



Cheetham CE Community Academy Policy on mobile phones in school

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Contents

- 1. Introduction and aims. 3**
- 2. Relevant guidance. 3**
- 3. Roles and responsibilities. 3**
- 4. Use of mobile phones by staff 4**
- 5. Use of mobile phones by pupils. 5**
- 6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors. 8**
- 7. Loss, theft or damage. 8**
- 8. Monitoring and review. 9**
- 9. Appendix 1: acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances.**
- 10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school 11**
- 11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors. 12**

1. Introduction and aims

At Cheetham CE Community 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 safeguarding 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.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's 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.

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 DSL, Jenny Wildgoose, is responsible for monitoring the policy every 3 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

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

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, whilst working with children. 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 circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their 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

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 01617405996 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 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).

For further guidance please refer to the school GDPR policy.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff or volunteers 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 that could identify a pupil, where the data is stored on the phone. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment, or via the agreed school portal, ie seesaw, where no images are stored on the personal device.

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 are not limited to:

Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions

Use of multi-factor authentication

Emergency evacuations / fire drills

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 that could identify a pupil, where the images are stored on the phone

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

4.5 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

4.6 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

The DfE's statutory mobile phone guidance says that pupils should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

In light of the guidance, pupils should not bring mobile phones into school.

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the Principal. Circumstances may include:

- Pupils travelling to school by themselves
- Young carers who need to be contactable
- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar

In this case, mobile phones should be handed in to the school office on arrival, where they will be stored in a secure place. The pupil must collect the phone at the end of the day.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [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. In line with this guidance, pupils are not permitted to bring smart watches into school.

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's [acceptable use agreement] for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

5.3 Sanctions

In line with [DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools](#)), if a pupil is found to have breached the policy, then the phone will be confiscated, kept in a secure place and parents / carers will be contacted to collect the phone.

Key staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#), if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

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 that 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

In circumstances where it is agreed for pupils to bring phones into school, they 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, in the same way. 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. This is detailed in the mobile phone acceptable use agreement.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the the locked safe within the school office.

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 on 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

9. Appendix 1: acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

[Code of conduct / 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:**
 - 1. Email**

- 2. Text/messaging app**
- 3. 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 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 indecent images 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.**

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

pupil details	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow [pupil name] to bring [their] mobile phone to school because they:

Travel to and from school alone

Are a young carer

Need the phone to support their medical needs

Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed

Attend a before- or after-school activity where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its acceptable use agreement.

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate):

For school use only	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

11. Appendix 3: 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 staffroom.

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.