



Mobile & Electronic Device Acceptable Use Policy

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1. Introduction

For the purpose of this policy, all references to 'mobile phone(s)' should be taken to include any electronic communication devices and/or recording technology including associated accessories including earphones, that are used to access content on digital devices. Examples of these include; multimedia devices, laptops, tablets and smart wearable devices. This is not a definitive list. This policy has been updated in keeping with the DfE's documents:

- [Statutory Guidance - Mobile Phones in Schools \(June 2026\)](#)
- [Statutory Guidance - Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Guidance - Behaviour in schools](#)
- [Statutory Guidance - Keeping children safe in education](#)
- [Guidance - Teaching online safety in schools](#)
- [Section 550ZA of the Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Schools \(Specification and Disposal of Articles\) Regulations 2012](#)
- [Guidance - Searching, screening and confiscation in schools](#)
- [Statutory Guidance - Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education](#)

2. Aim of this Policy

- 2.1. The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school, teachers, students, parents and carers take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at school. This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide, such as increased safety, can continue to be enjoyed by our students.
- 2.2. Smithdon High School has established this Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, students, parents and carers with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use during school hours.
- 2.3. Students, their parents or carers must read, understand and accept this policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.
- 2.4. This Acceptable Use Policy also applies to students during school trips and extra-curricular activities both at school and off-site with the following exceptions:
 - 2.4.1. Students will be permitted to responsibly use their mobile phone on residential trips, under the supervision and instruction of staff.
 - 2.4.2. Students on all school trips will be permitted to use their mobile phone, under the close supervision of staff, to responsibly take photographs for their own personal use. Photographs taken by students of another student(s) or of staff on trips must not, under any circumstances, be posted online / onto social media.
 - 2.4.3. Students on a school trip will be permitted to use their mobile phone, when instructed to do so, to contact their parent / carer or other responsible adult to advise of their expected return time to school (or other termination point of a schools trip).

A. Rationale

- 2.5. Our setting and extensive commuting area for working families presents challenges when it comes to communication. The school recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well.

B. Personal Safety and Security

- 2.6. Our School accepts that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport, commuting long distances to school and walking home via rural and isolated routes. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents/carers reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently. This policy has been written to take account of these risks, the need to ensure the school can meet its statutory responsibility for safeguarding students, and to reflect parents'/carers' views about safeguarding their child.

C. Responsibility

- 2.7. It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the rules outlined in this policy.
- 2.8. The decision to provide a mobile phone to children should be made by parents or carers. It is incumbent upon parents/carers to understand the capabilities of the mobile phone and the potential use / misuse of those functions.
- 2.9. Parents/carers should be aware, if their child takes a mobile phone to school, the school cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or theft incurred due to its use at school. The school would advise parent/carers to check that their household insurance covers loss or damage of mobile phones taken outside of the home.
- 2.10. Parents/carers are reminded the school office must be the initial point of contact during the normal school day and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way. Passing on messages through school reception also eliminates lessons being inadvertently disrupted.

D. Acceptable Use

- 2.11. Mobile phones must be switched off immediately upon arrival to school and before entering the school site. They must remain switched off kept out of sight, at all times during the school day in a school bag, until exiting the school gate.
- 2.12. Exceptions may be permitted only in exceptional time-limited circumstances, for instance, if the parent/carer specifically requests it on a particular day and for a specific purpose. Such requests must be handled on a case-by-case basis and must be directed to a member of the senior leadership team. Parents/carers are requested that in cases of emergency they must contact the school first, not their child, so we are aware of any potential issue and can provide any necessary support to the parent and / or their child.
- 2.13. Students should protect their mobile phone numbers by only giving them to close friends. This can help protect the students' number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice and text messages and inappropriate images.

- 2.14. The school recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones. The school will seek to educate and inform students about the advantages of using a mobile phone, its functions/apps, associated safety and etiquette as well as the risks through the wider school curriculum. Despite this, we must not permit mobile phones to be used as an aid/resource in their learning and/or any extra-curricular activity with the exception of their use as defined within 2.4, 2.15 and 2.16 of this policy.
- 2.15. Students will be permitted to use their phone for a specific medical purpose (e.g. monitoring their diabetes) where this is agreed between the parent and school and noted within their medical / care plan.
- 2.16. Year 11 students will be permitted to use their mobile phone in school, under the strict supervision of staff, for the sole purpose of setting up the Department for Education's Education Record App. They will also be allowed to use their phone responsibly to take photographs on their official leavers day at the agreed location and time as communicated by school.
- 2.17. Sixth form students are permitted to access and use their mobile phone outside of normal lessons but only in designated spaces. These spaces are [list spaces]. Sixth form students must not use their mobile phones outside of the designated areas and they must not be used in front of younger students. Sixth form students may be subject to the same limitations and sanctions as younger students for failing to adhere to this policy.

E. Unacceptable Use

- 2.18. Please see Appendix 1 for a list (but not definitive) of unacceptable use under this policy.

F. Theft or Damage

- 2.19. The theft and/or damage of mobile phones will follow the guidance in Appendix 2 of this policy.

G. Exams and Inappropriate Conduct

- 2.20. Please see Appendix 3 of this policy.

