

Mobile phone policy

Millgate School



Millgate
School

Approved by:
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1. Introduction and aims

At Millgate School 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, behaviour and Data Protection

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
- Safeguarding both students & staff

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

The Data Protection Officer (DPO) & SLT are responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

2.2 Governors

Governors are involved in initial policy approval and reviewing any future modifications of this policy.

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 **personal** calls / texts or engage in personal social media while students are present during contracted time.

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
- In case of need to contact the school when working with pupils when isolated without access to a school phone, or when off-site

The Head teacher will decide, on a case-by-basis, whether to allow for any other work related special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number (0116 2704922) as a point of emergency contact.

Use of personal mobile phones however is **permitted** around students given the context of our unique SEMH setting **for work purposes**, in the event of an emergency. It is likely during any given working day children reach crisis point and additional support will be required. Use of mobile phones offers a safe, rapid & effective form of communication for additional support.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information. Furthermore, no school related data may be stored on a personal mobile handset and uploaded to a personal Cloud account, either deliberately, or in an automated way.

Personal Staff mobile devices used for any work capacity must be encrypted, and have a complicated alpha-numeric password set up to access the device. If this is in place, facial and fingerprint recognition is permitted. Short numeric codes, or shape codes, are **not** permitted.

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found in the Data Protection policy, or ICT acceptable use policy

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or pupils, including connecting through personal social media and messaging apps. Work related communication is available through school email, Edulink or landline. In the event a personal mobile phone is used, a prefix 141 should be used. Pupil and Parent contact information must not be stored on personal mobile devices. Edulink can be used to access contact details, when required.

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

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

If your school uses classroom apps or programmes that require the use of a member of staff's mobile device, this will be discussed with the DPO, prior to purchase. A separate policy will then be written and added to this document that will be App-specific.

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
- Working 1:1 in school

Staff may use personal mobile phones when supervising residential visits or school trips if necessary when a school mobile isn't available. However, their contact details should not be available for parents/guardians.

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
- Try to refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office or school mobile, or using the prefix 141.

3.5 Work phones

Millgate School provides mobile phone allowances to key members of staff that need to be contactable 24 hours a day for work purposes and for when areas like the school residence is open. Allowances can be allocated on a 3-tier basis (£15, £25, £50 per month) to offset mobile phone costs, depending on perceived need by the Head teacher or Executive Head.

There are a limited number of school mobile phones available. Only authorised staff are permitted to use these phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation from the Office Manager. 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.
- Staff must not access social media through these devices, unless given specific, work-related reasons to do so. This may include adding information and posts to school social media accounts. However, personal social media accounts should not be accessed.

3.6 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils are allowed to bring a mobile to school, but the phone should be switched off and handed into a member of staff upon entry, unless directed otherwise by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The phones will be stored in a safe place until the end of the school day. The use of Mobile Phones may be used in circumstances such as at the direction of the teacher for approved classroom activities/trips and visits/educational activities only. Pupils must adhere to the school's Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

4.1 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy.

- An opportunity to refine behaviour. A second redirection will result in reflection time.
- Phones to be confiscated if behaviour escalates and / or the issue becomes a repeat offence. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#))
- When a phone is confiscated, it will be stored securely in the Main Office Safe and returned at the end of the day by a member of BART / SLT. If deemed necessary, the phone will be returned to a pupil's parent / guardian, instead of the pupil, who will come to school to collect it. It is the schools' responsibility to keep the device safe.
- 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 staff to search a pupil's phone if reason exists to believe the phone has been used inappropriately; such as 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 (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
- Bullying through abusive calls, emails, social media posts or messaging.

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 authorised by the Head teacher
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils for personal use.

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. This will be done on EntrySign, as they sign in.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents, unless using the prefix 141.
- 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 off and away, appropriately labelled / identifiable, 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 through encryption and adequate alpha-numeric password protection (at least 8 characters or more), as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches, with potential disciplinary action.

Millgate School accepts no responsibility for student or staff 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. The only exception to this is if a phone is deliberately damaged by another party. In this case, procedure outlined in the schools damage policy will be adhered to.

In the event of a staff handset or Smartwatch being damaged during a physical intervention, the school will investigate and seek to meet associated repair costs, if deemed appropriate by the Head Teacher.

To support communication of above policy:

- Put signs up in the school entryway or office
- Include disclaimers in the permission forms for bringing a phone to school. Phones will not be paid for in holds for pupils
- Include a disclaimer in the home-school agreement
- Provide a copy of the policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents

Confiscated phones will be stored in the Main office safe, in an envelope clearly marked with name, why it was confiscated, and the date.

In the event a phone is confiscated from a pupil, the school becomes responsible for the phone, and can be held responsible for loss, theft, or damage.

Lost phones should be returned to the school 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 of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. The school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

8. Appendix 1: Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils

Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils

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

1. You must hand your phone into a member of staff when you arrive to school. This will be stored securely for the time you are in school.
2. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
3. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent') at all other times.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school 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 passwords or access codes 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
 - d. Phone calls
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 school, as they are against the law.
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 school's behaviour policy and may, on occasions, also be against the law.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share adult/illegal or other harmful content.
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or turn over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobiles phones broken whilst in a hold may not be paid to be fixed by the school. You choose your behaviour. If you need holding because of unacceptable behaviour and your phone is broken, the responsibility lies with you.

Pupil agreement

I understand the points above and agree to follow the rules and guidelines for Mobile Phones in Schools. I understand that if I don't sign this agreement, and will not be allowed a mobile phone in school, or on school activities off-site

Pupil signature: _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

9. Appendix 2: Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Policy for Staff

Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Policy for Staff

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

1. You may not use your mobile phone for personal calls, texts, or personal social media or messaging, whilst pupils are present or during contracted time, unless you have specific permission from the Head teacher, or there is an emergency.
2. If you wish to use your mobile device on site for work, it must be encrypted, and have a complicated alpha-numeric password. If this is in place, face recognition and fingerprint access is permitted.
3. Short, numeric passwords, or shape codes are not permitted as adequate security.
4. You may use your personal device for contact for work purposes when working with pupils when isolated or off-site, or when without easy access to a school phone. You must use the prefix 141 for all calls, and Edulink for messages.
5. You must not store contact details for Pupils or Parents/Guardians on personal devices. They can be accessed through the Edulink app, which you can download on your phone, or through SIMS or Edulink on your school device.
6. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of other staff or pupils on a personal mobile device.
7. You must avoid sharing your contact or social media details with Parents/Guardians, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
8. You are allowed to access school emails on your personal device. However, this must ONLY be through the Microsoft Outlook app, and your device must meet expectations from point 2 (above). Outlook must also have Face recognition or Fingerprint access set up as additional security, if available.
9. If you access school emails on your mobile device, the Microsoft Outlook app must not be backed up to your personal Cloud account (e.g. iCloud)
10. Don't allow Pupils to use your personal devices.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in disciplinary action

Staff agreement

I understand the points above and agree to follow the rules and guidelines for Mobile Phones in Schools. I understand that if I don't sign this agreement, and will not be allowed a mobile phone in school, or on school activities off-site

Staff signature: _____

Staff name (Print): _____

Job title: _____

10. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information for visitors (added to EntrySign)

Use of mobile phones in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, please go somewhere away from pupils
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy and AUP is available from the school office.
