those who do not own or are not able/allowed to bring their own kit in.
- Encourage different types of kit. This helps limit bullying about who has the latest phone, and encourage students to think critically and select the best tool for the job.
- Use your trial group of teachers to share resources and information with those interested in the work!

#### **DON'T:**

- Assume that if they are banned the students will not use them, they are easier to monitor on the top of the table, like a homework diary, than under a table on someone's lap.
- Assume that students know how to use them in a responsible way - they need to be taught, just like emails and social networking.
- Assume that parents are aware of their children's use of handhelds - often they are not.

#### **TEACHERS**

##### **Do:**

- Make sure you have some 'experts' in each class (these can rotate on a half termly basis if needs be) so you do not end up a 'technology trouble shooter'.  
In a Maths class, one practitioner asks the class to select their own experts each half term. These experts are provided with a list of 3 websites where they can find info on lots of different handhelds. They are expected to evidence their research after the first week, so the teacher can ensure they are learning how to use the internet as a helpful guide. This is as well as their classwork being completed. They are rewarded using the school merit system each time they resolve a problem, but only at the end of the lesson if they have also completed their classwork.
- Challenge the students to research and use the internet to explore, ask and answer questions!  
In a History class, students are asked to find 2 differing sources describing Charles 1. They then have to identify the 'most reliable' source, by answering a list of questions. In a Science Class, students had to play 2 revision games, critically review them, and then build an app for an android device to aid GCSE Science revision.
- Think about HOW and WHY you are using Handhelds. They are a tool just like any other - how do you want to use them? If you are simply using them to access information, how are they different to a school textbook?  
Quote from a languages teacher "I could simply ask students to read a German newspaper. In fact, sometimes I do for a starter. However, using interactive tools - collaborative games, virtual worlds, skype discussions etc encourages my students to communicate, in German, with Germans! The school could never provide enough equipment for each student to do this for many spoken elements of my lessons. Using the students handhelds enables me to set this as a task. Pronunciation and vocab is vastly improved as a result!"
- Play with a couple of handhelds so you are comfortable with using them before you ask students to do something. You don't need to understand how each one works, but having a little confidence, goes a long way!
- Use them interactively. Internet research lessons can be great, but really explore the functionality. Texting, bluetooth, building apps, creating podcasts and sharing to a wider audience are all relatively simple tasks but can really challenge students thinking.  
In a Politics A-level lesson, the students created podcasts for their four topics. They uploaded them and the critiqued and edited the work each other had produced. In a PSHE lesson, the plenary is texting a question to be answered for next lesson. These questions are displayed on the projector.
- Plan like any other lesson! Handhelds do not mean less planning!  
Teachers agree that it is like any lesson encouraging student independence, more planning, leads to a lesson where the teacher can facilitate the learning.
- Sanction inappropriate use or comments in the same way you would sanction off task or comments in your classroom in any other guise!

In any lesson, laughing at/bullying/rude/inappropriate comments or off task actions result in a sanction. It should be no different if this occurs whilst using a handheld through text, messaging, social networking or any other medium.

**DON'T:**

- Assume that the students will be able to use every type of handheld. But, they can find out how, using the internet!
- Assume the school will be able to buy a device for each child to keep the same type of devices working. students, and parents, like choice!
- Ever accept the excuse that the student did not know/understand the rules - if you have made them clear, they need to follow them.

## Stages of Use

The group identified 3 stages of Handheld use a school might go through and how they might develop their use of handhelds further:

**Stage 1: Handhelds and mobiles are banned in school. They are not used at all and teachers are not using them independently. Please see the case study below to help.**

The school developed a working group of teachers & students who were interested in using handhelds within the classroom. Parents of all students were written to, informing them that the use of handhelds was not compulsory, and there was no expectation that they would buy handhelds but sometimes teachers may give classes the option to bring in their own.

The group agreed a set of acceptable guidelines to be used:

1. Behaviour rules remain the same
2. You can only use the handhelds when asked to by a teacher
3. If a handheld is being used inappropriately (i.e. to play games, message others, use social networking sites when asked not to) then a warning, followed by a detention and confiscation of the device would be occur.
4. If you do not know how to do something you have been asked to do (i.e. use bluetooth) you have 5 minutes to see if someone else in the class or the internet can help. If not, you need to share a handheld with someone else.
5. Theft of Handhelds will be dealt with in the same way any other theft is in school, with the same sanctions.
6. Bullying will be dealt with in the same way all other bullying in school is, with the same sanctions.

The school group used their experiences over one term to build some resources in a shared area (websites you can text to, suggestions for how to use them for simple tasks like looking up a word on dictionary.com, plenaries like bluetoothing a question to a school computer, texting onto a screen your best learning from the day, posting onto a twitter stream the bits you most enjoyed about the lesson or a short lesson summary and starter activities etc). Over the next term, they continued their use of handhelds, some other teachers and some parents were invited to join. They began to write their school Handhelds policy.

