



Policy

Mobile Phone Policy

Author	Teresa Ellington - Principal
Approved by	Academy Council
Date of Approval	March 2024
Review Date	March 2025

This policy is to provide guidance and information on some of the issues around children's use and misuse of mobile phones (and some smart watches) at Upwell Academy. It will clearly set out the school's expectations and rules around their use.

1.0 Introduction:

1.1 For many young people today the ownership of a mobile phone is considered a necessary and vital part of their social life. When used creatively and responsibly this type of phone has great potential to support pupils' learning experiences and social interactions. Upwell Academy incorporates devices such as the I-pad or laptops into our curriculum. We do not allow personal mobile phones to be used by pupils while on site.

1.2 There are various ways in which this technology can be misused:

- Online bullying by text, image and email messaging
- Taking and sharing inappropriate pictures (including Upskirting)
- Access to inappropriate websites bypassing the school filtering system
- General disruption to learning caused by pupils accessing phones in lessons
- Making disrespectful comments, misrepresenting events or making defamatory remarks about teachers or other pupils
- Pupils phoning parents immediately following an incident so that the ability of staff to deal with an incident is compromised
- Pupils posting material on social network sites with no thought to the risks to their personal reputation and sometimes with the deliberate intention of causing harm to others
- The deliberate engineering of situations where people's reactions are filmed or photographed in order to humiliate, embarrass and intimidate by publishing to a wider audience such as on Facebook or YouTube
- Publishing photographs of vulnerable pupils, who may be on a child protection plan, where this may put them at additional risk
- The use of a mobile phone for 'sexting' (the deliberate taking and sending of provocative images or text messages)

2.0 School Rules for the Acceptable Use of a Mobile Phone in School by Primary Pupils:

2.1 Reception to Year 4 pupils are forbidden from bringing a personal mobile phone to school. If a child in these year groups brings a phone to school, the agreed procedure is that this will be handed over to a member of staff who will send it to the office for safe keeping during the day. This can then be collected at the end of the day from the office by a parent. Parents will be informed that the school will not be held responsible for the security of a mobile phone brought into school unless they are handed to staff for safekeeping.

2.2 Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are permitted to bring a mobile phone to school, to support safety issues if they come to school independently. All mobile phones should be handed into the school office at the beginning of the day and collected at the end of the day. These phones will be locked away in a secure draw.

2.3 If parents want their Year 5 or 6 child to bring a phone it is on the understanding that they agree with the following limitations on use, namely:

1. The parent will sign the permission form to allow their child to bring in a phone and will not send in a phone without doing so. These forms are available from the school office.
2. Mobile phones must be switched off at all times during the school day, including break and lunchtimes, and remain off whilst pupils are on the school premises.
3. It is not permitted to film, photograph anyone on school grounds.
4. The phone will be kept in the school office during the day.
5. The school will not be held responsible for the security of a mobile phone brought into school.
6. Content on the phone will be queried with parents if it is felt the phone has been used inappropriately.

3.0 Misuse of Phones:

3.1 Parents are notified that appropriate action will be taken against those who are in breach of the acceptable use guidelines following the schools behaviour policy.

3.2 In the case of repeated misuse the phone will only be returned to a parent/carer who will be required to visit the school by appointment to collect the phone. This may be at the end of a week, a half term or longer.

3.3 Serious misuse may lead to the confiscation of the mobile phone, communication with parents and the imposition of other sanctions, up to and including exclusion from school.

3.4 In some instances an offence may have to be reported to the Police. If a pupil commits an act which causes serious harassment, alarm or distress to another pupil or member of staff the ultimate sanction may be permanent exclusion. School will consider the impact on the victim of the act in deciding the sanction and parents will be involved.

4.0 Dealing with a Misuse of Phone:

4.1 It is expected that most incidents of misuse of the mobile phone will be dealt with using the same principles set out in the school behaviour policy, with the response being proportionate to the severity of the misuse. However there are some more serious incidents of misuse of the mobile phone which may have to be addressed (see below).

4.2 The school will consider any of the following unacceptable use of the mobile phone and a serious breach of the school's behaviour policy resulting in sanctions being taken:

- Photographing or filming staff or other pupils during the school day and on organised school events
- Photographing or filming in toilets, swimming pools, changing rooms and similar areas

- Bullying, harassing or intimidating staff or pupils by the use of text, email or multimedia messaging, sending inappropriate messages or posts to social networking or blogging sites
- Refusing to switch a phone off or hand over the phone at the request of a member of staff*
- Using the mobile phone outside school hours to intimidate or upset staff and pupils will be considered a breach of these guidelines in the same way as unacceptable use which takes place in school time. This might be followed up in school if appropriate and visual evidence requested.

