



Mobile phones and electronic devices policy

Responsibilities

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Key school staff member & role	Geoff Bartrum - Headteacher
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1. Introduction and aims

Please note that throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones, tablets, smart watches, laptops, iPads and similar electronic devices.

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

This policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use and have a phone free school for pupils and staff, with the exception of senior staff who will only use school mobile phones and not personal ones
- 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 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 and safeguarding of pupils and staff
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

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.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for monitoring the policy annually, reviewing it, and holding staff, visitors, volunteers and pupils accountable for its implementation.



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

3.2 Volunteers and visitors

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.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

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 contact time. 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 exceptional circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to request 'special arrangements' to have use of their personal mobile 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
- In relation to medical issues such as diabetes

The Headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

To request special arrangements, staff should contact either Mr Geoff Bartrum, Headteacher, or Mr Richard Jones, Deputy Headteacher.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01474 705377 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process school-related 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's 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:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Medical reasons

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

4.5 Work phones

Members of staff, such as the Behaviour Support Team and SLT are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes, these phones will be identifiable by having an official Rowhill School label on them. 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, where necessary
- 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 Potential consequences for staff

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

5.1 General rules and exceptional circumstances

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

Pupils who bring mobile phones into school and use them for their journey into school will need to hand the phone into staff upon arrival as they enter the school building. They will then be held in a locked cabinet at the bottom of the staffroom stairs and returned to pupils at the end of the school day (3.00pm).

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances, such as health-related issues. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact either Mr Geoff Bartrum, Headteacher, or Mr Richard Jones, Deputy Headteacher. Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the School's code of conduct policy for mobile phone use (see Appendix 1).

5.2 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. Therefore, pupils are not permitted to have smartwatches in school and the same rules apply to them as for mobile phones.

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.

5.3 Consequences for pupils

If a pupil refuses to hand their personal mobile phone in when they arrive in school and the phone is seen out by a member of staff, they will be asked to hand over the phone. It will be stored in a locked cabinet at the bottom of the staffroom stairs where it will be signed in and collected at 3.00pm along with the other pupils' mobile phones.



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Staff are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under section 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

If, at this point, the pupil still refuses to hand their phone to staff, then parents/carers will be contacted by a member of the SLT or Behaviour Support Team and ask them to come and collect the phone from their child. If parents/carers are not in a position to come to the school then their child may receive a suspension until a meeting is set up with parents/carers to reiterate and explain the School's Mobile phone policy and the reasons for this. If a pupil continues to bring their phone into school and not hand the phone in, then a further meeting with parents/carers will be set up to support a better understanding of the policy and the impact of mobile phone use within school on the individual and school community. If this is unsuccessful, then the pupil will receive a suspension for a length of time at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances. As set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#) only in extreme circumstances, such as having good reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person or there is a potential safeguarding concern relating to the use of the phone or content on the phone.

However, to avoid physical confrontations with pupils, staff will not attempt to search pupils unless authorised by the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher and managed in a sensitive way.

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 if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, 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 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. A short summary of this policy will be handed in to visitors in reception.

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

- Use their phone in the presence of pupils or during contact with pupils
- 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 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 concerns they have to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

Parents/carers must use the school office (01322 705377) 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, 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.

Where a pupil does not hand over their mobile phone the school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips.



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The school also accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while pupils are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the phone cabinet at the bottom of the staffroom stairs. SLT and the Behaviour Support Team will be responsible for keeping the phones safe.

Any phones found on the school premises should be handed in to the school office staff. The school will then attempt to contact the owner and keep the phone in a secure place until the phone is identified and/or collected.

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



Appendix 1: Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Code of Conduct/Acceptable use agreement

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

1. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
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 pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils 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 password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via: Email, Text/messaging app/ Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
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. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. 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.
13. 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.

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY			
Pupil details:	Name:		
Agreement of pupil:	Signature:		
Agreement authorised by:	Name:		
	Role:		
	Signature:		
Date:		Review date:	

Appendix 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Information for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school



Please note that 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones, tablets, smart watches, laptops, iPads and similar electronic devices.

- 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, you may go to the staff room or in your car/car park area
- If you are attending a school event, do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- If you observe a pupil or any staff member, visitor or volunteer using their personal mobile phone, please alert a staff member
- The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

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, on request.

- END OF POLICY -