The Olympus Academy Trust
Mobile Phone Policy (Secondary and Post 16)

Document Summary

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Governing Committee:	Model Policy – Trust Improvement Committee Final Policy – School Improvement Committee
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Appendices:	Appendix 1: Information for learners Appendix 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors
On Trust Website?	No
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Amendment History

Version	Amendment Date	Author	Amendment Summary
1.0	24th February 2025	Trust Director Safeguarding, SEND and Inclusion	• New policy created.
2.0	4th April 2026	Trust Director Safeguarding, SEND and Inclusion	• Policy updated in line with DfE guidelines

1. Introduction and aims

At Bradley Stoke Community School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our learners, 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 learners, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially :
    - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
    - Behaviour Policy
    - Suspension and Exclusion Policy
    - Anti Bullying Policy
    - Complaints Policy
    - Staff Code of Conduct
    - Relationships and Sex Education Policy
    - Data Protection Policy
    - Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy

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

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and other technology with similar functionality to mobile phones such as smart watches and AI products with audio and/or visual recording capability.

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.

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 Trust Director for Safeguarding, SEND and Inclusion is responsible for monitoring the policy every three years and reviewing it.

Headteachers and senior leaders are responsible for holding staff and learners accountable for its implementation.

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

3.2 School Improvement Committee

The School Improvement Committee will receive information at least once a year regarding the implementation of this policy, including data on confiscations and sanction responses that have needed to be imposed

3.3 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for communicating the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones to all members of the community to ensure that the school's expectations are transparent to all.
School leaders should ensure that all staff, learners and parents are familiar with the policy, how it is implemented and any sanctions for breaching it.

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 or other technology with similar functionality to mobile phones such as smart watches and AI enabled products with audio and/or visual recording capability for personal reasons in front of learners throughout the school day.

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while learners are present and during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where learners 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 **01454 868840** as a point of emergency contact.

4.1 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):

- To issue homework, rewards or sanctions
- To use multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

When supervising residential visits or school trips, staff will be provided with a school mobile or a SIM card with a separate number. 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 learners, their work, or anything else which could identify a learner
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

The school phone system, 3CX, can be used for making work related calls via a personal mobile in an emergency. This can be done through an app on the phone. In these circumstances, staff can use their personal mobile phones.

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). More detailed guidance can be found in the Online Safety Policy (which includes the Acceptable Usage policy).

Staff should also avoid answering emails to external recipients on their mobile phones as data breaches are more likely to occur.

4.3 Safeguarding

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

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of learners, their work, or anything else which could identify a learner. 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 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. See the Staff Disciplinary Policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by learners

All Olympus Trust schools are mobile phone-free environments by default. This means that we prohibit the use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video) throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

Learners are permitted to bring a mobile phone into the school, but it should be switched off before they enter the school building, placed into their secure locker for the duration of the day. It must only be switched back on at the end of the day when learners are outside the school gates.

Learners' mobile phones should therefore not be seen or heard by a member of staff .

Learners must not use breaktime/lunchtime or any other point in the school day to go to their locker to check their phone.

If a learner is found using their mobile phone, either on their person or within their locker (this includes the device ringing, vibrating or making sounds to notify the user of alerts etc.) it will be confiscated.

Staff have the power to search learners' phones as set out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. Under the direction of the Headteacher, staff can search a learner's phone if they 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. All searches must be authorised by the Headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Behaviour Lead (as a delegated power). 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:

- Consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence, abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation etc.

If during an investigation, staff believe that an indecent image of children or adults is on the phone or device they should not view the image. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headteacher should be informed, and the phone or device will be confiscated and secured by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The police will then be contacted to continue the investigation. The return of the phone or device will only be sanctioned on the conclusion of the police investigation.

5.1 Use of smart watches and other wearable technology by learners

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance includes references to other communications and smart technology

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches and wearable devices have wellness and health-related features as well as the ability to make audio and visual recordings.

