



Mobile Phone Policy (Whole School including EYFS)

Independent Day School

Our Lady of Sion School

First edition: January 2025

Frequency of Review: Annually

Next Review Due: January 2026

1. Introduction and aims

At Our Lady of Sion, 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. Every school has a duty to create an environment that is calm, safe, and free from distraction so all pupils, whatever their background, can learn and thrive.

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, 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 Senior Leader: Head of Pastoral and Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

2.2 Governors

Governors will agree the initial implementation of the policy and ratify any changes each time the policy is updated.

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 pupils 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 are not present (such as the staffroom, classroom when no young people are present (PPA time)).

In the **Early Years Centre** staff are not permitted to carry their mobile phone on their person and this must be stored away in the staff room linked to the classroom area.

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
- 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 01903 204063 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).

For more information, please see our school's data protection policy and/or online safety policy.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving 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 should 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 school equipment. Where school equipment is not available and only a personal mobile is available, the member of staff should inform the DSL or Headteacher beforehand to request permission. These images should be deleted before leaving the school site.

A member of staff may use their mobile phone during lessons for educational purposes, such as accessing an app or programme to enhance learning, however, pupils should not be encouraged or allowed to use their phones. This is including but is not limited to Kahoot style quizzes and searches for information.

Member of staff in the Early Years classrooms are NOT permitted to use their mobile phones and these should be stored in the staffroom area.

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
- Accessing emails
- Research

Where a member of staff is leading or part of a school trip, the school trip phone will be the point of contact for school and parents. Staff should not use their personal phones to contact parents or students.

Where there is an emergency situation that requires a member of staff to use their personal mobile device to contact parents, it is good practice to inform the DSL or Headteacher retrospectively.

Otherwise, 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/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

Senior School pupils are allowed to bring their mobile to school when:

- Travelling to school by themselves
 - Young carers who need to be contactable
 - Parents feel their child will turn off their phone and follow the school rules appropriately.
- If a pupil brings their phone to school, it must be turned off, (not placed on silent), and either stored in their bag, stored securely in their locker, or left at reception.
 - Pupils may not use their mobile phones once on school site, before school, during break/lunch times, lesson times or as they are leaving. If a pupil needs to make a call, they may take their phone to reception or the Pastoral Office.
 - The only exception for having a mobile phone switched on during the school day, (other than the above) would be to pay for their food in the canteen. Phones should be switched back off immediately after purchase.

4.1 Sanctions

Where a pupil is in breach of this policy and is seen to be using their phone on school site:

- Mobile phones will be confiscated. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#))
- Any member of staff is permitted to confiscate a pupil's mobile phone where they have seen the mobile phone in use.
- Where a phone is confiscated, the school will keep the phone locked overnight in the school office and return the phone to the pupil at the end of the next school day. There is a zero tolerance to mobile phone use.
- Where a parent does not authorise the school to keep their child's mobile phone overnight, they must come into school to collect the phone or call one of the Senior Leaders.
- Where a phone is confiscated on a Friday or day before a holiday, the phone will be returned to the pupil on the same day of the confiscation and parents will be contacted. Where a pupil repeats this breach of the policy, a mobile phone may be kept over a weekend at the Headteacher's discretion.
- As outlined in our search and confiscation policy, the Headteacher, the Deputy Head and the Head of Pastoral and Designated Safeguarding Lead have the authority to search a pupil's possessions including their mobile phone, 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 there is reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, video or chat content linked to bullying or violence or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

- Where a member of staff reasonably suspects a pupil's mobile phone to contain pornographic images, video or chat content linked to bullying or violence or be linked to criminal activity, they should report this to the DSL or the Headteacher.
- Where a member of staff suspects that a pupil's phone contains indecent images of a minor (under the age of 18 years) they should not view the images.
- 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, 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/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 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.

6. Loss, theft, or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are switched off, appropriately labelled, and are stored securely when not in use.

Pupils 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 are travelling to and from school.

To remind students of the mobile phones policy we will:

- Put signs up in the school entryway, classrooms, and corridors.
- Include disclaimers in our permission forms for bringing a phone to school.
- Include a disclaimer in our home-school agreement.
- Provide a copy of our policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents/carers.

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

Lost phones should be returned to our office staff or Head of Pastoral. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

7. Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

- Whilst Our Lady of Sion School does prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day to reduce distraction and disruption, we must also comply with duties such as the duty to make reasonable adjustments where necessary.
- There will be pupils for whom we will need to make reasonable adjustments, and these will be made at the discretion of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- We have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to take such steps as is reasonable to avoid substantial disadvantage to a disabled pupil caused by the school's policies or practices.

8. 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 consider:

- 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
- Guidance received from the Governors.

The government have given schools autonomy over the way they implement the 'no phones' policy in their community. In the first instance we have chosen an approach which relies on a positive and trusting partnership between school, pupils, home.

Part of our review will be to decide whether this approach is successful at Our Lady of Sion and whether our community buys-in to the 'trusting approach'.

Where students aren't able to demonstrate the capacity to work within our policy it may be necessary for whole school review or individual student reviews.

Approved by Board of Governors January 2025

9. Appendix 1: Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement for pupils

Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement

You must agree to and respect 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 switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or 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 without their consent.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone, during school hours or after school. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. 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.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. 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.
13. 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.

10. Appendix 2: 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 are present. If you must use your phone, you may go the staffroom.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff, unless it is a school event.
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils.

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.

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