

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

OUR TRUST'S PRAYER

Heavenly Father

Let peace, friendship and love grow in our schools

Send the Holy Spirit to give:

Excellence to our learning

Love to our actions and

Joy to our worship

Guide us to help others

So that we may all

Learn, Love and Achieve, Together with Jesus.

Amen

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1. Introduction and aims

At Rainford C E we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils/students, 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 while at school.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils/students, staff, parents/carers and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection, behaviour and online safety

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

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 Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy, reviewing it (every 2-years as a minimum), and holding staff and pupils/students accountable for its implementation.

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 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 school where pupils/students 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

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

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01744 883281 as a point of emergency contact.

3.2 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).

Detailed guidance on data protection can be found in our Data Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils/students, 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/carers or pupils/students.

Staff must read the school's Communications and Social Media Policy (clause 7.6 Staff Conduct on Social Media Accounts) about connecting with pupils/students and parents/carers over messaging apps and social media.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils/students, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil/student. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school 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
- To authenticate CPOMS and other secure sites

For school trips/events away from school, teaching staff will be issued with a school duty phone and this number will be used for any authorised or emergency communications with pupils/students and parents. Any deviation from this policy (e.g. by mistake or because the school phone will not work) will be notified immediately to the Headteacher. Teaching staff using their personal phone in an emergency will ensure that the number is hidden to avoid a parent or pupil/student accessing a member of staff's private phone number.

All staff are governed by their contract of employment and the school's Acceptable Use Policy, which covers the use of mobile phones/personal equipment for taking pictures of pupils/students, and where these are stored. At our school, members of staff may occasionally (i.e. only when school devices are temporarily not available or there are insufficient devices) use personal phones to capture photos or videos of pupils/students, but these will be appropriate, linked to school activities, taken without secrecy and not in a one-to-one situation, and always moved to school storage as soon as possible, after which they are deleted from personal devices or cloud services.

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/students, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil/student
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. 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 school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils/students

Pupils/students in Year 6 are allowed to bring mobile phones to school for emergency use only but not when moving around the school buildings. Smartwatches are not allowed in our school. During lessons, phones must remain turned off at all times, unless the teacher has given express permission as part of the lesson. Any attempt to use a phone in lessons without permission or to take illicit photographs or videos will lead to the withdrawal of mobile privileges. Important messages and phone calls to or from parents can be made at the school office, which will also pass on messages from parents to pupils/students in emergencies. Pupils/students must adhere to the school's code of conduct for mobile phone use (see Appendix A).

4.1 Sanctions

Students who show inappropriate use of mobile phones will result in it being confiscated? (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

If the mobile phone is confiscated, it will be to be collected by the student's parent/ carer.

In line with the DfE guidance 'Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools', the Headteacher and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to

search pupils/students property on school premises. This includes the content of mobile phones and other devices, for example as a result of a reasonable suspicion that a device contains illegal or undesirable material, including but not exclusive to sexual images, pornography, violence or bullying.

Staff have the power to search pupils'/students' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows you to search a pupil's/student'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.

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

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

Parents/carers, 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/students, unless it is 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/students

Parents/carers, 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.

Volunteers, contractors, governors should leave their phones in their pockets and turned off. Under no circumstances should they be used in the presence of children or to take photographs or videos. If this is required (e.g. for contractors to take photos of equipment or buildings), permission of the headteacher should be sought (the headteacher may choose to delegate this) and this should be done in the presence of a member staff.

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/students, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil/student

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils/students 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.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils/students bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use.

Pupils/students 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 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/students are travelling to and from school.

In order to ensure pupils and parents/carers are aware of the disclaimer above. We:

- Put signs up in the school entryway or office
- Include disclaimers in your permission forms for bringing a phone to school
- Include a disclaimer in your home-school agreement

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a secure location/locked cabinet.

Schools that confiscate phones from pupils/students become 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 on pupils'/students' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

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

Review Schedule

Appendix A: Pupil/Student Code of Conduct - Use of Mobile Phones

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

1. You must hand your phone in on arrival to your class teacher. It must be turned off.
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').
4. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils/students.
5. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils/students without their consent.
6. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
7. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
8. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils/students or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
9. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
10. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
11. 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.
12. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
13. You must 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.
14. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you 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 your exam being declared invalid.

Appendix B: Permission form allowing a pupil/student to bring their phone to school

PUPIL/STUDENT DETAILS	
Pupil/Student name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow your child to bring their mobile phone to school because they:

- Travel to and from school alone
- Are a young carer
- Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed
- Need the phone for an educational activity during class time
- Attend before or after-school where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers

Pupils/students who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its Pupil/Student Code of Conduct – Use of Mobile Phones.

The school reserves the right revoke permission if pupils/students don't abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Appendix D: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

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/students are present. If you must use your phone, please speak with a member of the school office team who let you know where you may go to use your phone.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils/students (unless it is your own child), or staff.
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils/students

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 is available from the school office along with our Parent/Carer and Visitor/Contractor Acceptable Use Policies.