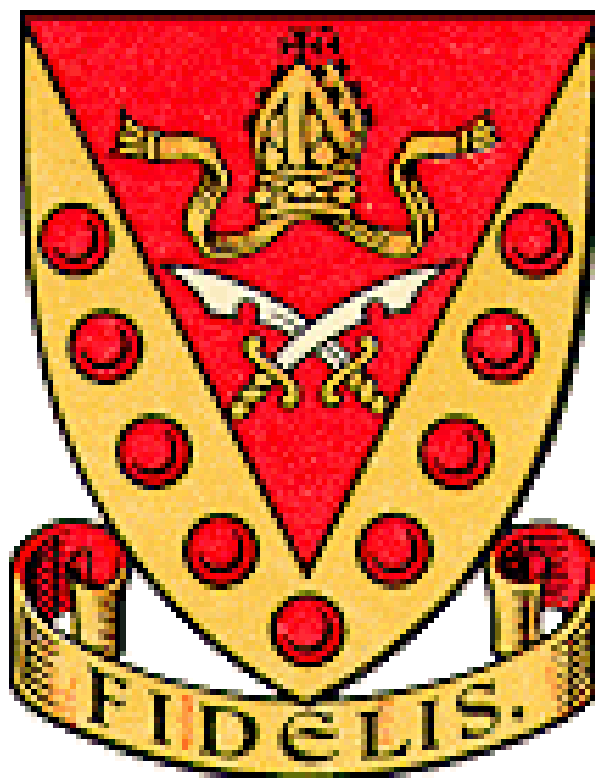


Bishopshalt School

Mobile Phone Policy

2024/25



Responsibility	Mr Cockcroft	Date reviewed	July 2024
Headteacher	Mr McGillicuddy	Next review date	July 2026
Ratified by	Governing Board	Date Ratified	July 2024

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Introduction

Bishopshalt 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. One of the greatest challenges facing schools is the presence of mobile phones. Today, by the age of 12, 97% of pupils own a mobile phone. Mobile phones risk unnecessary distraction, disruption and diversion. One in three secondary school pupils report that mobile phones are used in most lessons without permission. This not only distracts the single pupil using the phone, but disrupts the lesson for a whole class, and diverts teachers' efforts away from learning. We owe it to our children to do what we can to remove distractions and enable them to be fully present and engaged in the classroom. We also owe it to our pupils to keep them safe at school. One in five pupils have experienced bullying online. By removing mobile phones from the school day, we can create a safe space where pupils are protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media and cyber-bullying, as well as the peer pressure and possible stigma associated with owning what are often expensive devices.

Three in ten pupils cite making and maintaining friendships and their mental health as a cause of worry, anxiety or depression. By removing mobile phones, children and young people can spend more time staying active and socialising face to face with their peers, activities which have a positive impact on wellbeing. Bishopshalt School aims to help children and young people develop these habits, which will in turn help them thrive outside of school.

Today's children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. This presents many exciting opportunities – but also challenges. By prohibiting mobile phones, Bishopshalt can create a safe and calm environment free from distraction so all pupils can receive the education they deserve.

School Values

	Love Learning	To develop in students a love of learning. Bishopshalt students will thirst for knowledge due to the intrinsic joy that it brings.
	Show Kindness	To develop and instil in our students the virtue of kindness. Our students do things for others for no personal gain.
	Build Character	To develop in students the determination and dedication to succeed. Bishopshalt students are able to overcome any challenge that may come their way. Our students are focused, resilient and readily overcome adversity.
	Chase Brilliance	To develop students who do not settle for 'it's good enough'. Bishopshalt students always aim to improve their work and aim for perfection due to their belief that they are entitled to be brilliant.
	Bright Futures	To ensure that, for whatever field they choose to enter, Bishopshalt students succeed. Bishopshalt students will be the very best versions of themselves and compete on the world stage.

1. Aims

At Bishopshalt School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, 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 pupils, 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.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) 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 Deputy Head (Pastoral) is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, 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 Governors

The Governors are responsible for the monitoring, reviewing and ratification of this policy, at the full governing body meeting in July every two years.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

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 for personal matters, while [children are present/during contact time]. Use of personal mobile phones for personal matters 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 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
- To check on call emails
- To contact staff if they do not have a radio
- To contact staff over a sensitive issue that is not appropriate over the radio
- For safeguarding reasons

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 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).

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found in the data protection policy and ICT acceptable use policy.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give 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 must not use their personal 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.