H. Sanctions

- 2.21. Students who infringe the rules set out in this document could face having their mobile phones confiscated by teachers. If the mobile phone is being used inappropriately the student must give it to a teacher if requested.
- 2.22. On the first infringement of this policy the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher/support staff, turned off, enveloped and labelled with full details. It will then be passed to reception and the infringement logged. The student will be able to collect the mobile phone at the end of the school day and a record will be made of the incident. A communication will also be sent to the parent/carer to inform them of the incident.
- 2.23. On the first infringement the decision to return a mobile phone on the same day of confiscation directly to the student has been taken to reflect parental concerns about the safety of their child travelling to and from school without a mobile phone.
- 2.24. On the second infringement the mobile phone would be confiscated by the teacher/support staff, turned off, enveloped and labelled with full details. It will

then be passed to reception and the infringement logged. The mobile phone can be collected on the same day of confiscation (during reception opening hours). A record of the second infringement will be made. A second communication will also be sent to the parent/carer to advise them this is the second infringement and remind them of the consequences of subsequent infringements.

- 2.25. On the second infringement the decision to return a mobile phone on the same day of confiscation directly to the parent/carer, has been taken to reflect parental concerns about the safety of their child travelling to and from school without a mobile.
- 2.26. A third or subsequent infringement will result in the mobile phone being confiscated by the teacher/support staff, turned off, enveloped and labelled with full details. It will then be passed to reception and the infringement logged. A parental meeting should be held with the parent/carer. Usually, the phone will be returned to the parent **at the earliest opportunity**, however the school reserves the right to hold onto a confiscated mobile phone in keeping with the latest government guidance – **“Headteachers are backed by DfE to confiscate mobile phones and similar devices, if they consider it proportionate, for whatever length of time they deem proportionate”** [Guidance – Mobile Phones in Schools \(June 2026\)](#). It should also be noted by parents and students that **“The law protects staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to items they have confiscated as a sanction, providing they have acted lawfully.”** [Guidance – Mobile Phones in Schools \(June 2026\)](#).
- 2.27. The school reserves the right to ban a student bringing a mobile phone to school given repeated infringements of this policy, or in the case of a serious misuse.
- 2.28. Failure to heed the rules in relation to serious misuse as set out in this policy may result in alleged incidents, of a serious nature, being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent or carer would be notified.
- 2.29. Staff on residential trips have the right to confiscate a student’s mobile phone for however long they deem to be proportionate. In such cases, the member of staff should arrange for the parent / carer to be notified that a confiscation has taken place. Reasonable adjustments will be made to facilitate a student maintaining contact with a parent / carer whilst on the trip following a confiscation. Similarly, reasonable adjustments, agreed by parents / carers where possible, will be made to support a student’s ability to purchase items aboard, where the mobile phone was being used for payment transactions.

Appendix 1 - Unacceptable Use

Mobile phones:

- Must be switched off upon arrival to school and before entering the school site and not switched on again until exiting the site at the end of the school day at.
- Students may switch their mobile phones on only once they have left through and are leaving school after, or if the student is waiting in reception to be collected following an after-school activity.
- Should not be used for any purpose during the school day (exception as per section 2.15 and 2.16)
- Are not to be used or taken into changing rooms or toilets or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to their fellow students, staff or visitors to the school.

Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated and in some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses, defames or causes offence, it is unacceptable regardless of whether 'consent' was given and will result in further action including internal investigation or referral to the police.

Students with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using social media, messaging, AI to create images or video content, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls. Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary action.

Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language to malign staff or students while using a mobile phone, irrespective of where and when the content was created/posted, will face disciplinary action.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

It is forbidden for students to use their mobile phones to create content, take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate another student and then send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website or social media for public viewing. This also includes photographing or filming any student without their consent. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, messages and emails can be traced. Any such breach or behaviour by a student will result in an appropriate sanction being issued.

It is unacceptable to take a picture / video / audio recording of a member of staff without their permission. In the event this happens, the student will be asked and expected to delete those images. This will be treated as a very serious breach of this policy and the school's behaviour policy and as such will warrant a behaviour sanction which, in the most serious of cases, may result in permanent exclusion from the school.

Students must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading, racist or pornographic images. The transmission of such images is a criminal offence. Similarly, 'sexting' (sending personal sexual imagery) is also a criminal offence. Where criminality is suspected the school will notify the police.

Students who knowingly allow another person to access and use their mobile phone to send abusive or offensive material will be held jointly liable, regardless of whether they are aware of the content or not.

Appendix 2 - Theft or Damage

Students should make sure their mobile phone is secure with traceability and security features such as 'find my phone' and 'remote wiping'. It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers/biometrics to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their mobile phones (e.g. by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords may not be shared.

Students are advised to screenshot and email their International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number to themselves and/or another device. This is a unique 15 digit code that every mobile device has. It can be used to block or identify a phone if it's been stolen.

You can find your IMEI by:

Dialling*#06# (star, hash, zero, six, hash).

The number you are looking for follows IMEI or IMEI1

Students who bring a mobile phone to school must leave it switched off and in their school bag immediately upon arriving on the school site. To reduce the risk of theft during school hours, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed in their bags and not 'advertise' they have them.

Mobile phones that are found in the school should be handed to the reception.

Parents that allow their child to bring a mobile phone into school and the student themselves acknowledge and accept that in doing so:

- The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones or accessories.
- The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school or whilst they are at school.
- The school accepts no responsibility for the accidental damage caused to a student's phone, whilst in the schools possession, following that phone being confiscated.

When school confiscates a mobile phone from a student any damage to the phone should be noted.

Appendix 3 - Exams and Inappropriate Conduct

As per instructions by JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications), mobile phones are banned from all examinations. Consequently, students must not bring mobile phones to any examination or controlled assessment.

Students who arrive to examinations with a mobile phone must hand it to the invigilator before entering the exam hall. The mobile phone will be returned to the student after the examination. In this instance, contact will be made with the parent/carer to ensure the student does not bring a mobile phone to any future examination.

Any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination risk having that paper disqualified by the exam board and JCQ. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified. The school has a statutory responsibility to ensure the integrity of examinations and must report all such infringements to JCQ.