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Mobile phone policy

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1. Introduction and aims

At Progression 2Work our policy aims to:

- Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones, where applicable
- Provide 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 Safeguarding and child protection and behavior.

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
- Risk of theft, loss or damage
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes

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

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of section 36 of the [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026](#), and the Department for Education (DfE)'s [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behavior guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy includes [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), which sets out the expectation that all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, non-teaching staff and supply staff) are required to actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

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 leadership team is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it annually 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 Proprietor and Governors

The proprietors and governing body holds overall responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with relevant legislation and guidance.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DFE'S mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their mobile phones for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. All schools should be mobile free environments by default: Anything other than this should be by exception only. Staff should only use their mobile phone in an emergency.

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 during the school day, while pupils are present. 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).

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 line manager 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 01773 710118 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 and Google Gemini).

Please see data protection policy and acceptable use policy

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including by connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicizing 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.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones or a similar device during the school day in front of pupils 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

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

4.6 Sanctions

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

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils must not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

On arrival at school, pupils are required to hand their mobile phone to the designated member of staff. The device will be placed in a securely labelled envelope or other identified storage container and stored in a locked cabinet or locker within a secure staff area for the duration of the school day. Mobile phones will be returned to pupils at the end of the school day or at another authorised time determined by the school.

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that devices are stored securely while in its care. However, parents and pupils are advised that mobile phones and other valuable personal items are brought onto the school site at their own risk. The school does not accept liability for loss of or damage to personal property except where required by law or where loss or damage results from the school's negligence.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where required for pupils with disabilities, medical conditions or other individual needs. This includes, but is not limited to, pupils who rely on a smart device to support a medical condition, such as continuous glucose monitoring or insulin delivery systems. Such arrangements will be agreed with the Headteacher (or nominated member of staff) and, where appropriate, documented within the pupil's healthcare plan or other relevant support plan.

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to make sure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Pupils will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

Smartwatches and other wearable smart devices with the capability to send or receive messages, make or receive calls, access the internet, record images or audio, or connect to a mobile phone are not permitted for use on the school site.

Pupils must not bring smartwatches into school. If a pupil arrives wearing or carrying a smartwatch, they will be required to hand it to the designated member of staff on arrival. The device will be placed in a securely labelled protective envelope or pouch and stored in a locked cabinet or locker within a secure staff area until the end of the school day.

Any smartwatch found in a pupil's possession during the school day, including during lessons, between lessons, at breaktimes or lunchtimes, will be confiscated in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where required under the Equality Act 2010 for pupils who need to wear a smart device to support a disability or medical condition, for example a device used in conjunction with a continuous glucose monitoring system. Any such arrangements must be agreed in advance with the Headteacher (or nominated member of staff) and recorded, where appropriate, in the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan or other relevant support plan.

5.2 Sanctions

Any breach of the mobile phone and smart device policy will result in disciplinary action in line with the school's behavior policy. Sanctions will be applied fairly, consistently, and proportionately.

1. Confiscation and Storage

- The device will be confiscated by the member of staff who identifies the breach. It will be placed in a secure envelope labeled with the students' name. The device will be kept securely in the school office until the end of the school day, when the pupil may collect it.
- If a pupil repeatedly breaches the policy, they will be prohibited from bringing any mobile phone or smart device onto the school premises for a specified period (e.g., one school term).

2. Power to Search and Screen

In accordance with DfE guidance on searching, screening, and confiscation:

- **Reasonable Grounds:**
Authorized staff members have the statutory power to search a pupil's phone or smart device if there is a good reason to suspect that the device contains data or files that have been, or could be, used to cause harm, disrupt teaching, or commit an offense.
- **Inappropriate Content:**
If a device is found to contain pornographic images, evidence of cyberbullying, or data relating to a suspected offense, the school reserves the right to retain the device as evidence, delete the relevant files, or hand the device over to the police.

- Refusal to Comply:
If a pupil refuses to hand over a device for a lawful search, this will be treated as a serious breach of discipline and will result in an immediate escalated sanction (e.g., internal suspension).

3. Escalated Behavioral Sanctions

Depending on the severity of the breach (e.g., using a phone to film a member of staff, cheat in an exam, or bully another student), the school may apply wider sanctions alongside confiscation, including:

- Loss of break or lunchtime privileges.
- Placed onto an off/onsite Behavior Intervention.
- Internal suspension or fixed-term exclusion.

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 (SEN), disability)
- The pupil's behavior may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). This will include speaking with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy, who will consider whether pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care is appropriate

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:

- Making of or sharing nudes and semi-nudes including images that are digitally altered or wholly generated using AI (such as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes')
- 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 and carers are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

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, when working with pupils or while children are present

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. A copy of this policy will be in reception and Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be given a information slip on arrival.

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, but must refer any proposed 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 make sure that their phones are put in the appropriately labelled wallet on arrival, ready to be stored away securely in the mobile phone locker in the staff office when not in use during the school day.

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 or from school.

Key Actions to Communicate the Policy

- **Signage & Entry:** Visible signs are placed around the school entrance, reception, and main building.
- **Documentation:** Disclaimers and mobile phone expectations are included within parent packs and our student code of conduct contract.
- **New Intakes:** A copy of this policy will be provided directly to new families upon enrollment.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the mobile phone locker in the school office.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to making sure that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behavior and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behavior and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the DfE, the local authority and any other relevant organisations.

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, this should be raised with the executive head teacher immediately

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

Code of conduct for pupils

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

1. You may not use your mobile phone throughout the school day, including lesson times, in between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, unless a teacher specifically allows you to for a specific reason.
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.
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 password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the school's Behavior policy 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 a criminal offence. For instance, by making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes (including AI-generated images or 'deepfakes')
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 it appropriately, or turn it 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.

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

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- 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 to the staff room
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

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 and on our website

www.progression2work.co.uk

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