



Mobile phone policy

Approved by: Full Governing Body

Last reviewed on: September 2025

Next review due by: September 2027

Contents

1. Introduction and aims	3
2. Roles and responsibilities	3
3. Use of mobile phones by staff	3
4. Use of mobile phones by pupils	5
5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors	6
6. Loss, theft or damage	6
7. Monitoring and review	7

1. 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 safeguarding, 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 Pastoral Lead is responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, 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 using personal mobile phones, 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 01204 333 253 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). This is with the exception of use of the Bromcom Teacher App for registers etc **during the school day**, which is at the discretion of the individual, or exceptions noted in section 3.4 below.

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.

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 deleted as soon as it has been used e.g. for coursework (see section 3.4)

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
- Photographing work for exam boards

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. The exception to this is if permission is given e.g. for a trip or school event. Any photographs taken must be deleted after use for school promotional reasons.
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school telephone system

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 pupils

- The term 'phone' in this policy denotes mobiles phones, smart watches, air pods, 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 X, Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram.
- **The policy at Sharples is that student phones must not be used on the school site at any point. This includes all areas of school within the gates. Mobile phones must not be accessed at any time and must be in bags or zipped pockets.**
- 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. "[III Communication: Technology, Distraction and 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.

4.1 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 the school site 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 accessing their phone in any way during the school day will have the phone confiscated and a message will be sent home to inform parents that the phone has been confiscated until the end of the following day.
 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 placement in IEU until 16.30 that day and the following day and parents will be contacted to inform them.
 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 breaches the policy and the phone is confiscated three times within a half term, the phone will be kept by the school for one week.

In line with our safeguarding procedures, any student found to be taking photographs, filming or recording at any time in school will be subject to further sanctions in addition to those above.

- 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
- 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.

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 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 pupils are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored securely in the finance office.

Lost phones should be returned to the finance 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 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