*Where it is deemed necessary to examine the contents of a mobile phone this will be done by a Designated Safeguarding Lead. The action will be properly recorded including the time, who was present and what was found see Appendix B.

4.3 Pupils and parents should be aware that serious misuse may lead to the confiscation of the mobile phone, communication with parents and the imposition of other sanctions, up to and including exclusion from school. In some instances an offence may have to be reported to the Police.

4.4 School will ensure all staff know the correct procedure to follow where a mobile phone has been confiscated. This will ensure that the confiscation is correctly recorded on CPOMS (under the Behaviour Related Log category and/or safeguarding) and that the phone is kept securely. Should an incident occur then school will also need to ensure that support is provided for the victim.

5.0 Sanctions:

5.1 Pupils and parents are notified that appropriate action will be taken against those who are in breach of the acceptable use guidelines following the schools behaviour policy. In addition:

- An Instant Step 3 for any child who is using a phone during school time.
- Pupils and their parents should be very clear that the school is within its rights to confiscate the phone where the guidelines have been breached. If a phone is confiscated school will make it clear for how long this will be and the procedure to be followed for its return.
- Pupils should be aware that the police will be informed if there is a serious misuse of the mobile phone where criminal activity is suspected.
- If a pupil commits an act which causes serious harassment, alarm or distress to another pupil or member of staff the ultimate sanction may be permanent exclusion. School will consider the impact on the victim of the act in deciding the sanction and parents will be involved.

6.0 Confiscation Procedure:

6.1 If it becomes necessary to confiscate a mobile phone then:

- The pupil or their parent will be informed that the phone can be collected at the end of school day from the designated person.
- The confiscation will be recorded by the school for monitoring purposes (See Appendix C)
- Schools will ensure that confiscated equipment is stored in a named bag so that it is returned to the correct person
- In the case of repeated misuse the phone will only be returned to a parent/carer who will be required to visit the school by appointment to collect the phone. This may be at the end of a week, a half term or longer
- Where a pupil persistently breaches the guidelines, following a clear warning, the Principal may impose an outright ban from bringing a mobile phone to school. This may be a fixed period or permanent ban.

7.0 Where The Phone Has Been Used For An Unacceptable Purpose:

7.1 The Principal or a member of the senior leadership team will have the right to view files stored in confiscated equipment and will seek the cooperation of parents in deleting any files which are in clear breach of these guidelines unless these are being preserved as evidence.

7.2 If required, evidence of the offence will be preserved, preferably by confiscation of the device and keeping it secure or by taking photographs of the screen. Explicit images/screen shots from mobile phones should NOT be sent to the school. School should consider whether an incident should be reported to the school Designated Safeguarding Lead. The designated staff member will monitor repeat offences to see if there is any pattern in the perpetrator or the victim which needs further investigation.

8.0 Support for the Victim

8.1 Where an incident has involved the victimisation, harassment, alarm or distress of another pupil or member of staff, the school will provide support for the victim. This should be discussed with the victim's family or where the incident involves a member of staff, appropriate support should be obtained. This might be the designated staff welfare person or the victim's union. To support the rehabilitation of a victim the following support may be offered in consultation with the victim and their family or support person. The school may:

- Follow up with the victim and family and agree a suitable way forward to facilitate an effective closure for the victim to the incident.
- Implement the 'restorative practice' procedures. Where the perpetrator agrees, participation in this process will be included as part of their reintegration programme following the incident.
- Offer one to one support through the mental health first aiders.
- School will also ensure that the perpetrators, and any others involved, are educated about the impact of their actions on the victim.
- School will ensure a fully documented case history of the incident is recorded and secured in the relevant file.
- Senior staff will review the PSHE & E-Safety curriculum to ensure all areas are appropriately covered.
- Where material has been posted online about a victim, school will provide support in getting the material removed.

APPENDIX A

GUIDANCE ON CONFISCATION

Dfe Guidance in Screening & Searching – What The Law Allows.

“School staff can search a pupil for any item banned under the school rules, if the pupil agrees.”

“School staff can seize any banned or prohibited item found as a results of a search which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.”

See below for full document: <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/f0076897/screening>

APPENDIX B

RECORD OF CONTENTS OF MOBILE PHONE EXAMINATION

<u>Pupil</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Examined By</u>	<u>Witnessed By</u>	<u>Phone Contents</u>

APPENDIX C

RECORD OF PHONE CONFISCATION

<u>Pupil</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Removed By</u>	<u>Returned To</u>	<u>Returned By</u>

Principal:		Date:	
Chair of Academy Council:		Date:	