



Magisters
Education

Mobile phone policy

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1. Introduction and aims

At Magisters Education 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 provision 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 provision'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 provision, 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 non-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 provision, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The lead teacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every two 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 provision) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while children are in their presence. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the provision where pupils 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 personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's provision
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The lead teacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, provision staff can use the provision office number **[insert number]** 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 provision information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard). More detailed guidance on data protection can be found in the ICT acceptable use policy and Magister Educations Data Protection Policy.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff 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. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/provision trip/activity, this must be done using provision equipment.

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:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips

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
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the provision office or a provision mobile phone.

4.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the provision for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use provision 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 provision's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils should not use their mobile phones during the provision day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

- Pupils should give their mobile phones to their class teacher who locks them in a secure place for their session.
- Pupils should put mobile phones into air plane mode or turn them off before handing them over.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [non-statutory mobile phone guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the provision chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

- Smart watches may be worn as long as the pupils mobile phone is in airplane mode or switched off

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

The provision may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in provision, 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 lead teacher. For example, an exception may be granted for a pupil with diabetes who uses their phone to monitor blood sugar.

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

5.3 Sanctions

If a pupil is found to be in breach of this policy, they will be:

1. reminded of the policy and given a chance to comply.
2. asked to hand the device to a member of staff and told that they may collect it at the end of their session.

Staff have the power to search a pupils mobile device if they believe it contains pornographic images, has been used to commit an offence or to cause harm to another person. In these instances the provision will call the parents, unless by doing so the child could be put at risk. In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The provision 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 provision 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 provision site during the provision day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's at a public event (such as a provision 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 provision.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising provision 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 provision'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 provision office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the provision day. They must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the provision day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to provision must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use. Mobile phones will be placed in an individual bag with the pupils name on it, before being locked away.

Pupils 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. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The provision accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on provision premises or transport, during provision visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from provision. Pupils, Parents/Carers and visitors will be made aware of this disclaimer in the following ways:

- Signs up in the provision entrance or office
- Including disclaimers in permission forms for bringing a phone to provision
- Including a disclaimer in our home-provision agreement
- Provision of a copy of our policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents/carers

Lost phones should be returned to the administrator. The provision will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

The provision is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the provision 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

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of ***, the lead teacher in a timely manner.

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

Acceptable Use Agreement

Many of our pupils will be highly anxious and having their mobile phone in easy reach may give them a sense of safety until trust has been built in the provision.

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to provision:

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. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of provision 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:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. 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 provision.

10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the provision's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography 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 provision'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: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our provision

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the provision grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the administration area.
- 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 provision accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the provision grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the provision office.