



RYECROFT C. E. MIDDLE SCHOOL

POLICY STATEMENT

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Part of the Uttoxeter Learning Trust

Approved By Governors: Summer 2022
Review Date: Summer 2023

The Vision of the Staff, Pupils and Governors of Ryecroft C.E. Middle School

Embracing a culture where no child is left behind, we value and respect all the children that God has put in our care.

We enrich the lives of our children and ensure that Ryecroft is a safe, happy and inspiring place, embodying the Christian values of trust, humility and perseverance.

**“Whoever walks in integrity walks securely,
but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out”**

Proverbs 10:9

Contents

1. Introduction and aims
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Use of mobile phones by staff
4. Use of mobile phones by pupils
5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors
6. Loss, theft or damage
7. Monitoring and review

1. Introduction and aims

At Ryecroft CE Middle School, we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community. For the purposes of this policy the term 'mobile phones' includes smart watches, pagers and other communication devices.

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 pupils, staff, parents and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, see child protection policy and behaviour and discipline policy

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 and Governors are responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils 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, 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.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01889 590394 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.

3.3 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.

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.

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

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. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office
- Use their 'no caller ID' function

3.5 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.

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 pupils

Rules for the Acceptable Use of a mobile phone in school by students

Pupils are allowed to bring mobile phones into school. If they choose to do so it is on the understanding that they agree with the following limitations on its use, namely:

- Mobile phones must be switched off at all times during the school day, including break and lunchtimes, and remain off whilst students are on the school premises. It is not acceptable for phones merely to be put on silent or pager mode.
- The phone must be kept out of sight during lessons.
- No student may take a mobile phone into a room or other area where examinations are being held.
- The security of phone will remain the student's responsibility in all lessons including PE/gym lessons.
- If asked to do so, content on the phone (e.g. messages, emails, pictures, videos, sound files) will be shown to a teacher.

Unacceptable use

The school will consider any of the following to be unacceptable use of the mobile phone and a serious breach of the school's behaviour policy resulting in sanctions being taken:

- Photographing or filming staff or other students without their knowledge or permission.
- Photographing or filming in toilets, swimming pools and changing rooms and similar areas.
- Bullying, harassing or intimidating staff or students by the use of text, email or multimedia messaging, sending inappropriate messages or posts to social networking or blogging sites.
- Refusing to switch a phone off or handing over the phone at the request of a member of staff.
- Using the mobile phone outside school hours to intimidate or upset staff and students will be considered a breach of these guidelines in the same way as unacceptable use which takes place in school time.

4.1 Sanctions

Students and parents are notified that appropriate action will be taken against those who are in breach of the acceptable use guidelines following the school's behaviour policy. In addition, students and their parents should be very clear that the school is within its rights to confiscate the phone where the guidelines have been breached.

If a phone is confiscated school will make it clear for how long this will be and the procedure to be followed for its return.

Students should be aware that the police will be informed if there is a serious misuse of the mobile phone where criminal activity is suspected.

If a student commits an act which causes serious harassment, alarm or distress to another student or member of staff the ultimate sanction may be permanent exclusion. School will consider the impact on the victim of the act in deciding the sanction and parents will be involved.

Confiscation procedure

If a mobile phone is confiscated, then:

- the student will be informed that the phone can be collected by a parent at the end of school day from the school office/designated person.
- the confiscation will be recorded in the school behaviour log for monitoring purposes.
- schools will ensure that confiscated equipment is stored in such a way that it is returned to the correct person.
- In the case of repeated misuse, the phone will only be returned to a parent/carer who will be required to visit the school by appointment to collect the phone.
- where a student persistently breaches the guidelines following a clear warning, the Head Teacher may impose an outright ban from bringing a mobile phone to school. This may be a fixed period or a permanent ban.

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 (sharing of nude / semi-nude images)
- 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 pupils, unless it's 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, 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 or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents.
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, 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 pupils 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

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 office safe.

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

- Feedback from parents and pupils.
- Feedback from teachers.
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents.
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations.

Approved by Governors

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