

Mobile Device Policy

This policy is prescribed by The Good Shepherd Trust and all reference to ‘the Trust’, includes all Trust schools and subsidiary organisations.

Date adopted: February 2021

Last reviewed: March 2024

Review cycle: 3 years

Is this policy statutory? No

Approval: CEO

Author: COO

Local approval*: **Principal**

Local author*: **Mrs Hatch**

* only for policy/procedures that are templates and require local adaptation. Local approval will either be the local committee or the head teacher.

Revision record

Minor revisions should be recorded here when the policy is amended in light of changes to legislation or to correct errors. Significant changes or at the point of review should be recorded below and approved at the level indicated above.

Revision No.	Date	Revised by	Approved date	Comments
1	26 Jun 23	F Mackrory		Insertion of the header and revision record, no change to policy
2	06 Oct 23	F Mackrory		Amended approval to read CEo as opposed to RDoE
3	12 March 24	L Mason	13 March 2024	Amended to reflect DfE Mobile Phone guidelines February 2024. Addition of 2.2 to include reference to School Behaviour Policy. References to Covid 19 removed.

Introduction

For the purposes of this policy, a mobile device is a portable computing device such as a smartphone, smartwatch or tablet computer, including iPads etc.

All adults working in a Trust setting (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy. Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the Trust, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

1. General use of mobile phones

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- 1.1 Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner. The Trust accepts no responsibility for mobile devices that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils or adults are travelling to and from a Trust site.

- 1.2 No images, videos or voice recordings of pupils should be taken on personally-owned mobile devices, under any circumstances.
- 1.3 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. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

2. Pupils' use of personal devices

- 2.1 Should they be brought into school, all mobile phones and personally-owned devices must be handed in at the school office, unless the school has specified their use for the purposes of learning.
- 2.2 Use of mobile devices must only be used in conjunction with the school's behaviour policy.
- 2.3 If a pupil breaches the Trust policy then the phone or device will be confiscated and will be held in a secure place in the school office. Mobile devices will be released to parents or carers in accordance with the school procedures.
- 2.4 Phones and personally-owned mobile devices must not be taken into examinations. Pupils found in possession of a mobile phone or other device during an exam will be reported to the appropriate examining body. This may result in the pupil's withdrawal from either the examination or all examinations.
- 2.5 Pupils may be provided with school mobile devices to use in specific learning activities or for remote learning, under the agreement of the school.
- 2.6 Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The Trust takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:
 - Sexting and 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

3. Staff, local governing committee (LGC) members and visitors use of personal devices

- 3.1 Staff and LC members will be made aware of this policy upon their employment and visitors, upon signing in to the school office.
- 3.2 Staff are not permitted to use their own mobile phones or personally-owned mobile devices for contacting children, young people or their families within or outside of the setting in a professional capacity.

- 3.3 Staff will be issued with a Trust phone where regular contact with parents or carers is required, for example: a Trust based landline in Trust offices or specifically purchased mobile phone. Where staff members are required to use a mobile phone for Trust duties, for instance in case of emergency during off-site activities, then a Trust mobile phone will be provided and used. In an emergency where the staff member does not have access to a Trust owned device, they should use their own device and hide (by inputting 141) their own mobile numbers for confidentiality purposes. A log must be made of the call, including who was spoken to, when, the content of the call and any issues that arose. If any issues arose, these must be immediately reported to the line manager of the staff member.
- 3.4 Mobile phones and personally-owned devices will be switched off or switched to 'silent' mode unless in the Trust central office and being used as part of officers' work. Mobile phones or devices will not be used during in school teaching periods, unless you are logging into CPOMS or permission has been granted by the Headteacher (e.g. due to remote working), and only in emergency circumstances. If emergency circumstances are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number, as a point of emergency contact. Similarly, if members of staff have an educational reason to allow children to use mobile phones or a mobile personal device as part of an educational activity, permission must be granted by the Headteacher.
- 3.5 Adults must not use personal devices such as mobile phones or cameras to take photos, videos or voice recordings of pupils or staff at any time and will only use school provided equipment for this purpose and with users' permission.
- 3.6 Parents may not record meetings with school staff using a personal mobile device. To do so without a persons' permission, may result in a breach of data protection.
- 3.7 Parents/volunteers who escort children on trips and sporting events must not take any photographic images of the children, unless they are their own children.
- 3.8 Staff use of mobile phones during the school day should be limited to during break, lunch and PPA time, unless using to log in to CPOMS. Staff should not rely on mobile phones for their working practices e.g. to store and refer to notes. If regular access to emails is required, managers must ensure that sufficient time is provided for staff to have this access.
- 3.9 Staff should ensure that their phones are protected with PIN/access codes/facial or biometric recognition. Failure by adults to do so, could result in a breach of data protection.
- 3.10 Mobile phones should be switched off and left in a safe place, out of the reach of pupils, during lessons and other such times as pupils' are present.
- 3.11 Staff should not send and receive texts or any other types of messages, (including through apps), during directed time, unless the staff member has been authorised and the device is being utilised, to deliver remote learning or for safeguarding purposes. This includes the use of a camera facility, should it exist. See 3.4

