Mobile Phone Policy

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
The Governing Body	
Date adopted:	September 2022
Reviewed	September 2025
Date of next review	September 2026

Contents

1. Introduction and aims

At Edith Kay Independent School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our learners, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

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 learners, staff, parents/carers 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

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 Head Teacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and learners accountable for its implementation.

2.2 Governors

The governing body is responsible for reviewing the policy every 2 years, and holding the Head Teacher 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 learners are present/during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where learners are not present.

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 07983 934 923 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, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

More detailed guidance may be found in the School's Data Protection Policy and ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy, both of which may be found on the School's website.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or learners, 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 learners.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of learners, their work, or anything else which could identify a learner. 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 learners, their work, or anything else which could identify a learner

● Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

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 learners

● Pupils are allowed to bring their mobile phones to school. However, learners are not permitted to use their mobile phone during lesson times.

● During lesson times a learner's mobile phone(s) must remain in their bag or pocket.

● Pupils mobile phone must be set to silent.

● If necessary, during break times a learner may contact their parent/guardian for reassurance purposes only.

● Pupils are not permitted at any time to access live video apps via their mobile phone(s).

● Pupils are not permitted at any time to access inappropriate content via their mobile phone(s).

It is recognised that learners at Edith Kay School have special needs. Pupils who persist in using their phones during lesson times or accessing inappropriate content will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

This could include temporary confiscation of the mobile phone(s) and/or the learner not being permitted to bring their mobile phone(s) to school.

4.1 Sanctions

In exceptional circumstances, schools are permitted to confiscate phones from learners under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#))

If the phone is confiscated, and depending on the reasons for confiscating the phone, the young person/parent as appropriate will be able to collect the phone from the main office at the end of the day.

Please refer to the school's behavioural policy.

You may also wish to refer to the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows you to search a learner's phone if you 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.

Please refer to the child Protection and safeguarding policy in ensuring all staff, learners and parents/carers all understand what steps they should take if they find inappropriate content on a phone, or if they suspect inappropriate behaviour.

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)
- Up-skirting
- 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.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of learners, unless it's a public event (such as a school fair) when prior permission has been sought, 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 learners

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/carers
- Take photos or recordings of learners, their work, or anything else which could identify a learner

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for learners using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

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 his/her personal mobile during the school day.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use.

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 learners are travelling to and from school.

7. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of learners' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

● Feedback from parents and learners

● Feedback from teachers

● Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents

● Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations