



Mobile Phone Policy

2023-24

Effective for all employees, Learners and staff on or after 1 September 2023

Date of next Review: September 2024

Please Note: A formal, full review of this document will take place on a 3-yearly basis. However, in the interim, the document will be updated as necessary to remain current with any statutory legislation and/or significant Government guidance updates on the subject.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

DOCUMENT TITLE: ESS MOBILE POLICY
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1. Introduction and aims

At ESS Education and Support Services we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our learners, parents and staff.

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 charity'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 education, 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

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 Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

2.2 Trustees

On a 3 yearly basis this policy will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees and approved for implementation.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the Charity) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while [children are present/during contact time].

Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the venue where learners 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 instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- Whilst undertaking duty responsibilities such as break time, lunch time and support where access
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The DSL will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential Charity information.

Please see our data protection policy for more information.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents 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 or pupils.

Please see our ICT acceptable use and online safety policies for more information.

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 charity equipment.

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

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

- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

3.5 Sanctions

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

See the Charity's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

4. Use of mobile phones by Learners

We understand that phones and headphones are a part of modern life and are a really useful resource for keeping in touch and staying safe.

All learners can have a mobile phone with them, but they will need to:

- Keep it in their inside pocket
- Make sure it is not seen and not heard (unless directed to be used by their TLM)
- Keep headphones in their pockets

Our approach to electronic devices including mobile phones, smart phones, MP3 devices and other similar devices is simple – they are not to be seen, heard or used during lesson time.

Learners must not use devices to record staff or learners. If we believe this to be the case, we will contact families straight away and ask for the images to be deleted.

Families and learners should be aware of the following:

- If a learner is seen using any device during the lesson, they will be given a warning and asked to put it away, if the TLM decides it is necessary they may confiscate the phone until the lesson has ended.

In addition, there may be times when staff are concerned regarding the content on a learner's mobile phone (e.g., video footage, images, etc). Staff members have the power to search learners' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a learner's phone if you 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.

The checking of content on a mobile phone must be completed with two staff members always present. Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The charity 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

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

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including Trustees and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are at an ESS venue, when a provision is taking place.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event (such as a school 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, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in or attend a public event.

Parents must use the 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 provision period.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Learners bringing phones to a provision must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use.

Learners 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 data breaches.

The Charity accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on ESS premises or transport.

7. Monitoring and review

ESS Education and Support Services is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of learner's education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the charity will take into account:

- Feedback from parents and learners
- Feedback from TLM's
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations