

Mobile Phone Policy

Approval status	Approved
Last reviewed on:	August 2023
Next review due on:	August 2024

Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy (Students)

Rationale

- The school has a wide catchment area and as such the vast majority of our students will have been given a mobile phone by parents and carers as part of ensuring their personal safety and security whilst travelling to and from school.
- Although the use of mobile phones can play a role in facilitating and enriching learning beyond the classroom they can also prove a distraction to learning and can also be used to infringe the school's code of conduct. As such students in Years 7 to 11 must abide by the code of conduct in relation to mobile phones as set out in Appendix 1.
- Students in Years 12 and 13 are permitted to use mobile phones as set out on the code of conduct in relation to mobile phones as set out in Appendix 2.

Roles and Responsibilities

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 designated Deputy Headteacher, Jude Bevan will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy on a yearly basis.

Governors

- Governors will be responsible for reviewing this policy on a yearly basis.

Parents

- Parents/carers must read and understand the Mobile Phone and Acceptable Use Policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.
- Parents/carers will support the school when sanctions, such as the confiscation of phones, are required.
- Parents/carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school. It is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss or damage. OPGS cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use.
- **Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the OPGS Office (01622 726683) is the appropriate point of contact and will ensure that your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way. Passing on messages through the OPGS office also reduces the likelihood of disrupting lessons inadvertently.**

Students

- It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the code of conduct for use of mobile phones as set out in Appendix 1.
- Students should be fully aware that failure to follow this code of conduct will result in one or more of the following sanctions.

Sanctions

- Students who infringe the rules set out in the code of conduct as set out in Appendix 1 (Years 7 to 11) or Appendix 2 (Years 12 and 13) will have their phones confiscated by staff.
- When an infringement has taken place students must hand their phone to a member of staff when requested to do so. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Refusal to do so constitutes a serious disciplinary issue.
- On the first infringement of this policy the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher and taken to the school office to be put in a secure place. The student will be able to collect the mobile phone at the end of the school day and a record will be made of the incident. A phone call or email will be made to the parent/carer to inform them of the incident.
- On the second infringement the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher and taken to the school office.
- In this instance the mobile phone will NOT be returned to the student but must be collected from the school office by the parent of the student.
- A phone call will be made to parents to inform them that the phone has been confiscated for a second time and will need to be collected.
- Any further infringements of the mobile phone code of conduct may result in a ban on bringing a mobile phone to OPGS.
- As set out in the code of conduct, the school will also use the full range of disciplinary sanctions and where required liaise with the police if a mobile phone has been used in such a way that infringes the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.
- As set out in the DfE's guidance on 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' (2022) the school is allowed to search a pupil's phone if there is reason to believe the phone is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury. This can only be authorised by a member of the SLG and can only be carried out when one member of the SLG is present.
- 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

Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy (Staff)

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, during contact time with students. 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
- In the case of a medical emergency related to a pupil or colleague
- In the case of taking an attendance register using the school's Edulink App where it is not possible to do so using the Edulink platform on a laptop

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 01622 726683 as a point of emergency contact.

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).

Detailed guidance on data protection can be found in the school's Data Protection Policy.

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 contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils. Clear guidance on this can be found in the Staff Handbook.

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.

Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work where prior consent from the SLG has been given. 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/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office or using school mobile phones

Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes such as for use on field trips, educational visits or residential trips.

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.

Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action as set out in the school's Staff Discipline, Conduct and Grievance Policy.

Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy (Parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.)

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as would a member of staff.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils or of their own child unless permission has been granted by the SLG.
- Where permission has been granted using photographs or recordings for personal use only and not posting on social media platforms without consent.
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils.

Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are stored securely in lockers when not in use.

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 in a secure location.

Lost phones should be handed in to the School Office.

Appendix 1 Code of Conduct (Years 7 to 11) - Mobile Phones and Mobile Technology

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

1. You must not use your mobile phone during lessons, registration periods or at break and lunchtimes.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent') at the start of the school day.
3. You must 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 or other pupils without their consent.
5. You should not share your contact details with people you don't know, and do not share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Do not share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
7. Do not use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you are not in school. The school can use the full range of sanctions as set out in the school's Behaviour Policy. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and where required to the school will liaise with the police.
8. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media platforms
9. Do not use your phone to send or receive anything that could be breaking the law. Students must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading, racist or pornographic images. The transmission of such images is a criminal offence. **'Sexting' (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos) is also a criminal offence.**
10. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to hand over your mobile phone if you are using it without a member of staff's permission. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
11. If your phone is confiscated twice a parent or carer will need to collect the phone as per the school's policy on mobile phones.
12. 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, or turn them 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.

Appendix 2 - Code of Conduct (Years 12 and 13) - Mobile Phones and Mobile Technology

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

1. Phones must be set to silent, and all notifications switched off before entering school.
2. No voice calls should be made at any time.
3. Sixth Formers can use mobile phones for academic purposes in lessons with the teacher's permission. Phones should not be used as the primary method of working. Students are expected to take notes on paper or on a laptop.
4. Phones can be used at break and lunch and in corridors for checking timetables and school emails.
5. You must not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
6. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
7. You should not share your contact details with people you don't know, and do not share other people's contact details without their consent.
8. Do not share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
9. Do not use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you are not in school. The school can use the full range of sanctions as set out in the school's Behaviour Policy. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and where required to the school will liaise with the police.

10. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media platforms
11. Do not use your phone to send or receive anything that could be breaking the law. Students must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading, racist or pornographic images. The transmission of such images is a criminal offence. **'Sexting' (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos) is also a criminal offence.**
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to hand over your mobile phone if you are using it without a member of staff's permission. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. If your phone is confiscated twice a parent or carer will need to collect the phone as per the school's policy on mobile phones.
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 these appropriately, or turn them 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.

Appendix 3 - Code of Conduct - Mobile Phones and Mobile Technology for visitors

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, please do so in the School Office or Reception area.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils 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.