The policy was approved by the Senior Leadership Team the following half term. During this term, all form tutors were asked to teach a scheme of work on appropriate behaviour on phones. Lessons dealt with bullying, sex texting, fall outs, safety (i.e. internet safety - information details etc, mugging etc.). At the end of term, in preparation for the school year, a letter was issued to parents saying the school would be running a

Bring Your Own scheme from September (see appendix 2) and how this can have a positive impact on learning.

From September, the school policy was that students with a phone, left it in their bag, turned off (or on silent) until they were asked to use it. Teachers could use phones if they wanted to, but it was not compulsory.

**Stage 2: Handhelds and mobiles are used in school by some teachers. They are brought in at the students own risk, and are confiscated if seen in public areas or are being used when they have not been asked to.**

The School gathered information from the teachers who have been using Handhelds with students, within lessons. They used these 'experts' to build and develop a clear comprehensive policy. This included the clear guidelines on the use of phones.

The group agreed a set of acceptable guidelines to be used:

1. Behaviour rules remain the same
2. You can only use the handhelds when asked to by a teacher
3. If a handheld is being used inappropriately (i.e. to play games, message others, use social networking sites when asked not to) then a warning, followed by a detention and confiscation of the device would occur.
4. If you do not know how to do something you have been asked to do (i.e. use bluetooth) you have 5 minutes to see if someone else in the class or the internet can help. If not, you need to share a handheld with someone else.
5. Theft of Handhelds will be dealt with in the same way any other theft is in school, with the same sanctions.
6. Bullying will be dealt with in the same way all other bullying in school is, with the same sanctions.
7. Phones/handhelds are to be left on tables, on top of homework diaries, turned on silent, until students are asked to use them.
8. Students without handhelds will be provided with them by the school.

The policy was approved by the Senior Leadership Team. The school invested in a number of handhelds (iPod Touch and goole android pdas) Parents were able to buy them on a weekly buy back scheme. Otherwise, they were loaned to students on a daily basis. The school policy was implemented at Easter. Students first task was to put their school timetable onto their handheld. Every student managed in some way.

Phones were used within the classroom setting and to manage administration. Students and their parents received texts if they were missing from a lesson or were not in school. News was sent via text (i.e. about strike days, snow days etc). Parents could also text in information and concerns to keep the school informed. Within the classroom,

phones were used to access the internet, use forums to reflect upon and aid each others learning etc. They were part of the tools used regularly by some teachers and occasionally by others.

Inappropriate use of handhelds and confiscation was greatly reduced (it was easier to spot students texting/playing games under the table). The school asked students to put homework into their handhelds, there was no longer a need for homework diaries. They became optional for the following school year. The school saved money, and with the savings, were able to invest in more specialist equipment. They began to look at how they might use these tools to build better links within the school community.

**Stage 3: Handhelds have been trialled, are used consistently in lessons and as a learning tool across the school.**

Schools that have reached this stage have a password protected but open network where any device on the premises can access the internet.

Very few school have reached this stage and most are currently in stage 2.

# APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLE POLICY IN STUDENT PLANNERS

At (SCHOOL NAME) we are using social media sites to support and enrich learning as well as promoting e-Safety. These include creating blogs and communicating via Twitter. Social media is a rapidly growing medium; social media sites now account for more internet traffic than any other type of website. We want to embrace this technology and highlight how social media can be used for effective communication in an education or workplace setting.

With Years 7 and 8 we are using only internal means of Social networking via the Virtual Learning Environment. This will be moderated by staff and only accessible by staff and students.

Staff have been advised on sensible and safe use of social media and they are educating students to use it safely. As a parent we encourage you to stay involved in your child's internet use, expressing the same interest in their 'virtual life' as you would in their 'real world' activities. Social Media Safe Use Rules

1. Students may only use social media in school for educational purposes when instructed to do so by teachers\_
2. Students must not publish personal details on line such as addresses and mobile numbers
3. Students must never meet in person with somebody they have met online unless accompanied by a trusted adult
4. Students must never post anything online that isn't suitable for a wide audience – very few things are private when it comes to social media
5. Students must never use social networking to Cyber Bully – this will be dealt with very seriously by the school and may result in police intervention
6. If anything makes you feel uneasy when using social media, tell a trusted adult immediately or report it to CEOP

For more comprehensive advice on Internet Safety, please visit the CEOP website:  
[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

I do / do not (delete as appropriate) give permission for my child to use external social media in school.

Signed (parent/carer)

.....

I agree to use social media in accordance with the 'safe use rules' and understand that not following these could be putting my personal safety and/or the welfare of others in jeopardy.

Signed (Student)

.....

## APPENDIX 2: PARENT'S LETTER

Dear Parents,

With the completion of the school wireless network, approval has been granted for the use of personal wireless devices (such as Notebooks, Laptops, or Netbooks – and now including the iPad, iPod Touch, or Nintendo DSi) in our classrooms in order to access online resources for enhancing student learning.

