



# Mobile Phone Policy



## The Stour Federation

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mobile phone technology continues to evolve. Wireless connections in particular have extended the capabilities of mobile phones, enabling access to a wide range of new content and services globally. Many phones now offer Internet and email access, alongside the standard functions of messaging, camera, video and sound recording.

## 2. AIM

The Stour Federation recognises 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 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

## 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones on site. This includes practitioners, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

## 4. PERSONAL MOBILE PHONES

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of images of children, exploitation and bullying.

It is recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others. When mobile phones are misused it can impact an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all. It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile phones is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual

to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their mobile devices while children are present/during contact time. Staff keeping their phone with them during contact times must ensure their phone is switched off (not silent/vibrate).

Use of personal mobile phones is restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present such as the staff room and offices.

In circumstances where immediate contact is needed, then staff should let family/their child's school know to call the main reception as personal phones will be switched off during lessons.

The Headteacher/Head of School will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number as a point of emergency contact.

Staff need to use the *Record of Concern About an Adult* yellow form should this policy be breached. These forms must be given to the Headteacher/Head of School. Please refer to the Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct) and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for further information.

Staff are permitted to use their personal mobile phone on a school trip to contact the school about a query, incident or provide an estimated time of arrival. Staff must refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office.

Staff are permitted to use their personal mobile phone at school during an emergency, such as fire alarm evacuation, lockdown or behaviour incident.

## **5. DATA PROTECTION**

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

Staff can use school iPads and school cameras to take photographs – not personal devices.

Staff can access websites and apps that access data on external servers such as Google Drive, Welearn365 and CPOMS but should never download content onto their personal devices.

Staff 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 any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

## **6. SANCTIONS**

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

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

Individual schools may choose to allow certain year groups to bring mobile phones into school. They must be switched off on entering the site and handed into the class teacher on arrival.

Personal phones and tablets and watches that are internet-enabled and have cameras are not allowed on school trips during the day or at afternoon clubs.

Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#). School 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 schools to search a pupil's phone if we 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. If they are confiscated, parents/carers will be contacted to collect the phone/device.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The Stour Federation takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

## **8. USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY PARENTS, VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS**

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy in the same way as staff when they are on the school site during the school day. This means:

- Not taking photos or recordings of pupils on school grounds or school trips or when working with pupils.
- Not posting any images/data about the school on social media without consent.
- 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.

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

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

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 their personal mobile during the school day.

## **9. LOSS, THEFT OR DAMAGE**

Any person bringing a mobile phone to school must ensure that it is appropriately labelled, secured as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. 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.