- 3.12 Staff should never contact students from their personal mobile phone, or give their mobile phone number to students. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a parent, a school telephone should be used. See 3.2 and 3.3.
- 3.13 Staff should never store parents' or pupils' telephone or contact details on their mobile phone, (including through apps), as this allows the possibility of inappropriate contact.
- 3.14 Staff should never send, or accept from anyone, texts, messages or images that could be viewed as inappropriate. If a member of staff receives an inappropriate message or image they must report it to their line manager immediately. The LADO and Police may also need to be contacted.
- 3.15 If a member of staff suspects a message, text or similar may contain inappropriate content it should not be opened. As in 3.14, this must be reported to their line manager immediately. The LADO and Police may also need to be contacted.
- 3.16 If a member of staff breaches the Trust policy then disciplinary action may be taken as appropriate. Other policies, such as safeguarding and allegations of abuse against adults may also be enacted.
- 3.17 Attached Mobile Devices Policy Agreement read and agreed via google forms in Admissions pack.
- 3.18 Staff agree to policy via Induction Pack.

MOBILE DEVICES POLICY AGREEMENT

All parents and students read and agree to the below agreement via google forms which is included in the College Admissions pack.

March 2024

Dear Parent/Carer(s)

Mobile Phones in School

Along with a number of outstanding schools praised by Ofsted, we looked at the whole area of mobile phones and associated watches being used during the college day.

Mobile phones and other inappropriate mobile devices presented three significant challenges to the operation of a secondary school:

- 1) Firstly, there is an increased opportunity for cyber bullying. Rumours can spread very quickly and a large number of people can get involved in sending unkind text messages to others in their year group. We take the view that, if there is ever a disagreement between two students, they should either inform a teacher, or try to solve the problem with a face-to-face conversation. Indeed, trying to resolve a dispute with a face-to-face conversation is a good Biblical principle. To send unkind messages without a face-to-face conversation is somewhat cowardly and problems can escalate rapidly.
- 2) Secondly, and linked to this, there is a concern that young people are losing the art of conversation. Speaking and listening remains an important skill for the work place. Indeed, because it is so important, the English Language GCSE exam has a spoken language component. Moreover, the latest Ofsted framework requires schools to promote oral communication. Many educators now believe that excessive communication through 'text speak' is not something that will serve children well in their exams and in their lives at work.
- 3) Thirdly, there is a growing view amongst teachers that mobile phones in class can be a distraction from learning. Instead of focusing on solving an equation or understanding a piece of literature, students may be worrying about whether they will receive a text/social media message back in the next few minutes. They may be waiting to hear from their best friend, boyfriend, girlfriend, or mum, and this will be a distraction from learning and making progress. Of course, when phones are on in class it interferes with the school Wi-Fi systems and makes it more difficult to use the College's laptops.

Set against these problems, there is the advantage that a student to contact parents following a college fixture or any other activity outside normal school hours could use a mobile phone. This is particularly important in the winter months when it is dark after college and children have to walk home.

Therefore, and based on all the above, we have implemented a slight amendment to our current college rules for Years 7 to 11. We still **recommend**, "No valuable items (including phones) are brought into college." The reason is that there is always a possibility of damage or loss, and we have no insurance policy to cover this. In this sense, the college would seek to exclude all liability for loss of a valuable item on the grounds that it is our recommendation that no such item is brought into college. However, the college rules have now be strengthened by the clause that "if a phone is seen or heard during the college day, including at break and lunchtimes, it will be confiscated immediately and returned on the Friday of that week at the end of the College day." This includes smart watch's (mobile devices worn on the wrist).

To support the small number of students who need to bring a phone/smart watch into college in order to use it after college, we will provide a lockable storage service. Prior to college starting, a member of staff will be available from 8.10am to check in their phone. They can then collect their phone/smart watch at 3.15pm. If parents need to contact their children during the college day between 8.30am and 3.15pm, they should continue to use the proper channels of communication by phoning the college office. We will ensure that the phones in the office are always staffed for this purpose. If, in the extremely unlikely event that a student has to contact their parents during the school day, they should use the proper channels and go to the college office to make a phone call.

We believe that this arrangement eliminates the possibility of cyber bullying, improves speaking and listening skills, enhances learning and raises exam results and therefore the life chances of our students. Research by

the London School of Economics in 2015 discovered that schools which have a policy of banning mobile phones enjoy 6% higher exam results. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via email. Thank you for your support of Christ's College.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Hatch', written in a cursive style.

Mrs S Hatch

Principal