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Mobile Phone Policy

Reference: TP/WP/Safeguarding

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| Strategic Board Approval | October 2020 | |
| Reviewed and Updated | November 2024 | |
| Next Review Date | November 2028 | Review cycle every 4 years |
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Who should use this policy?

This policy will apply to all staff, pupils, parents, volunteers and visitors attending any school within the Academies for Character and Excellence.

This policy will be reviewed every four years unless significant legislative changes occur before the review date.

Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Introduction and aims..... | 2 |
| 2. Roles and responsibilities | 2 |
| 3. Use of mobile phones by staff..... | 2 |
| 4. Use of mobile phones by pupils..... | 4 |
| 5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors..... | 5 |
| 6. Loss, theft or damage | 6 |
| 7. Monitoring and review | 6 |
| 8. Appendix 1: Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement for pupils | 7 |
| 9. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school..... | 8 |
| 10. Appendix 3: Mobile phone information slip for visitors..... | 9 |

1. Introduction and aims

At the Academies for Character and Excellence we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents, volunteers, visitors and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Headteacher and the DSL are responsible for monitoring the policy and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

The Safeguarding and Inclusion Lead will review this policy every four years.

2.2 Local Advocate Board

As part of the Safeguarding portfolio, local advocates will be monitoring Safeguarding across all schools. Part of this will be appropriate use of mobile phones and adhering to the mobile phone policy.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while children are present/during contact time excluding the DSL. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The headteacher will decide on a case-by case basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number [insert number] as a point of emergency contact.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information. Please refer to the Trust's GDPR Policy.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their personal contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils. Please refer to the Trust's Online Safety policy.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

3.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct

- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

3.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

3.6 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils are allowed to bring a personal mobile phone to school for the following reasons.

- Travelling to school by themselves
- Young carers who need to be contactable

If pupils do bring in personal mobile phones they are to hand them in to the office or a nominated member of staff as soon as they enter the school premises.

Pupils are not allowed to use their mobile phone whilst on school premises.

4.1 Sanctions

If a pupil breaches this policy, the following sanctions will apply:

- Phones be confiscated until the end of the school day
- The pupils' parents will be contacted about the breach
- The phone will be returned at the end of the day from either the school office or nominated member of staff
- Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

The school have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows you to search a pupil's phone if

you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

Certain types of conduct, cyber bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including directors, local advocate and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

All visitors and volunteers will be given key information on the use of mobile phones upon arrival at school.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

Parents must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, and are stored securely when not in use such as:

- Inserting a slip of their full name in their phone case
- Labelling the phone cover with their full name

Pupils must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office or in a secure location and be returned at the end of the school day.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

7. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

8. Appendix 1: Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement for pupils

[insert school logo]

Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent') when handed into reception.
2. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
3. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
4. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
5. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
6. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
7. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
8. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
9. If you are found to have a phone on your person, you must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off and turn over your phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
10. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store these appropriately, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

9. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

| PUPIL DETAILS | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Pupil name: | |
| Year group/class: | |
| Parent(s) name(s): | |

The school has agreed to allow [pupil name] to bring [his/her] mobile phone to school because [he/she]:

- Travels to and from school alone
- Is a young carer

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its code of conduct/acceptable use agreement.

The school reserves the right revoke permission if pupils don't abide by the policy.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

Parent signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

| FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Authorised by: | |
| Date: | |

10. Appendix 3: Mobile phone information slip for visitors

Print out copies of this slip to give to visitors when they arrive at your school. If you have additional rules please include them.
Please put your school logo on the slip.

Use of mobile phones in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staff room or main office
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

Use of mobile phones in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to [insert location]
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
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