

Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy



Ellesmere College



MOBILE PHONE AND SMART TECHNOLOGY POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1. People today are fully immersed in technology and to a large extent it is part of every day life. Mobile phones are a part of modern society with information at our fingertips. However, it must be recognised that mobile phones may also be a source of harm or at the very least a distraction. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This means that some children, while at school, sexually harass, bully and control others via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups), and view and share pornography and other harmful content (KCSE 2024 – Section 137)¹.

2. Aim

2.1. The aim of this policy is to promote the safety and appropriate use of mobile devices, through establishing clear and acceptable guidelines for all users. The areas of risk this policy aims to mitigate against are:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **conduct:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and nonconsensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and
- **commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1. Any reference to mobile phones and/or Smart technology includes any technology that allows the user to connect with internet networks, directly or indirectly.
- 3.2. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobiles phones that cause the most concern and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation, bullying and control of others.
- 3.3. It is also recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

¹ [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91234/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_2024_-_GOV.UK.pdf)



- 3.4. When mobile phones are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.
- 3.5. We are aware that phones have access to the internet via 3G and 4G access and this is one of the reasons that phones are not allowed to be used during the day, unless allowed to do so by a member of staff and/or in line with this policy.

4. **Scope**

- 4.1. This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones (or similar smart technology devices) on the school site. This includes staff, volunteers, pupils, parents/carers, visitors and community users. The list is not exhaustive.

5. **Staff**

5.1. Mobile Phones for personal use

- 5.1.1. Staff should not make/receive personal calls/texts during contact time with children.
- 5.1.2. Staff should have phones for personal use on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag) during class time.
- 5.1.3. Mobile phones for personal use should not be used in a space where children are present, (e.g. classroom, dining hall corridor, playground).
- 5.1.4. Use of phones for personal use (including receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present, e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- 5.1.5. Staff must security protect access to their phone.
- 5.1.6. Staff should not use recording equipment on their personal mobile phones, for example to take recordings of children or to share images for personal use. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras, iPads or school phones.
- 5.1.7. Staff should report any usage of any mobile devices that cause them concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

5.2. Mobile Phones for work related purposes

- 5.2.1. We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of school related communication on off-site activities.
- 5.2.2. Where possible school mobiles should be used for phone contact with pupils.
- 5.2.3. Personal phones set up for College TEAMS, FROG, SOCS or school e-mail can be used for such purposes.
- 5.2.4. If an event needs to be recorded and school camera equipment is not available then personal mobile phones can be used in this instance. Images should be downloaded to the school network and deleted from the device as soon as possible after the event. This would normally be within 72 hours but could be longer if away on a residential trip.



6. Personal Mobiles – Pupils

We recognise that mobile phones are a part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping children to feel secure and safe, as well as a useful tool in education. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others. When pupils use the school network with their own laptops/tablets, filtering is in software is in place to prevent access to inappropriate material and sites, however, we are aware that phones have access to the internet via 3G and 4G access and this is one of the reasons that phones are not allowed to be used during the school day, subject to this policy.

6.1. School Day

6.1.1. Lower School

- Lower School pupils are permitted to bring a mobile phone to school but must leave it, turned off, in their locker during the school day.
- They may ask for permission to check their phone during break or lunch but this should not be the norm.
- During prep time permission can be sought from the duty teacher to access their phone for educational purposes.
- If pupils need to contact home in an emergency they should do so via the school office.
- Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy
- Whilst on school trips, phones should be switched off and placed in their bags. Permission may be sought to use the camera but other mobile features should not be accessed.
- Unauthorised use of a mobile phone will fall under the behaviour policy. The immediate action will be to confiscate the mobile phone.

6.1.2. Senior School

- Senior School pupils are permitted to bring a mobile phone to school but must leave it, turned off, in their locker during the school day.
- They may check their phone during break or lunch but this should take place in their locker rooms or House (subject to House rules). Phones should not be taken outside.
- During quiet time permission can be sought from the duty teacher to access their phone for educational purposes, this should not be the norm.
- If pupils need to contact home in an emergency they should do so via the House phone through their tutor, HsMs or Housemother.



- Whilst on school trips, phones should be switched off and placed in their bags. Permission may be sought to use the camera but other mobile features should not be accessed.
- Unauthorised use of a mobile phone will fall under the behaviour policy. The immediate action will be to confiscate the mobile phone.

6.2. Borders – after 5.30pm and before 8.30pm

6.2.1. Middle School and Lower School

- Pupils can use mobile phones at the end of the school day and in their free time subject to House rules.
- During prep time permission can be sought from the duty teacher to access their phone for educational purposes.
- Mobile phones and other smart technology should be handed into the duty teacher before lights out.
- Mobile phones should not be used in any of the school buildings, other than Houses or agreed events.

6.2.2. Sixth Form

- Pupils can use mobile phones at the end of the school day and in their free time subject to House rules.
- During prep time phones can be used for educational purposes
- Mobile phones should not be used in any of the school buildings, other than Houses or agreed events.

6.3. General rules

- Mobile Phones must not be taken into examinations.
- Mobile phones should not be taken to the dining hall, chapel, assemblies, changing rooms or toilets at any point.
- Loud speakers must not be used at any time on school site, or off site when under school rules.
- Head phones, ear buds etc. should not be used at any time when moving around the school site.
- If using a mobile phone on school transport, head phones, ear buds etc. should be used, so as not to distract the driver or disturb other pupils.
- Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone in circumstances during the School day (8.30am -5.30pm), that contravene this policy, the phone will be confiscated from the pupil and handed to a member of the Senior Management Team.



- Should a pupil be found to be using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a phone into school.
- Searching electronic devices²

In line with the school Behaviour and Discipline Policy:

- An electronic device such as a mobile phone or a tablet computer may be confiscated in appropriate circumstances in accordance with this policy. If there is good reason to suspect the device has been, or could be used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break school rules, any data or files on the device may be searched and where appropriate, data or files may be erased before the device is returned to its owner. Any data or files will only be erased if there is good reason to suspect that the data or files have been, or could be used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break school rules.
- If inappropriate material is found on an electronic device; pupils may be instructed to delete the material; retain it as evidence of a breach of College discipline or criminal offense; or hand it over to the police if the material is of such seriousness that police involvement is required.
- Pupils should not walk around the school using their mobile phones.
- Mobile phones can be used in House (subject to House rules).

7. Volunteers, Governors, Advisors and Contractors

- 7.1. All volunteers, governors, advisors and contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises.
- 7.2. On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones.

8. Parents and Visitors

- 8.1. While we would prefer parents and visitors not to use their mobile phones while on school premises, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents and visitors see their phones as essential means of communication at all times.
- 8.2. We therefore ask that parents' and visitors usage of mobile phones whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment.
- 8.3. We do allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones – but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.

² D of E Guidance: [Searching, Screening and Confiscation \(July 2022\)](#)



9. National Governing Body Rules

9.1. Where student athletes are part of NGB, then they must also abide by their regulations related to mobile phone use. Any breach in NGB rules may result in referral to the sports NGB.

10. Related Documents

- E-Safety Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy

11. Review

The annual review of this policy will be undertaken by the Deputy Head Pastoral who will take into account any guidance published by the DfE, ISI or other relevant bodies.

Authorised by:	Headmaster
Date:	October 2024
Reviewed by:	DHP
Date:	October 2024