



Mobile Phone Policy

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1. Introduction and aims

At Rowan Education we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our students, 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 students, 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
- 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 2026](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff where applicable) 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 Head, Helen Hockaday is responsible for monitoring the policy every year (or as necessary to reflect updated guidance), 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.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

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

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, while children are present (unless in an emergency – see below). 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 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 Head 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 [07384 151888] 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 Bard).

For more detailed guidance on data protection please see our [Data Protection Policy](#).

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. Clarification of our stance regarding this can be found in our [Staff Code of Conduct](#).

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs 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.

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 aren't limited to:

- To issue homework, rewards or sanctions
- To use multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips (although lead staff member will be issued with a school mobile phone – see [Educational Visits Policy](#))
- 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 students, their work, or anything else which could identify a student

- 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 (e.g. Deputy Head, DSL and SENCO) 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.

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 (and smart watches) by students

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that students should not use mobile phones throughout the school day.

Although we understand the desire by parents/carers for students to have mobile phones in their possession for the purpose of safety and emergency contact, students should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes or at lunchtimes.

To support our students in this, our policy is to:

- Collect all student mobile phones on their arrival
- Store student mobile phones safely and securely throughout the school day
- Return student mobile phones to the student at the end of the school day

Should a student refuse to hand over their mobile phone at the beginning of the school day or be found to be in possession of a mobile phone at any point during the school day, they will be dealt with in accordance with our Behaviour Policy.

5.1 Exceptions for special circumstances

Exceptions to the above may be made (on a case-by-case basis) in the following (non-exhaustive list of) circumstances:

- Students travelling to school by themselves
- Young carers who need to be contactable
- Students with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar

To request such permission, students or parents/carers should contact the Head.

Any students who are given permission must then adhere to the school's code of conduct for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

5.3 Sanctions

Sanctions may be employed if a student is in breach of this policy.

For example:

- If a student refuses to hand over their mobile phone, staff may contact parents/carers and apply sanctions as per the [Behaviour Policy](#).
- If a student denies being in possession of a mobile phone but is suspected to be (or is suspected to be in possession of a second, undeclared mobile phone), they may be searched with the use of a security metal-detecting wand.
- Mobile phones can be confiscated. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from students under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) and the [DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools](#)). Under such circumstances, the mobile phone will be stored safely and securely and returned to the student at the end of the school day.

School staff also have the power to search a student's phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#), which allows such a search if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person). This may also represent a Safeguarding concern or suggest the student may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If so, such concerns will be managed according to our [Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy](#) and in line with Part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can also 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 students, unless it is 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 students

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 students, their work, or anything else which could identify a student

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the School's policy for students 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 Head or Deputy 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

Students 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.

Once mobile phones are removed from students, they will be stored in a secure locked cabinet in the school office. As such, the School will be responsible for loss, theft, or damage to the mobile phone whilst it is in their safekeeping. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, damage to or theft of undeclared (or secreted) mobile phones on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while students are travelling to and from school.

The above information is displayed on the wall in the school premises.

Lost phones should be returned to the Head or Deputy Head. 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 of students' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school 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

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of the School Head (Helen Hockaday) or the Business Manager (Christopher Hockaday - both contactable at info.rowaneducation@gmail.com) in a timely manner.

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

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

1. You may not use your mobile phone during school lessons.
2. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other students.
3. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other students without their consent.
4. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
5. Do not share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
6. You must not use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating students or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
7. Do not use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
8. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
9. Do 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.
10. Do not use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
11. 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.
12. 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 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where students are present. If you must use your phone, you may go outside onto the grounds
- Do not take photos or recordings of students (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your 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 our mobile phone policy is available from the school office or on our website (www.rowaneducation.uk).

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