

# Mobile Phone Policy

This policy aims to promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible use of mobile phones. For the purposes of this policy the term 'mobile phones' includes smart watches, pagers and other communication devices.

This policy was approved as follows:

|                           |                    |                          |  |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Approver:</b>          | <b>Headteacher</b> | <b>Date:</b>             |  |
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This policy applies to pupils, staff, visitors and parents.

## Document History

| Version | Version Date | Author  | Summary of Changes   |
|---------|--------------|---------|--|
| V1.0    | 11.02.2025   | T Evans | Policy reformatted using new template and Trust name change updated. Reviewed and approved by Headteacher / Senior Leaders |

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

*Ryecroft CE Middle School aims to enable every pupil to achieve their God-given academic and personal potential, so they can make a positive impact in the world.*

*We seek to be a community built on knowing God's love. Our values underpin all we do; we welcome all into our loving, happy and safe school.*

*Loving and Learning Together*

*'Love each other as I have loved you' (John 13, v34-35)*

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

*Proverbs 10:9*

## Contents

## Page

|     |   |    |
|-----|---|----|
| 1.  | Introduction and aims   | 4  |
| 2.  | Smartwatches  | 4  |
| 2.  | Roles and responsibilities  | 5  |
| 3.  | Use of mobile phones by staff   | 5  |
| 4.  | Use of mobile phones by pupils  | 7  |
| 5.  | Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors                    | 8  |
| 6.  | Loss, theft or damage   | 9  |
| 7.  | Monitoring and review   | 9  |
| 8.  | Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for children                           | 10 |
| 9.  | Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone on a trip | 11 |
| 10. | Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors             | 12 |

## 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

### Smartwatches

For the purposes of this policy, smartwatches are considered mobile devices and are therefore subject to the same rules as mobile phones.

Pupils wearing smartwatches must ensure that all communication functions, including calls, messaging, and internet access, are disabled during the school day.

Smartwatches must not be used to take photographs, record audio or video, or access social media. If a smartwatch is used inappropriately or causes disruption to learning, it will be confiscated following the same procedures as mobile phones.

The school reserves the right to prohibit the wearing of smartwatches altogether if they are found to be disruptive or present a safeguarding concern.

## **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 or using the work mobile phone (see section 3.5)
- 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.

On occasion, for certain residential for safeguarding reasons pupils will be permitted to have access to their mobile phones. In consultation with parents' pupils will be asked to provide their mobile numbers as a means of contact in emergencies. These numbers will not be stored on the work phones or staffs' personal mobile phones and will be destroyed after the residential visit.

### **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 pupils 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 pupil's responsibility in all lessons including PE/gym lessons.

### **Unacceptable use**

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

- Photographing, filming or recording staff or other pupils without their knowledge or permission.
- Photographing, filming or recording in toilets, swimming pools and changing rooms and similar areas.
- Bullying, harassing or intimidating staff or pupils 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 or device outside school hours to intimidate or upset staff and pupils will be considered a breach of these guidelines in the same way as unacceptable use which takes place in school time.

### **4.1 Sanctions**

Pupils 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, pupils 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.

Pupils 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.
- where a student is believed to have used the phone in breach of this policy or there is a safeguarding concern in respect of its use the phone will be confiscated, with the content reviewed by the parent in the presence of the Headteacher and/or DSL.

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

## Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for children

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

1. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons or activities, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent') and remain in lockers.
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other children.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other children.
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 children 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 & Rewards Policy.
11. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or turn over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's Behaviour & Rewards Policy and will be dealt with accordingly.

## Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone on a visit

| PUPIL DETAILS             |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Pupil name:</b>        |  |
| <b>Year group/class:</b>  |  |
| <b>Parent(s) name(s):</b> |  |
| <b>Trip:</b>              |  |

Ryecroft CE Middle School has agreed to allow [pupil name] to bring [his/her] mobile phone on the above named school visit, because [he/she] is attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed.

Children who bring a mobile phone on the school visit must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its acceptable use agreement (which can be found in the Mobile Phone Policy).

Children must not take photographs without the individuals consent.

The school reserves the right revoke permission if children do not abide by the policy.

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Child signature: \_\_\_\_\_

| FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY   |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Authorised by:</b> |  |
| <b>Date:</b>          |  |

## Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

### Use of mobile phones in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- 
- Please do not use phones where children are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staff room
- 
- Do not take photos or recordings of children or staff
- 
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with children

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.