This is not compulsory – there is no expectation for parents to purchase their child a device and certain points need to be made clear to students and parents before any personal property is brought onto the school site:

- Any form of insurance will need to be decided upon by parents. The school WILL NOT be liable for lost or damaged personal property;
- Devices should be clearly engraved or labelled in order to be easily identified, they are not to be left at school overnight;
- Student guidelines for the classroom around these devices include points such as safely moving the devices around the room, keeping liquids away, not sharing personal devices, charging, security and the like. These will be discussed in-depth during class;
- In the specific case of small devices such as the iPad, iPod Touch or Nintendo DSi please refer to the separate attachment;
- Instructions will be provided in regard to changes needed to allow access to the internet on the school wireless network;
- The collaborative nature of the work we will undertake is Web 2.0 based, and therefore no extra software will be required by the school (we do however advise up to date antivirus software);
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Please feel free to direct any questions regarding this trial of e-Learning in the classroom to myself or Mrs. X.

Regards

Mr / Mrs / Miss .....

I give permission for my child ..... to bring their own internet-ready device to school for use in the classroom and school.

I acknowledge that the school will not be held liable for any damage to or theft of the device as a result of this decision.

Signed: ..... Date:.....

**“By 2015, 80% of people will be accessing the internet from a mobile device such as the iPad, iPod Touch, or Nintendo DSi – mobile device computing will outstrip desktop use.”  
Morgan Stanley 2010**

These ultra-small devices enable:

- Use for Internet Access/reference tool
- Email Access
- Still Camera and Video Camera – including some editing software
- Sound/Voice recording
- Apps eg. Maths, brain training
- eBook readers
- Diaries / note-takers
- Music/Book playback
- Maps/GPS/compass
- Video Conferencing
- Dictionary, Thesaurus, calculator etc

Over the past 30 years user interfaces have progressed through text, Graphical Interfaces, and now touch. Input devices have moved from keyboard to mouse, and now on to fingers. Device usage has moved through content creation, to communication, and now we focus on consumption and interaction.

**To start, mobile technology is helping to solve the two challenges facing education today: students' desire to learn differently, and students' need to learn differently. The upshot is, these digital natives now have in their hands the tools to shape their own education in once unimagined ways. They can research, on the spot, any topic of interest. And they can capture the moment, whether it's in a picture, a video, or a blog entry.**

**- Mary McCaffrey 2011**

With this in mind, and in the interest of continuing to allow students to learn in a technologically-rich learning environment, the school would like to trial the use of students' own small mobile devices during class learning sessions for Years 5 & 6.

This move will entail adherence to a new set of rules, personal and property safety, and etiquette:

1. All student devices must be **clearly labeled**.
2. **Students will be responsible for their own devices whilst at school** - where the device is kept is at the discretion of the parents in consultation with their child. Some scenarios may be in the classroom, or in their pocket. Whilst all care will be taken, the school will not be liable for any loss or damage to the student device, irrespective of where the student chooses to store the device when not in use.
3. **Student will not be permitted to use the devices for non-educational purposes** such as games, at any time during the day.
4. **Students will not be permitted to make or receive telephone calls** or communicate with others outside of the school during lesson time (should their device have this capability).
5. **Students will not be permitted to use their device on the playground** during recess, lunch, or before or after school.
6. **Taking photos or filming video** for any other purpose other than as directed by the teacher is strictly forbidden.

## APPENDIX 3: SECONDARY SCHOOL ACCEPTABLE HANDHELD USE POLICY

In using the School's ICT system or other electronic devices or services ("System") as a member of the (school name) Community you are agreeing to abide by this Acceptable Use Policy:

- **Respect Yourself:** I will show respect for myself through my actions. I will consider the data I use or communicate by means of the System so that it is appropriate. I will consider what personal information about my life, experiences or relationships I use or communicate using the System is appropriate.
- **Protect Yourself:** I will ensure that data I use or communicate will not put me at risk. I will report any inappropriate behaviour directed at me. I will protect passwords, accounts and resources. I will not use or communicate any data which is inappropriate.
- **Respect Others:** I will show respect to others at all times and communicate with them in an appropriate manner. I will show respect for other people in my choice of websites and I will not visit sites that are inappropriate. I will not abuse my rights of access and I will not enter other people's personal data spaces.
- **Protect Others:** I will protect others by reporting abuse and not forwarding or sharing inappropriate data.
- **Respect your Education:** I will use the System solely as directed by my teachers and for the purposes of teaching and learning only. I will only use appropriate data or services.
- **Protect your Education:** I will report any misuse of the System. I will not use or communicate anything that would bring the (school name) Community into disrepute.

**All ICT use is logged and monitored; violations of the AUP will be dealt with on an individual basis in line with whole school behaviour policies.**

Clicking **I accept** means that you agree to the Acceptable Use Policy.