

# Mobile Phones Policy



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## 1. Introduction and aims

At Releasing Potential, we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider organisation 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 organisation's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour.

At Releasing Potential, we thrive to create an environment that is calm, safe and free from distraction so all pupils can learn and reach their full potential. Mobile phones risk unnecessary distraction and diversion.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in organisation, 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

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 [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 for staff

### 3.1 Staff

All staff are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy.

All members of SLT and the Organisation Governing body are responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and students 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.

Staff are also encouraged to use their relationship with the young people to help manage the behaviour.

## 4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of students throughout the organisation day.

#### **4.1 Personal mobile phones**

Staff are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while students are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time and to areas of the organisation where students are not present.

The Charity SLT will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements for personal reasons. For example: In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, education delivery staff can use the organisation office number as a point of contact.

#### **4.2 Data protection**

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process any student personal data, or any other confidential organisation information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

Please see our data protection policy for further guidance.

#### **4.3 Safeguarding**

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

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a session, this must be done using their work mobile phone.

#### **4.4 Work phones**

All staff are provided with a mobile phone by the organisation for work purposes.

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.

#### **4.5 Sanctions**

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

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

### **5. Use of mobile phones by students**

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that students should not use mobile phones throughout the educational day.

At Releasing Potential, we believe by limiting mobile phones throughout the educational day, we can create a safe space where students are protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media and cyber-bullying.

## 5.1 Behaviour

All students should hand in their mobile phones and other electronic devices that can be connected to the internet at the start of each day, and they will be returned to students at the end of the day.

Student's mobile phones and other electronic devices will be kept within a locked draw of their classroom or kept in the glovebox of the vehicle they are using, or kept in the tutor's bag.

If students are refusing to hand in their mobile phones or other electronic devices and this behaviour is affecting their or others' engagement they will be sent home.

## 5.2 Unacceptable behaviour

- Not handing phone in during arrival,

As this then may lead to unacceptable behaviours such as:

- Using mobile phones during sessions and causing distraction/non-engagement.
- Taking images of staff and/or peers.
- Playing mobile games that are above students' current age.
- Bullying or threatening through texting and/or messaging through other social media platforms.
- Allowing other peers on their mobile device.

## 5.3 Consequences

- Students will have to hand their mobile phones and other electronic devices to a member of SLT on arrival, and it will have to stay in the SLT office the entire day.

We will also consider whether:

- The students' 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 organisation 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 and visitors

Parents/carers, and visitors (including governors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the organisation site during the organisation day.

This means:

- You are asked to refrain from using your mobile phone whilst on the organisation sites
- Not to take any photographs or videos whilst on our organisation sites
- You may also be asked to leave the premises if you need to make/take a call

Parents/carers and visitors will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception.

## 7. Loss, theft or damage

Students bringing mobile phones or other electronic devices onto organisation sites are responsible for the safety of their own mobile phone.

Releasing Potential accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on organisation sites or transport, during Outdoor Education activities, or while students are travelling to and from organisation.

## 8. Monitoring and review

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

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

Annex, table of changes.

Pages	Changes
Throughout the document	And other electronic devices that can be connected to the internet.