



Sharple's
S C H O O L

Extract from Mobile Phone Policy

Pupil use of Mobile Phones

**Approved by: Full
Governing Body**

Date: September 2020

Last reviewed on: September 2020

**Next review due
by: September 2022**

Introduction and aims

At Sharples 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.

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, 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

Use of mobile phones by pupils

- The term 'phone' in this policy denotes mobiles phones, smart watches, iPods, iPads, MP3, MP4 players and any similar portable electronic devices. The School recognises that mobile phones, cameras and digital devices are now an integral part of our culture and can be of considerable value, particularly in relation to personal safety. However, balanced with this is the need to safeguard children and staff from cyber bullying, inappropriate use of the Internet and telecommunications, and the misuse of social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram.
- The policy at Sharples is that student phones must not be used on the school site at any point during the school day.

- Aside from the safeguarding issue the rationale for this is that it has been shown that the effect of banning mobile phones from school premises adds up to the equivalent of an extra week's schooling over a pupil's academic year. This is according to research by Louis-Philippe Beland and Richard Murphy, published by the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics. "Ill Communication: The Impact of Mobile Phones on Student Performance" found that after schools banned mobile phones, the test scores of students aged 16 improved by 6.4%. The economists reckon that this is the "equivalent of adding five days to the school year". According to Beland and Murphy, a phone ban produced improvements in test scores among students, with the lowest-achieving students gaining twice as much as average students. The ban had a greater positive impact on students with special education needs and those eligible for free school meals, while having no discernible effect on high achievers. "We found that not only did student achievement improve, but also that low-achieving and low income students gained the most. We found the impact of banning phones for these students was equivalent to an additional hour a week in school, or to increasing the school year by five days".

Sanctions

- The school recognises that parents/carers may feel the need for their children to have access to a mobile phone for communication home. This helps with safeguarding and child protection especially in the long dark winter months. Sharples supports this approach wholeheartedly.
- To that end Sharples has adopted the following mobile phone best use policy:
 1. Students are allowed to bring mobile phones to and from school to ensure their personal safety at all times.
 2. If a student brings their phone to school then on arrival at school their phone is to be placed immediately in their school bag/zipped pocket before they access the school grounds.
 3. The phone must remain in the school bag/zipped pocket whilst the student is on the school grounds and may not be accessed including during any period of social time (break or lunch).
 4. Any student found in possession of their phone during the school day will have the phone confiscated and a message will be sent home to inform parents.
 5. The phone will be handed back to the child by the Year Coordinator at the end of the following day.
 6. Any refusal to hand a phone over to members of staff will result in an immediate SMART detention.
 7. Any requirement for a parent/carer to contact a student or a student to contact their parent/carer can be done through the school reception or through the Year Coordinator.

If a student breached the policy and the phone is confiscated three times within a half term, the phone will be kept by the school for one week.

- Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006).

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows school staff to search a pupil's phone if we 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.

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
- 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

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