



Odyssey House School - Wokingham

Mobile Phone Use Policy

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1. Introduction and Aims

At Odyssey House School we recognise our duty to create an environment that is calm, safe and free from distraction so all our students, can learn and thrive. We do recognise that mobile phones, including smartphones, and indeed personal communication through mobile technologies, have become part of everyday life for our students, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community, but that mobile technologies need to be used appropriately. Research from the DFE has identified that by removing mobile phones from the school day schools can create a safe space where students are better protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media and cyber bullying, as well as increasing their focus and attention in lessons.

Our mobile phone use policy therefore aims to:

- To safeguard our students
- Ensure that we provide a safe and calm positive learning environment
- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for students, staff, parents and volunteers

In addition, the Mobile Phone Use Policy supports the schools' other policies, especially those related to:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding
- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour Management
- Staff Code of Conduct
- E safety
- GDPR privacy notice
- ICT acceptable use
- Data protection
- Privacy notice

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

The Mobile Phone Use Policy and related Code of conduct also apply to students, staff and parents/carers during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities both on the school site and off-site.

Students and their parents/carers must read, understand and sign this Mobile Phone Use Policy and the related Code of Conduct as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.

“Mobile phone” is used throughout this document but refers to any type of digital device, e.g. watches, iPads or tablets, which use the same technologies.

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 annually, for reviewing it, and for holding staff and students to account 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 students are not present. There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to use their phone during contact time, for example when completing 2 factor authentication to access the schools confidential IT systems.

For instance:

- In case of emergencies involving close family members
- In the case of acutely ill dependants 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’s office number as a point of contact for emergencies.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data or any other confidential school information. Additional detailed guidance on data protection can be found in the school’s Data Protection Policy, E-Safety Policy and the Staff Technology acceptable use agreement.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or 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 or students. Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photos or recordings of students, their work, or anything else which could identify a student. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment. Should there ever be a need to take photos or recordings of students

using a personal device (if for example, the school equipment malfunctions/is unavailable) the photos/recordings must be uploaded onto the school Intranet at the earliest opportunity and must be immediately deleted from the personal device.

3.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use their personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Verification of 2 factor authentication

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with the school's staff Code of conduct.
- Not use their phones to take photos or recordings of students, their work, or anything else which could identify a student, unless it is due to the circumstances as set out in paragraph 3.3 above. As stated in paragraph 3.3, any images/recordings must be uploaded onto the school Intranet and removed from the device at the earliest opportunity.
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office. If it is necessary to use personal phones to contact parents, the withhold caller ID function must be enabled.

3.5 Sanctions

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

Please refer to the school's Staff Disciplinary Policy for more information.

4. Use of mobile phones by students

4.1 Rules

Odyssey House School recognises that mobile phones have now become an integral part of the world we live in.

There are, however, very clear expectations on their use which are set out below:

- Phones must be placed in the student's locker when first arriving in school. Or handed in to reception, who will put it in a plastic wallet labelled with student's name and store them in a locked drawer.
- Students must not use their phones to photograph, film or record students, staff or visitors
- Mobile phones are banned from all exams. Any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an exam will have their paper disqualified. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified.
- The only exception would be where a student is required to carry their phone on their person for a medical purpose (e.g. to transmit data from a medical device to a parent/ staff). Where this is the case, the student must keep the device in a bag or pocket and all other functions should be disabled via parental controls.

Students must adhere to the school's Code of conduct/Acceptable use agreement for mobile phones (see Appendix 1).

4.2 Sanctions

Failure to follow the school's Code of Conduct may result in the phone being confiscated (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from students under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)). In the first instance, the phone will be returned to the student at the end of the day. When a student persistently breaches the Code of conduct, then parents/carers will be asked to come into the school to collect the phone.

Certain types of conduct such as cyber-bullying or harassment are totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence, it is unacceptable regardless of whether 'consent' was given.

In some cases, these types of conduct can constitute criminal behaviour. 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 of nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Use of vulgar, derogatory or obscene language transmitted through a mobile phone
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at another individual based on their ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation
- All breaches of the Code of conduct by students will be recorded, and parents/carers will be contacted by the school. As mentioned above, failure to heed the rules set out in this document may result in an alleged incident – of a serious nature - being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent or carer would be notified immediately.

In particular, if staff have reason to believe a phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#), parents/carers will be informed before any search of a phone is undertaken. The police will be informed if any illegal material is found on the phone.

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

Parents, 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 photos or recordings of students, unless it is a public event (such as a school fair), or it is a picture or recording of their own child only
- Using any photos or recordings for personal use only, and not posting any on social media without the school's consent

- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with students
- Parents to refrain from sending their children messages to the student's mobile phone during the school day. Please call our main reception number for any messages
- 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 must not:

- Use their phone to contact other parents
- Take photos or recordings of students, their work, or anything else which could identify a student

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for students using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

During the school day, parents must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child, and they must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile.

6. Loss, theft or damage

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones or devices if they are bought into school.

Mobile phones that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to the school office.

Students bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that their devices are appropriately identifiable and are placed in their locker or handed into reception where they will be stored in a plastic wallet and kept in a locked drawer until home time.

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 students are travelling to and from school.

A copy of the Mobile Phone Use policy is provided to all new students and parents, upon joining the school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked cabinet, until they are handed back to the student or their parent.

7. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents and students
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents over the previous academic year
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisation

8. Appendix 1

Student Code of Conduct / Acceptable Mobile Phone Use Agreement

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

1. I will place my phone and smart watch (if linked to your phone) in my locker or hand it into reception when I first arrive at school. I understand I can pick it up at home time.
2. I will not use my mobile phone on the school site, or during a school outing unless given express permission by a member of staff to do so.
3. I will not use my mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other students.
4. I will not take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other students, either on the school premises or during trips/outings.
5. I will avoid sharing my contact details with people I don't know and won't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. I will not share my phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
7. I will not use my mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating students or staff via email, text messaging applications or social media.
8. I will not use my phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal, for instance, by 'sexting'.
9. I understand that rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how I use my mobile phone, even when I am not in school.
10. I will 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.
11. I will not use my phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. I understand I 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 I understand I will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobile phones and smart watches are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If I have a mobile phone or smart watch, I understand I must hand them in before I can enter the examination room. I understand that bringing a phone into the test room can result in my exam being declared invalid.

Person	Name & Signature	Date
Student - I agree to the above. I understand if I do not follow the Mobile Phone Policy and school rules, I will no longer be permitted to bring a phone onto the school site.		

9. Appendix 2: Template for mobile phone information slip for visitors

Print out copies of this slip to give to visitors when they arrive at your school. Adapt the template to reflect section 5 of this policy.

Use of mobile phones in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use your mobile phone where students are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the school office or the front yard
- Do not take photos or recordings (video or audio) of students (unless it is your own child), or of staff
- Do not use your mobile phone in lessons, or when working with 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 the school's Mobile Phone Use policy is available from the school office.