



# DITCHAM PARK SCHOOL

*Where every child is known and valued*

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## Mobile Phone Policy

Compiled by	Headmaster
Approved by	SLT
Date of Publication	Oct 2023
Next Review	Oct 2025



# Mobile Phone Policy

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## Introduction

At Ditcham Park School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers 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/carers and volunteers.
- Support the school'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 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

## Roles and Responsibilities – 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 Headmaster is responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

## **USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY STAFF**

### Personal Mobile Phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) should not normally receive or receive personal calls or send texts while working with or in contact with children. Use of personal mobile phones should ordinarily be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it is 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



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### Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

More detailed information about Data Protection can be found in our Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

### Safeguarding

Staff should never share personal contact details with pupils or connect with them via the use of social media or messaging apps.

Staff should avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website in order to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils.

It is advised that staff refrain from sharing personal contact details with parents or carers, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

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

### 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 evacuation
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Two factor authentication

Staff are allowed to use their personal mobile phones on school trips if a school mobile is not available.

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

### 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 at all times, and in line with our staff code of conduct



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### Sanctions

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

### **USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY PUPILS**

Use of mobile phones in the Junior and Senior School is not permitted. In the Junior School, pupils hand in their mobile device to their class teacher at the start of the day and then get it back at the end of the day. In the Senior School, on entering school, all pupils must lock their mobile phones in their Yondr case which should then be stored in the pupil's bag. Phones must remain in the case until the pupil leaves school at the end of the day.

If a pupil needs to leave school early, they can unlock their Yondr pouch and retrieve their phone when they exit the building.

On rare occasions, a staff member may ask pupil to access their phones in order to complete a specific task. In this event, the staff member will provide the pupils with a Yondr unlocking device in order that phones can be retrieved. Phones should be put back into the Yondr pouch once the activity has been completed.

In the event of a school trip / travel off-site, pupils' phones should ordinarily remain in the Yondr pouch on the 'outgoing' journey. On the return journey, the staff in charge will provide pupils with a Yondr unlocking device in order that pupils can access their phones and if necessary, call parents.

Any poor behavior or mis-use of phones whilst on a school trip will result in sanction and the possible removal of the pupil's device on subsequent off-site activities.

If a pupil forgets to bring their Yondr pouch to school, they should hand their phone to the school office for storage until the end of the day.

Failure to comply with the policy will result in a sanction; in most cases this will be a 90 minute after-school detention.

### Sanctions

If a pupil is found to be using their phone during the school day, the phone will be confiscated and held in the school office until the end of the day. An additional sanction may well be given.

Staff have the authority 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 they 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.

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)
- Up-skirting
- Threats of violence or assault



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- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

If evidence of abusive content is discovered on a pupil's phone, the school will take action in line with the behaviour/bullying policy.

### USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY PARENTS/CARERS, VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

Contractors are allowed to use their mobile phone for their work purposes. They should not take photographs of pupils or use any other features in their phone other than for appropriate work purposes.

Parents/carers/volunteers/visitors should:

- Not make private or work-related telephone calls on the school site unless necessary
- Should not take photos or video of pupils unless it is a public event such as sports day or a school production when taking photographs or video of their child is permitted
- Should not post images of video footage of other people's children on social media or in the public domain without permission

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

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

Parents/carers 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/carers 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.

### LOSS, THEFT OR DAMAGE

Any person bringing a phone into school is responsible for its safe and appropriate storage. Staff must 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 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.

Parents are made aware in the Parents' handbook, that the school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones which are lost or stolen.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office and will be the responsibility of Deputy Head of Juniors for a mobile phone belonging to a pupil in Juniors and the Deputy Head of Seniors for a mobile phone belonging to a pupil in Seniors.



### **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers 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



### **APPENDIX 1: Expectations of conduct for mobile phone use – pupils**

Pupils should not use a mobile phone in school unless authorised to do so by a teacher.

Pupils should:

- Never take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
- Avoid sharing personal contact details with people they don't know, and never share other people's contact details without their consent.
- Never share their phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
- Never use their 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
- Not 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.
- Never use their phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
- Comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
- Understand that mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If pupils have a mobile phone, they will be asked to store these appropriately, or turn them over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in an exam being declared invalid.
- Never use their phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal, eg: 'sexting'
- Understand that rules regarding bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how mobile phones should be used even when the pupil is not in school.