If a member of staff suspects that a learner is using their smart watch or other wearable technology to send and receive texts, to make calls or to make audio or visual recordings, it will be confiscated. All confiscated smartwatches and devices will be held securely in the office.

5.2 Exceptions and reasonable adjustments

- Learners with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar

- Post 16 learners may use their mobile phones in designated areas only.

Misuse of mobile phones by learners in the sixth form will lead to the same sanctions as learners within the secondary phase. Details of these sanctions are found at 5.3 within this policy.

Where the school has assessed a learner as being a young carer, these learners will have access to a school phone during the day to check-in on family members if this is required.

We do not consider that having access to a phone is a necessary reasonable adjustment for learners with special educational needs, unless this provision is stated as a requirement within their EHCP. If there is an anxiety issue that means they need to ring home during the day, they can do that from the SEND office, and we will support that process.

5.3 Sanctions

- Where staff see a learner using their mobile phone, holding their mobile phone, checking their mobile phone, hear the phone ringing in a bag or pocket, or suspect they are carrying on their person their mobile phone when it should not be, it will be confiscated. The same applies to smartwatches where a learner is seen using it for any other purpose than checking the time.
- Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from learners under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- Headteachers can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools)

Phased Sanctions

- On the first instance of confiscation, the mobile phone or other technology such as smart watches etc. will need to be collected by a parent or carer at the end of that school day and the learner will be issued with a 30-minute detention. The phone will need to be collected from the front office before 4pm.
- If the learner has a further confiscation that term, the phone will be held for 2 school days and the learner will be issued with a 60-minute detention. This is likely to mean that the learner will not have their mobile phone over a weekend or school holiday if the confiscation occurs mid-week or during the last week of a term.
- Further incidents within a term will result in the learner being placed on a mobile phone report, which means that they must hand their mobile telephone into an agreed member of staff before period 1 every day for 2 weeks.

Sanctions for mobile phone mis-use link to our behaviour policy.

- Refusal to comply with a request to hand over a mobile phone will result in the learner being issued a day in the internal suspension room
- Where a learner has persistent behaviour issues, which would include the persistent misuse of a mobile phone, or failure to follow mobile phone report arrangements, the school will consider other approaches within the policy as a sanction response. This will include the learner being placed onto a formal inclusion phase.

In each case, the sanction given will 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 learner'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 Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education

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

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including trustees, 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 learners, unless it's at 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 learners

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 school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of learners, their work, or anything else which could identify a learner

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for learners 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. Loss, theft or damage

Learners bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phone is locked away in their secure locker.

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 learners are travelling to and from school. This policy has been shared with all parents to ensure they are fully aware of this.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked cabinet.

Lost phones should be returned to [insert appropriate person or office]. 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 on learners' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the Trust will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and learners
- 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 the Pastoral Deputy Headteacher via the school office in a timely manner.

9. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

We are committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment where every individual is valued and respected. Our policies reflect our dedication to creating a workplace that embraces differences and promotes fairness. We believe that diversity enriches our organisation and drives innovation, and we strive to ensure that all employees have equal opportunities to succeed and thrive.

Appendix 1: Information for Learners

Learner Information

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

You are permitted to bring a mobile phone into the school, but it should be switched off before you enter the school building, placed into your secure locker for the duration of the day, and only switched back on at the end of the day when you are outside the school gates. Other wearable devices such as smart watches or other technology capable of audio or visual recording must not be brought into school.

1. You must place your mobile phone into your locker before you attend your first lesson/tutor period
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent') in your locker
3. You may not use your mobile phone from this point on and cannot return to your locker to switch it back on to check messages/send messages.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other learners without their consent.
5. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
6. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone outside of school hours as the school will sanction this behaviour. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone **even when you aren't in school**.
7. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating learners or staff via:
    a. Email
    b. Text/messaging app
    c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by sharing nudes
9. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
10. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
11. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.

12. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

Learner signature:
Date:

Appendix 2 - Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds

Please do not use phones where learners are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to [insert location]

Do not take photos or recordings of learners (unless it is your own child), or staff

Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with learners

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

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Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds

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