



Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras Policy

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1. Introduction and aims

At Victory Park Academy we recognise that mobile phones and cameras, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors 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 (GDPR)
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

3.2 Volunteers

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.

3.3 Safeguarding Lead

The DSL Charlotte Burch is responsible for monitoring the policy annually, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day.

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, 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 staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- 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 number 01702 904644 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers 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/carers or pupils.

Communication with parents and carers can only be used through official channels school landline phones, school mobile phones allocated to senior leaders and “study Bug” app (used for reporting child absences)

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that 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.

4.4 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 are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips (if a school phone is unavailable)

4.5 Work phones

Some Senior Leaders (SLT) are 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

4.6 Sanctions

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

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

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

The DfE’s non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that pupils should not use mobile phones throughout the school day.

Pupils should not have access their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

On arrival pupils are required to hand over mobile phones at pupil reception where they are placed in named pouches and locked away securely until the end of the school day where pupils can then collect.

5.1 Sanctions

Mobile phones and other social networking or communication devices are considered a safeguarding risk and a potential source of distraction and disruption to the learning environment. In line with this, all pupils are required to hand over personal electronic devices upon entry to the

school. These items are securely stored in a locked environment for the duration of the school day.

If a pupil is found in possession of a mobile phone or similar device on any learning site, the device will be confiscated immediately.

Confiscated devices will only be returned in line with school procedures, which include the following:

The return of confiscated devices will be arranged directly with the pupil's parent or guardian.

Only a parent or legal guardian is permitted to collect the device.

The time and method of return will be determined by the school and communicated to the parent/guardian.

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, disability)
- The pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

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

This policy is supported by the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which grants schools the legal authority to confiscate items such as mobile phones (sections 91 and 94). This also is linked inline with Victory Park Academy's Behaviour policy.

[Documents and Policies | Victory Park Academy](#)

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

Parents/carers, 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 pupils, unless it's at a public event (such as school fair), and 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/carers, 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/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

Parents/carers 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 their personal mobile during the school day.

7. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of Mr E Muca (Headteacher) or Mrs C Burch (DSL) in a timely manner.