

Mobile phone policy



Last Review: October 2022

Next Review date: October 2025

At Patcham High School we are committed to being a school for all and consider ourselves a proactive community who promote inclusivity and celebrate diversity. We are an Anti-Racist School who endeavour to create an environment which allows all our pupils and staff to thrive and learn from each other's differences; experiences, cultures, backgrounds, identities and abilities. It is our intention to ensure that all students are supported to be proud of themselves, respect each other and ultimately succeed as young adults. We are particularly conscious of the need to ensure the identities of those from minority groups are acknowledged and celebrated – in every field, at all times, every day - whether students of colour or LGBTQ+ we have an overall aim of providing equal opportunities for all by having One Team and One Dream.

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1. Introduction and aims

At Patcham High we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our students, parents 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 students, staff, parents 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

2. Roles and responsibilities

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for 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 Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy annually, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information. More detailed guidance on data protection is detailed in the school's Data Protection Policy and Acceptable use of ICT and E-Safety Policy.

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents 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 or students.

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:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- 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. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4. Use of mobile phones by students

We recognise that mobile phones and other portable devices are important to our students; as learning tools, for contacting parents and carers and as a safety precaution that can be used to and from school.

However, we believe that the use of mobile phones can have a detrimental effect on student outcomes. Mobile phones affect behaviour. They can be a major distraction and can be used to bully and harm others.

We do not allow the use of mobile phones and portable devices inside the school building, unless a teacher specifically asks for students to use their mobile phone in a lesson for the purposes of learning.

Whilst inside the school building students must make sure that their mobile phones are turned off and kept in bags.

Students are able to use their mobile phones outside the school building during break and lunchtimes.

Any phone seen inside the building is confiscated by staff, placed in a labelled bag in a locked safe and can be collected by the student at the end of the day. If a phone is confiscated on more than one occasion, a parent/carer will be asked to come and collect the phone on the student's behalf. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from students under sections 91 and 94 of the *Education and Inspections Act 2006*)

If a parent/carer needs to contact their child urgently they should phone the school reception and the message will be passed on to the child.

5. Unacceptable uses

Using mobile devices to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour, and will be referred to the police.

It is forbidden for students to use a mobile device to take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate or humiliate another student. This includes using mobile devices to photograph or film any person without their consent

Mobile devices are not to be used in 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

Certain types of conduct 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
- 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

Staff have the power to search students' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows staff to search a student's phone if we have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

6. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, 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 any students in school other than their own children
- Not posting on social media without consent

Parents 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.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Students must secure their 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 students are travelling to and from school.

Lost phones should be returned to Student Services. 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 consider:

- Feedback from parents and students
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations