

Update for Parents/Carers regarding Mobile Phones

We are writing to remind you of Sharples School's expectations regarding mobile phone use, in line with our Mobile Phone Policy and the most recent Department for Education (DfE) guidance on mobile phones in schools which was released last week. The updated guidance is clear that schools are expected to operate as **mobile phone-free environments throughout the entire school day**, including lessons, movement between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtimes as well as on site before and after school. The DFE guidance provides examples of inappropriate use of phones, for example as a calculator or for research purposes.

At Sharples School, we are fully committed to maintaining a safe, calm and focused learning environment for all pupils and you will be aware that our policy is already that the site is phone free. However, we are updating our mobile phone policy, in light of the new guidance.

Whilst we recognise that many students carry a phone for personal safety when travelling to and from school, we now require that **phones must be switched off before entering the school site and remain switched off and kept out of sight at all times while on school grounds**. This expectation applies before school, during the school day (including break and lunchtimes), and after school until pupils have left the site.

Our approach is one of **clear expectations and zero tolerance to phone use in school**. If a pupil is found accessing a mobile phone during the school day:

- The phone will be **confiscated until the end of the following school day**, and parents/carers will be informed.
- Repeated breaches will lead to **longer confiscation periods and further sanctions** in line with the Behaviour Policy (see the school website for further details).
- Refusal to hand over a phone when requested will result in **immediate placement in the IEU for that day and the following day until 4.30pm and parental contact**.

Safeguarding remains our highest priority. Any misuse of a phone to take photographs, record, or communicate in a harmful or inappropriate way will result in **more serious consequences**, and external agencies may be involved where necessary.

If students require assistance during the school day, then they should alert a member of staff. **Contact home will always be made in the event of an emergency**.

If you need to contact your child urgently during the school day, you should:

- **Telephone the school office**, and we will endeavour to ensure that the message is passed on as quickly as possible, or
- **Email a member of staff** or office@sharplesschool.co.uk who will respond as quickly as possible.

We are grateful for your continued support in reinforcing these expectations with your child. By working together, we can ensure that Sharples School remains a safe, respectful and disruption-free environment where all pupils can focus fully on their learning and wellbeing.