Mobile Phone Policy

Rushcliffe Spencer Academy

Date policy last reviewed: June 2026

Signed by:

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1. Introduction and aims

At Rushcliffe Spencer Academy we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, 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 safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors 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 and the smooth running of the school
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory mobile phone guidance and behaviour guidance. Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is Keeping Children Safe in Education.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently 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 Principal is responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly, and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

3.2 Governors

Governors will monitor and review this policy in accordance with their roles and responsibilities.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone for personal use, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones for personal use must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom/workrooms/empty classrooms).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The Principal 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 (0115 9744050) as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 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, Microsoft CoPilot and Google Bard).

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers 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/carers or pupils.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that 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 school equipment.

Staff may use their mobile phone to access school systems if these require an authentication app.

Please refer to the Spencer Academies Trust ICT acceptable use policy.

4.4 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 are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

Trip leaders will have an Academy phone for contact and camera purposes. 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 that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4.5 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:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils should not use their mobile phones on the school site during the school day, including before and after school, during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

- Pupils must keep their mobile phones out of view at all times and they must not be heard.

The exception to this rule for all pupils is during school trips where pupils must follow the School Visits and Residential Trips – Mobile Phones and Smart Devices guidance and parents agree to the home school agreement. Please refer to the School Visits and Residential Trips – Mobile Phones and Smart Devices letter (appendix 3).

There may be further individual cases where a student is able to use a mobile phone in school. These will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis (for example, for medical purposes) and bespoke agreements will be put in place for those students (appendix 2).

5.1 Use of Yondr phone pouches Y7 only September 2026

Upon arrival, pupils will:

1) Turn their phone off.

2) Place their phone inside their Yondr pouch and show this to staff on the gates.

3) During form time pupils will show their tutors that their phone is off and lock the pouch.

3) Pupils then keep the pouched phone with them throughout the school day, and store it in their bag or locker.

At dismissal, students will unlock their pouch, retrieve their phone and re-close the pouch to protect the locking mechanism from damage. Pouches must be brought to and from school each day.

Forgotten Pouches

The pupil will collect a spare pouch from PSU. Parents/ carers will be contacted and reminded of the procedures. If the pouch is repeatedly forgotten their pouch will be treated as lost and a replacement fee of £15 will be charged.

Phone Use During the School Day

If a pupil is found in possession of a phone outside their pouch on school site the phone will be confiscated. The phone will be only returned once a parent/carer collects it and serious sanctions will be applied in line with a serious breach of the behaviour policy.

Bag searches may be conducted if teachers have concerns that a pupil has a mobile device on them that hasn't been placed into their pouch.

Damaged Pouches

Any attempt to tamper with the Yondr system, including use or possession of high-strength magnets will be treated as a serious offence, potentially resulting in a replacement fee of £15, confiscation until a parent/carer picks it up and serious sanctions will be applied in line with a serious breach of the behaviour policy.

If accidental damage occurs, students must report it immediately. If damage is discovered during checks and has not been reported, it may be considered intentional.

The following examples may indicate intentional damage:

❖ Ripped or cut fabric

❖ Bent or cut pin

❖ Signs of force to the black locking mechanism

❖ Pen marks inside the pouch

❖ Pouch opening without a station

❖ Scuff marks on the black ball

The pouch should not be used as a replacement for a protective case and/or screen protector on a mobile device.

Communications During the School Day

Parents/ carers who need to contact their child during the school day should do so via the school office. We will then pass this message onto your child.

Medical Conditions

Students who require access to their mobile devices for specific medical purposes will be provided with a medical pouch following a request from parents/carers.

5.2 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

- Smartwatches will be treated as a mobile phone if they are used to access any of the functions on a mobile phone such as messaging, accessing the internet, playing music etc.

5.3 Exceptions for special circumstances and for sixth form pupils

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the Head of Year and/or school nurse.

Any pupils that are given permission must only use the mobile phone for the circumstances that are agreed e.g. monitoring blood sugars for a diabetic.

Sixth-form pupils are allowed access to their mobile phones during the school day, to reflect their increased independence and responsibility, but must not compromise our policy on the use of mobile phones for other pupils.

Therefore, they are only permitted to use their mobile phones in the allocated sixth form spaces within the building and area directly outside the entrance. Misuse of mobile phones by pupils in the sixth form will lead to sanctions according to our behaviour policy.

