



The Forge School

Mobile Phone Policy

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Introduction & Aims

We recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, 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, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers 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

1. Pupils and Mobile Phones

- a. On arrival into the school reception, pupils enter the locker room and place their personal property, such as mobile phones, into their lockers. As part of the school's safeguarding arrangements, pupils may be subject to routine screening using a hand-held metal detection wand before entering the main part of the building. Screening is conducted in line with the DfE guidance Searching, Screening and Confiscation and is undertaken in a manner that preserves pupils' dignity. Reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with SEND or known trauma histories. Any refusal to comply with screening is managed in accordance with the school's behaviour and safeguarding procedures and is recorded appropriately.
- b. For safeguarding reasons, pupils do not have independent access to lockers during the school day. Lockers and the locker room are accessed by staff only. The school accepts responsibility for the reasonable care of items stored during the school day.
- c. No pupil is allowed into the school beyond the school reception area with their mobile phone. Staff will not ordinarily charge or hold pupils' mobile phones during the school day. In exceptional safeguarding circumstances, alternative arrangements, involving parents, may be authorised by the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead, informed by professional judgement and individual risk assessment.
- d. An Enrichment Trip or a Reward Trip are treated as part of the school day, and mobile phones must remain in their lockers for the duration of the school day. In the event that a pupil is going to be dropped off directly home at the end of a trip, the trip leader is responsible for 'holding' the pupil's phone and handing it back to them at the end of the trip as they drop them home.
- e. At the end of the school day, pupils leave the school via the reception area. As they do so, they enter the locker room and collect their personal property, including their mobile phone, from their locker.
- f. Residential trips operate under a structured mobile phone protocol appropriate to safeguarding, wellbeing and context. Pupils are provided with agreed, supervised access to mobile phones at specified times to maintain appropriate contact with home, while ensuring safety, rest and engagement in activities.
- g. Smart watches are not permitted to be worn by pupils in school and are treated the same as a mobile phone proper and are therefore required to be left in the pupil's locker as personal

property. To support this, and the challenges in identifying what a smart watch actually looks like, all pupils are required to leave watches in their locker as personal property.

2. Staff and Mobile Phones

- a. Staff are expected to model to pupils that the school space is a mobile phone-free environment which means that staff will not ordinarily carry their mobile phones with them around the building or have them on display.
- b. Staff members who are engaged on duty at the front gate in the mornings and at the end of the school day are expected to have a mobile phone with them in case of emergencies.
- c. Staff accompanying pupils on Enrichment Trips or Reward Trips will be expected to bring their mobile phones with them so that they can contact the school or each other if they are in different locations on a trip. Staff will model healthy mobile phone use by not using their phone for other reasons on these trips.
- d. Similarly, certain members of staff, as part of their role, may be reasonably expected to carry their phone on them during the school day in case they are involved in a situation that requires them to need it: this is determined on a case-by-case basis depending on role and duty. In addition to this in certain circumstances or emergencies, for example, an evacuation, staff may be required to use their phones. In such cases, staff are expected to use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct.
- e. Staff are permitted to use their phones to access authenticator apps and other means of identity verification. It is expected that the use of phones in this manner will be done mainly in admin offices or workspaces away from the gaze of pupils rather than in classrooms or corridors.
- f. Staff who have a medical telephone appointment which they are taking on their mobile phone need to alert the Headteacher as soon as they are aware of the appointment so that arrangements can be made to facilitate the taking of this call: this will be context specific.
- g. Staff are expected to exercise professional judgement to their wearing of a smart watch. It is accepted that in today's culture, Smart watches are sometimes people's only timepiece and can be used to monitor important biometric data such as steps, heart-rate etc. At the very least, during the school day, Smart watches should be disconnected from their mobile phones so that staff do not receive phone calls or other messages through them.
- h. When staff are working in other schools, they are expected to follow the expectations of the other school around the use of mobile phones by adults.
- i. Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.
- j. Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils.
- k. Staff must not use their 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.
- l. Staff should use the satellite navigation devices while transporting pupils on school trips. In exceptional circumstances, staff may use their mobile phone but they must make sure that no personal messages appear on it that pupils may see.
- m. As a general practice, staff should refrain from using their own mobile phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact should be made via the school office or by using one of the school mobile phones. That said, as was evidenced by practice during Covid, there may be times when it is appropriate to use a personal mobile phone to contact a parent. This would need to be done on a case-by-case basis allowing for the specific context at the time. In such a case though, staff would need to dial 141 before entering the parent or carer phone numbers.
- n. If staff wish to use their mobile phones during the school day when pupils are present, then they need to do so in the private space of the staff room. When there are no pupils present in the building, staff are free to access their phones as any adult does in the workplace – there is no

restriction on where they can use their phones provided they are doing it in a professional manner and not in the space of a meeting.

3. Parents and Mobile Phones

- a. Parents are encouraged to reinforce and discuss the policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.
- b. Where parents need to contact their child during the school day, they will be directed to the school office, where staff should be aware of the school's policy on relaying messages and facilitating contact.
- c. Parents who are attending the school will be asked to respect that we are mobile phone-free environment. This means that we will ask parents, as responsible adults in the building, to model this to pupils by not openly displaying their phones or using them as they move around the building.

4. Visitors and Mobile Phones

- a. Visitors who are attending the school will be asked to respect that we are mobile phone-free environment. This means that we will ask visitors, as responsible adults in the building, to model this to pupils by not openly displaying their phones or using them as they move around the building.

5. Consequences

- a. The Forge will use a range of consequences for breaching the mobile phone policy appropriate to their context, including confiscation, turn around and possible suspension.

5. Reasonable Adjustments

- a. In some circumstances, supporting a person with their medical condition can involve the use of a mobile phone. For example, a person with diabetes might use continuous glucose monitoring with a sensor linked to their mobile phone to monitor blood sugar levels. Where mobile phone use is required to allow a person to manage their medical condition effectively, this would be appropriately managed on a case-by-case basis.