

**Mobile Phone Policy**

**The Valiant School**

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| **Approved by:** | The Management Committee |  |
| **Last reviewed on:** | August 2023 |
| **Next review due by:** | August 2024 |

# 1. Introduction and aims

At The Valiant School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, 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 pupils, 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

**2.1 Staff**

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 every two years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

**2.2 Management Committee**

The Management Committee will reviewing this policy and its implementation.

# 3. Use of mobile phones by staff

**3.1 Personal mobile phones**

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room).

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:

* For emergency contact by their child, or their child’s school
* In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

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 as a point of emergency contact.

**3.2 Data protection**

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.

More details about the way we handle and process personal data and confidential school information can be found in the the school’s data protection policy.

**3.3 Safeguarding**

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

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.

**3.4 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:

* 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 pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
* Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

**3.5 Work phones**

Some members of staff may be 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.

**3.6 Sanctions**

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school’s staff disciplinary policy for more information.

# 4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils are permitted to bring mobile phones on the journey to school but must hand these over to a member of staff when they enter the building. Pupils are not permitted to have possession of their mobile phones during the school day. In normal circumstances, phones will be returned to the pupil at the end of the school day.

Staff reserve the right to screen pupils for possession of a mobile phone.

In light of well documented concerns about burner style phones, we have banned Nokia phones from the building. If a pupil is found to have one of these phones, this will be confiscated. We recognise that other styles of phone can be used as burner phones and if we have any cause to believe that a pupil is using a phone for illegal purposes we reserve this right to confiscate this. When a phone has been confiscated a parent/carer will need to collect this personally from the school. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/94)

If we have reason to believe that the device contains evidence in relation to an offence, we will give the device to the police as soon as reasonably practicable.

**4.1 Sanctions**

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in a sanction in line with the school’s Behaviour Policy.

Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/94). Phones can be confiscated by any member of staff and will be stored in a locked safe until the end of the day.

Staff have the power to search pupils’ phones, as set out in the [DfE’s guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation).

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

# 5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including members of the management committee 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 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, 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 or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

* Use their phone to make contact with other parents
* Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school’s policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

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.

# 6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils 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 pupils are travelling to and from school. This policy will be put onto the school website and parents will be made aware of where to find policies during the pre- admission meeting.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked safe. They will be the Proprietor/Headteacher or designated person in charge.

Lost phones should be returned to the Proprietor/Headteacher or designated person in charge. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

# 7. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of pupils’ education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

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