



**EXCELLENCE**  
**GIRLS ACADEMY**  
LEARNERS TODAY - LEADERS TOMORROW

# **Mobile Phone Policy**

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Chair of Governors

**Reviewed by:** Laura Webb - Governor

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## 1. Introduction and aims

At Excellence Girls Academy, 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 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

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

Whilst reference has been made to mobile phones, this policy covers any equipment or device that can make and / or receive mobile calls. Where reference has been made to staff, this policy also covers volunteers and non-teaching staff including parents.

## 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

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 year, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Governors are responsible for approving this policy and ensuring it is enforced appropriately.

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

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, 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 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

The Headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements. This will be by prior arrangement and where staff supervision levels will not become compromised.

Staff shall remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses.

Except where it has been agreed, the personal use of mobile phones outside of the above will result in a disciplinary procedure.

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

The school's telephone number shall be used as the main point of contact for staff in an emergency. Staff shall ensure family members have been given the school number, in case they need to be contacted in an emergency.

The school mobile phone is labelled as such and is kept in the office.

## 4.1 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 on data protection can be found in the school's data protection policy and ICT and Internet acceptable use policy.

## 4.2 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.

Please refer to our ICT and Internet acceptable use and online safety policies for further guidance on connecting with parents or pupils over messaging apps or social media.

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.

If the school uses classroom apps or programmes that require the use of a member of staff's mobile phone, there may be appropriate use of mobile phones in these circumstances, but these will be communicated to staff on a case-by-case basis. Likewise, if we require staff to use their phones to access the internet.

All staff has a duty of care and must notify the Headteacher/SLT if they have any concerns regarding inappropriate or misuse of mobile phones by staff. Any breach of protocol will result in invoking disciplinary procedures.

## 4.3 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 issue homework, rewards or sanctions
- > To use multi-factor authentication
- > 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

During outings designated staff members are permitted to carry mobile phones for health and safety reasons.

A school mobile will be carried during any visits outside of school to contact parents in the event of an emergency.

#### **4.4 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:

- 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.

#### **4.5 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**

In general, pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones in school.

However, we recognise that some pupils require a mobile phone for safety and communication purposes associated with travel to and from school or there may be special circumstances where use of mobile phone may be necessary e.g., young carers who need to be contactable.

However, in all cases, pupils are required to hand their phone into the school office upon entry to school and they can be collected at the end of the day.

Pupils will not be permitted to use mobile phones during break or lunch times.

If a pupil is found using their mobile phone (this includes the device ringing, vibrating, or making sounds to notify the user of alerts etc.) it will be confiscated and only returned to a parent or carer who will have to come and collect it from the school. It may also lead to a sanction such as a detention, internal exclusion or even a fixed term suspension.

Pupils may be occasionally allowed to use mobile phones at the direction of the teacher for classroom activities/trips and visits/educational activities only but this will be discussed and arranged with pupils beforehand and under the permission of the Headteacher.

Pupils must adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

#### **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.

If the Smartwatch is not connected to a mobile phone or any other device and cannot record audio or any visual content the student will be allowed to wear the watch. If the smart watch is connected to a mobile device or can record audio and video then it is not permitted in school.

If a pupil is found wearing a smartwatch that is banned it will be confiscated and only returned to a parent or carer who will have to come and collect it from the school. It may also lead to a sanction such as a detention, internal exclusion or even a fixed term suspension.

### 5.3 Sanctions

If a phone is not handed in upon entry to school or is seen being used without prior agreement, it will be confiscated and will only be returned to the parent/carer. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#).

If a pupil has been given permission to use their phone but is used inappropriately, it will also be confiscated and only be returned to the parent/carer.

In all cases, additional sanctions may also apply in line with the school's behaviour policy.

The school has the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows staff to search a pupil's phone if they have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury. Staff should refer to the Headteacher or a member of the SLT if they find inappropriate content on a phone, or if they suspect inappropriate behaviour.

In each case, the sanction given must 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:

- 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 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, 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.

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 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.

We make sure pupils and parents are aware of the disclaimer above by:

- Put signs up in the school entryway or office
- Include disclaimers in your permission forms for bringing a phone to school
- Provide a copy of your policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents/carers

We acknowledge that schools that confiscate phones from pupils become responsible for the phone, and can be held responsible for loss, theft, or damage. Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a secure location. The Headteacher is responsible for these phones.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. 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

This document will be reviewed every year but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.

It will be reviewed by the Governing Body and approved by the Chair of Governors at every review.

## **9. Related policies**

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- > Anti-Bullying Policy
- > Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- > Behaviour Policy
- > ICT and Internet Acceptable Policy
- > Online Safety Policy
- > Parent's/Carer's Code of Conduct
- > Staff Discipline Procedures
- > Staff Code of Conduct
- > Visitors Policy
- > Volunteers Policy



## Appendix 1: Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Agreement for pupils

### Acceptable use agreement

You must obey 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:
  - a. Email
  - b. Text/messaging app
  - c. 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.

## Appendix 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

### Use of mobile phones and similar devices 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, you may go to the main office.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), 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.

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