

Mobile Phone Policy



growth • learning • therapies



Approved by: Jayson Rawlings

Date: September 2024

Last reviewed on: September 2024

Next review due by: September 2025

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1. Introduction and aims

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

Our policy aims to:

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

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

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

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [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 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils 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.

Staff should request where they need to be contacted during the working day this contact is via reception in the first instance

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 pupils throughout the school day. If needed, staff are permitted to use their personal phone within the staff room or closed office space area during their off-timetable sessions. Phones will be locked away during the school day in the staffroom area where lockers are provided.

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 during the school day. 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 staffroom).

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):

- o For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- o 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 0121 8051222 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).

More detailed guidance can be found within the schools ICT- Acceptable use Policy

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps and should ensure that any social media platforms are locked/secure from public viewing.

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

Staff must not use their personal 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.

Staff should ensure that they are following the Staff Code of Conduct and remaining professional at all times and represent the school in a professional manner.

4.4 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:

- o Emergency evacuations or emergency incidents.

In these circumstances, staff will:

- o Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- o Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
- o Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office or SLT.

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:

- o Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- o 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 Disciplinary Procedures

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 pupils

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

Where students do bring mobile phones into school, they will be required to hand them in at reception where they will be securely stored and available for collection (distributed by staff) at the end of the day

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [non-statutory 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.

Students will be expected to hand smart watches into reception with their mobile phones or show a member of staff it is disconnected from the phone in the settings.

Where there is a medically evidenced requirement to wear a smart watch, this can be discussed in advance with Ben Connolly- Pastoral Manager

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact Ben Connolly –Pastoral Manager

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's code of conduct/acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

5.3 Sanctions

If a student is found in possession of a phone during the school day it will be confiscated. (Headteachers can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the [DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools](#))

If a phone is confiscated, after discussion with parents/carer the phone will be returned at the end of the school day.

If a student refuses to hand over their phone to staff, they will be dealt with following the school Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy and sanctioned accordingly.

Students should be aware that staff have the power to search pupils' 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 pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person). This will only take place after a discussion with the parents/carers of the young person.

In each case, the sanction given will 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 pupil's 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:

- o Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- o Upskirting
- o Threats of violence or assault
- o 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:

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

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:

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

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils 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

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use.

Pupils 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 pupils are travelling to and from school.

Pupils and parents/carers will be made aware of this disclaimer by

- o Include a disclaimer in your home-school agreement (if you have one)
- o Provide a copy of your policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents/carers

Confiscated phones will be stored in the reception in the students file or with the headteacher/DSL

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 of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

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

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of Jay Rawlings - Headteacher - in a timely manner.

Appendix 1: Code of Conduct for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Code of conduct – Mobile Phones

The following rules apply if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You **may not** use your mobile phone during lessons
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent') and handed in at reception every morning on arrival.
3. You **may not** use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You **cannot** take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff.
5. You **cannot** take photos or recordings as above of other pupils without their consent.
6. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
7. **Do not** share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
8. **Do not** 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

The school does not tolerate any form of bullying and the school will act accordingly in line with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

9. **Do not** use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by sexting, photographs, inappropriate TikTok or other platform videos/pictures/memes
10. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you are not in school.
11. **Do not** use inappropriate, 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.
12. **Do not** use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
13. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
14. 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 it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school – Granting an exemption

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

The school has agreed to allow [pupil name] to bring [their] mobile phone to school because they:

- o Are a young carer
- o Need the phone to support their medical needs and SEN
- o Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed
- o Attend a before - or after-school activity where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers

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.

All phones will be stored in a secure location on entry to the school at reception

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

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

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