Slough and Eton Church of England Business and Enterprise College

A Member of Slough and East Berkshire C of E Multi Academy Trust

Mobile Phone Policy

Owner:	Mr Peter Collins
Ratified by Governing Body:	
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1. Introduction and aims

At Slough and Eton we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our students, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for students, staff, parents/carers, visitors 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

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices, smartwatches, earphones and headphones.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's mobile phone guidance and behaviour guidance. Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is Keeping Children Safe in Education.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently 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 is responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and students accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of students throughout the school day.

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where students are not present (such as the staffroom) except for school-related school business such as including a student's timetable or accessing their school email account.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- 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-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01753 520824 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or students, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or students.

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

If your school uses classroom apps or programmes that require the use of a member of staff's mobile phone, see the appropriate use of mobile phones in these circumstances,

Staff may need to sue their phones to access the internet.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use their personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Available school mobile phone for trip use.

If in the circumstance a school mobile phone is not available, 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 students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student.
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4.5 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

4.6 Sanctions

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

5. Use of mobile phones by students

The DfE's that are mobile phone guidance says that students should not use mobile phones throughout the school day.

Students should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

- Mobile phones confiscated are to be collected by a parent/carer named on the school database.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by students

The DfE's mobile phone guidance includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

- Smart watches that are confiscated are to be collected by a parent/carer named on the school database.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances and for sixth form students

The school may permit students to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional medical circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, students or parents/carers should contact the headteacher. Any such authorisation will be outlined in a students' medical plan.

Any students who are given permission must then adhere to the school's Mobile Phone Policy and acceptable use for mobile phone use. (see 5.2)

Sixth-form students are allowed access to their mobile phones during the school day, to reflect their increased independence and responsibility, but must not compromise our policy on the use of mobile phones for other students.

Therefore, they are only permitted to use their mobile phones out of sight of younger students Misuse of mobile phones by students in the sixth form will lead to sanctions according to our behaviour policy.

Sixth Form students may use their mobile phones as follows

- In lessons with permission of teacher
- In the study room if staff believe they are being used inappropriately they will be warned and then phone will be confiscated.
- In the Sixth Form Garden and theatre at social times only

The use of mobile phones on school trips and visits will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

5.3 Sanctions

- Mobile phones and items that are confiscated can only be collected by a parent/carer named on the school database.

Staff have the power to search students' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a student's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having a reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person.

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, disability)

- The students' behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education

Certain types of conduct, 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 (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- 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.

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including governors 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 students, unless it's at 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 students

Parents/carers, 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.

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

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a students

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for students using their phones, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

Parents/carers 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 their personal mobile during the school day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Students bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are stored securely in their bags when not in use.

Students must secure their mobile 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 students are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones and devices will be stored in the school safe.

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

8. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents/carers and students
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

9. Other relevant school policies

- Behaviour Policy
- E Safety Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Managing Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Visitor Policy