5.4 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy the mobile phone will be confiscated and taken to the Pupil Support Unit by a member of staff and recorded. The process for returning the mobile phone is as follows:

- Mobile phone will be returned to a parent/carer only. No phones will be returned to pupils.

Schools are permitted to confiscate mobile phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Headteachers/Principals can confiscate mobile phones for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools . Staff have the power to search pupils' mobile phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation . This guidance allows mobile phones to be searched if there is a good reason to do so, such as, it has been used to cause harm to another person or it has been used to commit an offence.

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, disability)
- The pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education

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

6. 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, unless it's at 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/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.

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 that 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 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

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 their personal mobile during the school day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are stored securely and out of sight.

Pupils must secure their mobile 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 are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the Pupil Support Unit and locked away overnight if not returned.

Lost phones should be returned to reception or Pupil Support Unit. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

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

9. Appendix 1: Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement

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

1. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
2. Phones must be on silent.
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils.
5. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
6. 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.
7. 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 it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the exam room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to use their phone in school

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

The school has agreed to allow (pupil name) to use their mobile phone in school because they:

- *Need the phone to support their medical needs*

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its code of conduct/acceptable use agreement.

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

11. Appendix 3: School Visits and Residential Trips – Mobile Phones and Smart Devices letter

School Visits and Residential Trips – Mobile Phones and Smart Devices

Dear parents and carers,

Taking a break from online communication is a rare privilege in this day and age and many young people have not known a time without the pressure of constant online communication. Allowing them to disconnect from devices and connect to the world around them – and to themselves – is a gift. Indeed, when the phone is down, the eyes are up.

To maximize the benefits of their school trip abroad, students need to be free to be fully in the moment, engaging in the activities on offer and focusing on the people they are travelling with. For this reason, we advise minimal use of their smart devices during their school trip and will have the following in place:

• Student to hand in their mobile phones (and other smart devices) switched off and in a small name-labelled bag at curfew to trip leaders. These will be stored in the hotel room safe overnight alongside passports (if applicable).

• Only students allocated to a room will be allowed inside and we expect respectful use of mobile devices during this time. Students are free to congregate and use their mobile devices in a respectful manner in communal areas.

Many young people, especially those of secondary school age and above, own a mobile phone. While these have benefits, they are also the cause of serious concerns, including:

• Unnecessary distraction, disruption and diversion

• Online bullying

• Peer pressure and stigma associated with the ownership of expensive devices

• Access to inappropriate internet content

• Impact on sleep hygiene

The Department for Education (DfE) has issued guidance encouraging schools to prohibit mobile phones. This is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools.

1. We understand that there may be exceptional circumstances where a child a might need to use their phone. These could include situations where a child needs to monitor a health condition or needs to contact a parent/guardian urgently. In these cases, staff will use their discretion to allow temporary phone use.

2. Bringing a mobile phone or other smart devices is at the student's own risk. Rushcliffe Spencer Academy and its staff does not accept responsibility for lost or damaged devices.

FAQ:

How can I contact my child overnight in an emergency?

- Parents can reach the trip leader via the phone number shared prior to the trip commencing.

How can my child contact home overnight in an emergency?

- If students need to contact a parent or guardian, they can request to do so via a member of staff. All students will know where staff are located in the accommodation.

How can my child charge their device?

- Each day there will be opportunities to charge devices; devices will be returned at the beginning of the day (approx. 7am) and handed in at nighttime curfew (approx. 10.30pm) which allows devices to be charged in hotel rooms over mealtimes or during downtime.

Home-School Agreement – Use of mobile devices, tablets and other smart technology.

School:

- Will ensure students have access to their mobile devices (and other smart technology) between morning wake-up and evening curfew. Times will be confirmed by trip leader.

- Will ensure that students have access to their mobile devices (and other smart technology) during trips that involve overnight travel (bus travel, flights etc.) due to the availability of staff supervision.

- 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.

Parent:

- Support school in ensuring their child understands that their phones will be handed in each evening.

- Support their child's online safety by ensuring appropriate filters are in place to prevent access to inappropriate content and that passwords/pin numbers are in place to prevent unauthorised use.

Year 7-Year 11 Pupil:

- Agree to handover their mobile phone (and other smart technology like tablets) each night to the trip leaders at curfew.

- Agree to only use their phone appropriately (i.e. will not access inappropriate content, take photographs of others without explicit consent or use their device to be unkind or facilitate unkindness to others).

Please confirm your agreement to the above via this online link:

To be read alongside

On line safety policy

Behaviour policy

SAT staff acceptable use policy

SAT staff AI policy