



Mobile Phone Policy

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1. Introduction and aims

1.1 Aims

At Chaucer School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart watches, are an important part of everyday life for our students, 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 students, staff, parents and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, including Safeguarding, Relationship and Anti bullying

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to student protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage

2.1 Rationale

Aside from the safeguarding issue, the rationale for this policy 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 student'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.

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 Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and students accountable for its implementation.

3. Use of mobile phones by student

3.1 Student Use

The school recognises that parents/carers in the community feel the need for their child to have access to a mobile phone for communication home. This helps with safeguarding and student protection especially in the long dark winter months. Chaucer School supports this approach. Because of this, the school has adopted the following mobile phone best use policy:

- Students are allowed to bring mobile phones to and from school to ensure their personal safety at all times.
- Students must not use a mobile phone, smart watch or electronic device including earphones/earbuds anywhere in school during the school day, except under the specific direction of a teacher. For the purposes of this policy, the school day begins the moment students enter the school grounds and ends once students leave the main building. Mobile phones will not be permitted to be used at any after school extracurricular clubs, for example.
- If a student brings their phone to the school, then on arrival it should be switched off and kept out of sight, for example in a bag. It should not be seen or heard (including vibrate) throughout the school day.
- The phone can be switched back on upon leaving the school site. Students are not permitted to have their phone out before school when on the school grounds, and not during any period of social time (break or lunch).
- Any student found using or known to have used their phone during the school day will have the phone confiscated and returned at 3.30pm at the end of a 30 minute detention.
- If the student is a repeat offender, the school will request a parent/carer to come in and discuss how to minimise the repeated issues with phones. It may be agreed for a student to hand their phone over to their Year Leader or Engagement Leader on arrival to school, for example.
- Any refusal to hand a phone over to members of staff will result in a follow up response in line with the school's relationship policy. This would constitute the refusal of a reasonable request by a member of staff. In the first instance, a student will be taken to Reflection until the item is handed over, and a same day 30 minute detention issued.

3.2 Designated areas:

The Head teacher reserves the right to allow phones in selected areas given individual circumstances. These might include the use of a mobile phone to contact a family member in an emergency, or for medical purposes linked to diabetes.

3.3 Contacting Students and Parents/Carers

Parents needing to contact their child during the school day should ring the school. We have a well-established and efficient system for getting messages to students and pastoral support if it is needed.

Students who need to contact parents during the school day should speak to student reception or member of the pastoral support team, who will make a phone available.

3.4 School responses

If a phone is seen by a member of staff it will be confiscated by them. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from student under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#). Once confiscated, this will be placed in Student Services and stored securely.

Students will need to attend a 30 minute detention that same day; their phone will be returned to them at the end of that 30 minute detention at 3.30pm.

If a student has their mobile phone repeatedly confiscated, we will request a parent or carer meeting to review further strategies to minimise the repeated issues with phones. It may be agreed for a student to hand their phone over to their Year Leader or Engagement Leader on arrival to school, for example.

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, staff have the power to search student's phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). This will always be done by a member of the SLT or pastoral team.

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.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Staff and mobile phones

Students must accept that staff will access phones at times in order to support their role in school.

Staff often use phones in school in order to support and safeguard students. These uses include accessing school related emails, school systems, accessing internal messaging systems, and for contacting parents.

4.2 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or students, including connecting through social media and messaging apps. There are occasions where pastoral staff may share direct school contact details with parents.

Staff must avoid publicising their personal contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or students.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else which could identify a student. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

4.3 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:

- Emergency evacuations
- 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 student, their work, or anything else which could identify a student.

4.4 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:

- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our Staff Code of Conduct.

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 student, unless it is a public event, 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 students.

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 trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for students using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

Parents must use reception as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They should not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

6. Loss, theft, or damage

Student bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are stored securely and out of sight when not in use.

Student 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 GDPR breaches.

Where a mobile phone is brought into school, it is entirely at the student's and parents' own risk. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of any phone or electronic device brought into school, including if confiscated. (Ref: Section 94, Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that "where a teacher disciplines a student by confiscating an item, neither the teacher nor the school will be liable for any loss or damage to that item").

Equally, there is no statutory liability on schools for items that go missing in other ways.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the main office in a secure location and will be returned directly to the student the same day at the end of a 30 minute detention.

Lost phones should be returned to reception. 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 student's education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations.

This policy will be reviewed every year.

Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for student

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

1. You may not use your mobile phone during any lessons, activities or social times.
2. If your mobile phone is seen or heard, it must be handed over to a member of staff. It will be returned to you that same day after a 30 minute detention. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's relationship policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
3. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent') and remain out of sight. If you are worried that your phone may be on, speak to a member of staff to be allowed to check.
4. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other students.
5. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other students.
6. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
7. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
8. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating student or staff via email, text/messaging app or social media. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
9. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by sharing inappropriate images.
10. 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 this appropriately, or pass it to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a student to bring their phone on a trip

STUDENT DETAILS	
Student name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent(s) name(s):	
Trip:	

Chaucer School has agreed to allow [student name] to bring a mobile phone on the above named school trip, because they are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed.

Student who bring a mobile phone on the school trip must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its acceptable use agreement (which can be found in the Mobile Phone Policy).

The school reserves the right revoke permission if student do not abide by the policy.

Parent signature: _____

Student signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

