

Hulme Hall Grammar School



Mobile Phone Policy

Policy Control	
Report:	Mobile Phone
Approval Body:	Education Committee
Approved by Governors:	November 2024
Review Schedule:	Two Years
Next Review due:	November 2026

Introduction and Aims

At Hulme Hall Grammar School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the working day, and which are most susceptible to misuse - including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

However, as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to ALL mobile communications devices.

1.1 Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following documentation:

- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy – Searches and Confiscation section

2.1 Code of conduct

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other, thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

Our aim is therefore that all practitioners:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse
- know how to minimise risk
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations
- understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use
- are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting, which is agreed to by all users.

3.1 Personal Mobiles - Staff

Staff members are not permitted to make or receive calls and / or texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office.

- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag, pocket or in their locker in the staffroom) during class time
- Enrichment Department staff must lock their mobile away in their locker and access only at break / lunch / non-contact time
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (e.g. classroom, playground)
- It should be noted by all, that for Safeguarding purposes, the Pre-school is a mobile free zone
- Use of phones (including receiving and / or sending texts and / or emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms
- It is also advised that staff security-protect access to functions of their phone
- On occasions, when out of their office, it may be necessary for SLT members to have their mobile phones on them in case the office need to contact them. This may also apply to members of the site team.
- Members of the PE department may also need to carry a mobile phone on their person due to their being regularly off site and / or working outside, in case there is an emergency (e.g. due to an injury or medical reason) and they need to call for assistance.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Headmaster aware of this and obtain permission to have their phone available should they need to receive an emergency call
- Staff members are not, at any time, permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children, or share images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and tablets
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headmaster.

3.2 Mobile Phones for Work Related Purposes

We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on off-site activities. However, staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional
- For marketing purposes, the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), will inform staff attending off site activities that images may be taken of pupils. However, once forwarded to our Marketing Manager, all images must be deleted.
- Mobile phones should not be used to contact parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office. If the school office is closed, staff should always dial the prefix 141 before ringing a parent in order to hide their personal phone number
- School mobile phones are available from the school office for use on school trips and should be used wherever possible rather than personal mobile phones.

3.3 Personal Mobiles - Pupils

We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others.

Therefore:

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones on their person whilst at school. It is at the teacher's discretion whether they are permitted to be used on trips / sports events. Pupils must adhere to strict agreed rules regarding the taking and sharing of images of staff and pupils whilst on the trip / sports event
- Pupils may, at times, be granted permission to use their mobile phones for research purposes, or for capturing images (e.g. in Art and Design / Photography lessons) relating to their work. Such usage should be cleared in advance by the class teacher with a member of the SLT and should be carefully monitored and controlled by the class teacher, forming part of the individual department's risk assessment
- In the event of a parent wishing for his / her child to bring a mobile phone to school for transport purposes / to contact the parent after school:
 - the child must not use the phone once on school premises, except for the reasons outlined above
 - the phone must be switched off, handed in to their Form Tutor at morning registration and collected from them by the child at dismissal
 - phones should be placed in a named envelope and signed in and out by the pupil. School will then lock the phone away. The phone is left at the owner's own risk
 - if a pupil arrives late to school, they should sign in at the school office and leave their phone with the receptionist.

- At after school / homework club in the Enrichment department, mobile phones will be placed on the staff supervisor's table and may be switched on, so that messages can be sent and received regarding pick-up and transport arrangements.

Mobile phones brought to school and not handed in, or used on the school site will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day. The pupil will receive a detention. If this behaviour is repeated, other sanctions available will be applied.

If there is reason to believe that a pupil's mobile phone could have been used during the school day / during a school activity and may cause harm / commit an offence (e.g. nude / pornographic images) – then a search will be conducted for this prohibited item.

3.4 Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises. On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones. Signage relating to mobile phone use by visitors is displayed at reception.

3.5 Parents

We prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school. However, we understand that parents see their phones as an essential means of communication. We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile phones whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment and does not compromise the safety of our pupils or compromise their own safety.

We do allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones – but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own. Please refer to the Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy.

4.1 Dissemination

The mobile phone policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents via the school office and website.

