



Mobile phone policy 2019-20

Reviewed and Approved by the Business and Premises Committee

On: 25th June 2019

Reviewed and Ratified by Full Governing Body

On: 11th July 2019

Next review date: Summer 2020

SLT are responsible for oversight of this policy's implementation

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1. Introduction and aims

At St Edward's School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our students, parents 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 students, 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 is responsible for monitoring the policy via Directors of Learning every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and students accountable for its implementation.

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, during contact time. 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 staff room or departmental/team areas).

There may be circumstances in which it is 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-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01202 740950 or ext 210 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. Access to the school network is restricted to usage set out in the staff Internet and ICT Acceptable use policy (AUP) and E-Safety policy.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents 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 or students. Please also see Home-School Communication policy.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of students, 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: Please see Foreign Exchange Visits policy. For further information please contact the school's Educational Visits coordinator (EVC).

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 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, such as for educational visits.

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 students

St. Edward's school does not permit the use of mobile phones by students for any purpose on its site.

St. Edward's school understands that some parents and carers wish their child to carry a mobile phone for use outside of the schools premises. In such circumstances, mobile phones must be switched off during school hours, and kept securely in the student's bag, locker or blazer. St. Edward's school will not accept responsibility for damaged, lost or stolen phones, and will not invest significant time in managing such instances.

If parents and carers wish to contact their child during open hours, or vice versa, all calls must be via the School Office.

4.1 Sanctions

In accordance with our Behaviour policy ("Promoting Positive Behaviour") St. Edward's school expects full cooperation with this policy from students, parents and carers, staff and visitors.

Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from students under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

If a phone is seen in use, or if there is evidence that a phone has been used, it will be confiscated and kept in the School Office until the end of the school day on the first offence and will await parental collection on subsequent occasions.

If a student uses a mobile phone to contact parents or carers in order to get their version of events in first; or if such a call requires staff time for subsequent management; then a range of sanctions may be used from a C5 detention to fixed-term exclusion.

Staff at St. Edward's school have the authority to search a student's mobile phone without consent if they have reason to believe that the phone contains pornographic images, and/or if it is being, or has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury, including safeguarding concerns. (DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

If inappropriate material is found on a phone, or if there is evidence that it has been misused as above, the DSL must be informed at the earliest opportunity; and, if appropriate, the relevant Director of Learning.

School sanctions may be imposed for misuse of social media outside of school.

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. If the Police are required to search a phone, for example if the student refuses to cooperate with staff, or if a crime is suspected; the Police will confiscate the phone and it is likely that it will not be returned.

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 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 is 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, visitors and volunteers will usually be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school, but this policy stands irrespective of whether or not this has happened.

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 students, 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 students 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

Students 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 students are travelling to and from school.

All parents are given a copy of this policy via the form tutor, and their attention is drawn to it via school communication.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office until parental collection for the second, or subsequent offenses.

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

- Feedback from parents and students
- Feedback from teachers and other staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents

- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

Member of SLT responsible for oversight of the implementation and review of this policy: Mr M Antram

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

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

1. You may not use your phone until you have left the school site. At the end of the day, as you are approaching traffic, you must not use your phone until you are beyond the entrance to the school.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other students, or at any time whilst on site.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other students without their consent.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.

7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating students or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media

You may be sanctioned for such behaviour if it affects another student, even outside of the school day. Your behaviour may be considered a criminal action, and other families may ask for further action to be taken.

8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'. If you receive an illegal or obscene image you must not forward it. By doing so you may be committing a criminal action. Consult a member of staff immediately. You are likely to be instructed to delete the image, and the Police may be informed.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. 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.
11. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand in, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly. Staff may request the Police to search your phone if they believe a crime has been committed or if they feel that the phone contains information of a safeguarding or criminal nature.
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.