



Mobile Phone Policy

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1. Introduction and aims

At Hebden Green 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:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school’s other policies, especially those related to Safeguarding 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.

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 Designated Safeguarding lead is responsible for monitoring the policy every two 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.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff (including Residential)

4.1 Personal mobile phones and smart watches

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while in public areas of the school. 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 is appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons.

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 01606 594221 as a point of emergency contact.

Where SMART watches are worn, they need to be set to 'aeroplane mode'.

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 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/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 is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

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:

- To use multi-factor authentication
- During emergencies e.g. to phone an ambulance
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising residential visits
- Supervising day 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, where possible, from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

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 pupils (including Residential)

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that pupils should not use mobile phones throughout the school day.

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

At Hebden Green school mobile phones are banned from the school premises for all pupils.

Where there is an exceptional need for a pupil to have a mobile phone whilst at school, parents will liaise directly with a member of the Senior Leadership team who will work with the class teams to ensure its secure storage during the school day.

5.1 Use of smartwatches and all other devices with communications and smart technology 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.

Pupils are asked not to wear smartwatches to school as:

- Pupils may be able to use a smartwatch to communicate via text, even if their phone is in their bag or pocket
- Smartwatches can be more fragile than mobile phones, so any storage procedures may cause damage

Other devices such as tablets and IPADS also contain smart technology. They can be used to send and receive messages and access social media.

Pupils are asked not to bring smart devices into school where:

- They are used to access social media
- They are used to communicate with others via apps such as whatsapp

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

All technology that is identified specifically for use to support communication (AAC) for individuals within school is permissible onsite.

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 a member of the senior leadership team in school by phoning 01606 594221.

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere the shared agreement linked to the exceptional need.

5.3 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy, mobile phones will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day to the supervising adult transporting the young person and parents will be contacted. Where needed, safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in DFE guidance. The DFE guidance allows schools to search a pupil's phone if there is good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe that the phone contains pornographic images, or it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

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 pupils
- 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:

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

Parents/carers or volunteers supporting 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 must secure their mobile phones as much as possible (when exceptional permission is given), 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 during the day at reception in a locked drawer.

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:

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