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
- Supervising residential visits
- To access Bromcom
- For safeguarding purposes
- To access work emails

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 or School mobile phone

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 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 by pupils

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that pupils should not use mobile phones throughout the school day. **In accordance with the DfE [Mobile phones in schools. Guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day](#) The school approach is 'Never used, seen or heard'.**

- Pupils are allowed to bring their own mobile phone to school but it must be switched off before entering the school grounds and can only be turned back on once they have left the premises.
- Mobiles phones must not be seen and should be kept either securely fastened away in their bag or in a locker
- If a student is seen with a mobile phone, whether it has been used or not, it will be confiscated and the student will receive a one hour detention after school. Parents will be informed by text of the detention and the reason. On the second offence Parents will be required to collect the phone at a time determined by the school.
- Exceptions to this rule are for medical use such as checking glucose levels under the guidance of the welfare officer in the pupils office and under the explicit direction and guidance of a member of staff
- No pupil or parents are to contact the other via a mobile phone in school. If a pupil wishes to contact a parent or carer it must be through the pupils office under the guidance of the school. Any student who uses their phone to contact a parent will be sanctioned with a one hour detention and the confiscation of the phone.
- The school takes no responsibility for the loss or damage of a mobile phone if a student wishes to bring it to school.
- Filming or recording students or staff using mobile phones will lead to a suspension.
- Posting students, staff or incidents onto Social media will lead to a suspension.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

Smartwatches are permitted in school as long as they are used for time keeping purposes. Smartwatches are subject to the same rules as mobile phones and must not be used to communicate, access the internet or listen to music

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances and for sixth-form pupils

Pupils are allowed to bring a mobile phone to school and use it in school, under the following conditions:

- Under the direct supervision of teachers (Key stage 4 and 5 students only)
- To access google classroom in a lesson (Under the direction of the teacher - Key Stage 4 and 5 only)
- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar
- Sixth-form pupils (Only in designated sixth-form areas)

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact Mr. N. Cockcroft (Deputy Head Pastoral)

Sixth-form pupils are allowed access to their mobile phones during the school day, to reflect their increased independence and responsibility, but must not compromise our policy on the use of mobile phones for other pupils. Sixth Form students will be allowed to use their mobile phones in specific designated areas only. (Sixth Form only areas). Therefore, they are only permitted to use their mobile phones out of sight of younger pupils. Misuse of mobile phones by pupils in the sixth form will lead to sanctions according to our behaviour policy.

5.3 Sanctions

- If a student is found with a mobile phone, whether it has been used or not, it will be confiscated and the student will receive a one hour detention after school. Parents will be informed by text of the detention and the reason.
 - No pupil or parents are to contact the other via a mobile phone in school. If a pupil wishes to contact a parent or carer it must be through the pupils office under the guidance of the school. Any student who uses their phone to contact a parent will be sanctioned with a one hour detention and the confiscation of the phone.
 - The school takes no responsibility for the loss or damage of a mobile phone if a student wishes to bring it to school.
 - Phones - if taken will result in a same day detention on the first offence. Subsequent offences will require Parents to collect the phone at a time determined by the school.
 - Filming or recording students or staff using mobile phones will lead to a suspension
 - Posting students, staff or incidents onto Social media will lead to a suspension
- (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- If a phone is confiscated they will be collected by the on call duty staff and given to the Focus Room duty staff. Depending on the decision by the Senior Leadership team the phones will either be returned to the student after a one hour detention or confiscated until a parent can collect at a time suitable to the school. (Headteachers can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools)
 - The policy on mobile phones is included as part of the schools' Behaviour for Learning Policy

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a pupil's phone 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). If a message or image contravenes the schools' behaviour for Learning Policy the school will apply the relevant sanctions outlined in this policy.

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, disability)
- The pupil's 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 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 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, 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 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 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 ensure that the phones are appropriately stored on their person in a zipped up pocket or in a locker.

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 and from school.

If your school confiscates phones from pupils, add:

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school reception in a secure location/locked cabinet.

Lost phones should be returned to lost property in the school reception. 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 on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- 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 Mr. N. Cockcroft (Deputy Head) in a timely manner.

The policy will be reviewed at ratified at the July Full governing body meeting bi annually

9. Links to other policies

- [Behaviour for Learning Policy](#)
- [Suspension and Exclusion policy](#)
- [Acceptable use of ICT policy](#)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Safeguarding Policy](#)