

Mobile Phone Policy - Draft JUNE 2023

1. Introduction and aims

At Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College, we recognise that mobile phones are an integral part of life for pupils, parents, families, carers and staff. We also recognise that whilst mobile phone technology offers huge opportunities, it also brings risks. This means that the appropriate use of mobile phones needs to be carefully managed. This policy should also be read alongside of and supports other policies including, for example but not exclusively those relating to e-safety, data protection, safeguarding and behaviour.

This policy sets out the expectations, responsibilities, rules and standards regarding the use of personal mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers as well as promotes the safe and responsible use of personal mobile phones. The procedures and processes detailing the implementation of this policy can be found in the appendix

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 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 Headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team with delegated responsibility is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy every 3 years and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.
- This policy will be approved by the governing body or the appropriate delegated committee following each review and may receive updates relevant to the use of mobile phones in school.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phone use by staff

- Staff are not permitted to make or receive calls or send texts when they are working directly with children. This includes during lessons, whilst on duty and any other time when they are supervising children.
- Use of personal mobile phones to make or receive calls or send texts must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where children are not present.
- There may be exceptional circumstances where the Headteacher will allow a member of staff to use their phone for **personal reasons** during the time that they are working directly with children. Staff must make these requests for special arrangements in advance and directly to the headteacher.

3.2 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate, or staff may wish, to use personal mobile phones for *work purposes*. In these circumstances, staff will:

- Always use their personal mobile phone in an appropriate and professional manner and in line with section 3.1 as well as the acceptable use of the acceptable use of ICT and data protection policy.
- At their discretion, staff may choose to use their mobile phone to access the school's MIS.
- Staff may wish to use personal mobile phones for other aspects of work including, but not limited to trips, visits, performances, sports fixtures, open evenings, fairs and other school events. If staff do not wish to use their personal mobile phone in these situations, a school mobile phone will be available.

Should a member of staff decide to use their personal mobile phone in such situations, the following conditions must be followed:

- The device must be protected by a PIN and/or biometric data
- The device must be kept up to date with security updates and must have a remote wipe feature in case it is lost or stolen (eg Find my Iphone)
- The date, time and event details that any images, recordings and videos of children are taken must be logged to aid any future subject access requests.
- Any images, recordings and videos taken of children must be uploaded to the school system (Google Drive) within 24hrs and then deleted from the device as well as from the deleted items folder and any automatic online backups.
- Personal information about children must not be shared on a member of staff's personal social media accounts, chat forums such as WhatsApp, Messenger, etc

3.3 Data protection and safeguarding

- Staff must not
 - use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.
 - give their personal mobile phone number to parents or pupils and should take appropriate steps to avoid publicising their personal contact details on any social media platform, messaging app or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils.

3.4 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

As mobile phones have become integral to our everyday lives, it is *accepted* that most pupils in all year groups will bring a mobile phone with them to school. By enabling families to be in touch with their children on their journey to and from school, mobile phones are seen as an important way of helping to keep children safe. However, once in school, it is not necessary, except for very specific exceptions, for pupils to need access to a mobile phone *during* the school day. Furthermore, mobile phones are not a requirement for learning whilst in school and are not needed during lessons.

The policy at Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School is that pupils in year groups 7,8,9 10 and 11 are not allowed to use their mobile phone or have it switched from the beginning of the school day (that is, the from start of morning tutor time) to the end of the last lesson of the school day including break and lunch.

4.1 Exceptions

- The **only** exception to this policy is where a child has a defined medical condition, supported by medical evidence from a doctor or medical professional that specifically requires access to a mobile phone.
- Exemptions to this policy are granted at the discretion of the Headteacher following an application by the child's parents or carers.
- See appendix 4: Application form for pupil exemption to the mobile phone policy

4.3 Home - child contact during the school day

- If home needs to contact their child during the day, this must be via a phone call to school reception. Information will then be passed to the child as soon as possible. Parents must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the school day.
- If a pupil needs to contact home, they must go to reception or their hub office at break or lunch where an appropriate member of staff will make contact on their behalf. Pupils will not be permitted to retrieve their mobile phone at any time during the school day to contact home.

4.4 Mobile phone use by Sixth Form College Students

- College students may use their mobile phone whilst they are in the Sixth Form College buildings. However they must not use their mobile phone whilst in the main school.
- College students must adhere to all policies relating to the appropriate use of IT

5. Implementation of policy and dealing with non-compliance from pupils

- The rules and expectations pertaining to the implementation processes specific to the management of mobile phones is detailed in **appendix 1**.
- The process for managing compliance and sanctions for breaking the rules pertaining to mobile phone use is detailed in **appendix 2**
- All pupils in years 7 to 11 and their parents or carers are required to sign and agree to comply with a mobile phone agreement detailed in **appendix 3**. Failure to provide a fully signed agreement will result in the pupil not being permitted to bring a mobile phone into school.

5.1 Searching the content of mobile phones and confiscation of phones

- If there is reason to believe the phone may contain pornographic images, inappropriate material and content, if it is being used or has been used to commit an offence, cause personal injury, engage in inappropriate behaviour including but not limited to any form of bullying or harassment, the contents of the phone may be searched.
- Certain types of conduct 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: consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos, upskirting, threats of violence or assault, abusive calls, emails, social media posts, messages or texts directed at someone for example, on the basis of their ethnicity, religious beliefs, gender or sexual orientation
- If anyone suspects or finds that any other person has inappropriate content on their phone or that it is being used in any way as detailed above, they should report this to a senior member of staff immediately
- The school is permitted to conduct a search for phones from pupils and may confiscate them as detailed in **appendix 2**.

6. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy 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
 - Examples of public events include but not exclusively, school fairs, concerts and other performances.
- Not posting photographs or recordings on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils
- Not taking photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

6. Loss, theft or damage

- In order to mitigate against loss, theft or damage, pupils must ensure that their phone is appropriately labelled and stored as detailed in appendix 1
- Pupils and staff must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions and data.
- 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.

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