



Mobile Phone Policy

Written by:	Janine Dix	Date: 21/05/19
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1. Introduction and aims

At AVESC 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 academy 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 academy's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour and Online Safety policy.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in the academy, 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

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

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the academy, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Headteacher and Assistant Headteachers are responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for 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 academy) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while during contact time with pupils. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the academy where pupils are not present (such as the staff room).

Academy staff can use their site office number as a point of emergency contact. For instance:

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

3.2 Data protection

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

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found in the Esteem MAT Data Breach policy and the Acceptable use of ICT 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/academy trip/activity, this must be carried out using academy 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

Staff are allowed to use personal mobile phones when supervising residential visits or academy trips and make their contact details available to pupils and parents.

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 academy office

3.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the academy for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use academy 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, taking photographs of pupil work, or pupils engaging in learning, 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 academy's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils are allowed to bring a mobile phone to site as many attend the academy via travelling in a taxi, catch a bus or walk to site.

Once on academy premises, our expectation is that pupils hand in their personal belongings including their mobile phone. Personal items are then stored in a secured area within each of the support centre sites.

Pupils who attend alternative provisions may carry a mobile phone depending on the provisions mobile phone policy but will be directed not to use the device whilst accessing their lessons. They may be able to use their mobile devices during break and lunch times.

Pupils must adhere to the academy's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

4.1 Sanctions

If pupils refuse to adhere to our expectations pupils will potentially not be allowed entry into the main teaching and learning areas. If a pupil persistently refuses to hand over their device, then sanctions will occur.

Phones will be confiscated if pupils use their device during times unspecified in this policy. Fair reminders will be given to pupils by staff before a phone is confiscated.

Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

When a phone is confiscated, it will be locked in a secure area until the end of the pupils required timetable. The pupil will then get the mobile device back. If the pupil has breached safeguarding protocol and it is believed that they have content on the mobile device the phone will be confiscated, and investigation will take place, parents will also be notified. If sensitive material is found on the device, then the relevant authorities will be informed, this could lead to further sanctioning from the academy.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance states that staff can search a pupil's phone if there is reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The academy takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting
- 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 governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the academy site during the 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 and in public areas.

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 the academy.

Summary of the rules:

“For the purpose of maintaining our safeguarding and child protection practices please be advised that mobile phones should always be away and out of sight.”

If caught using the mobile device on academy premises, you will be asked to leave.

Parents or volunteers supervising academy 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 academy's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

Parents must use the academy office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the day. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the academy day.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to the academy sites must ensure that phones are appropriately stored securely when not in use.

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 academy accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on academy premises or transport, during academy visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from site. This is clearly stated in the pupil induction meeting.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the site office in a secure location and the Assistant Headteacher will be responsible for them. If they are not present at the time of the device being confiscated, then the staff member confiscating the device will be responsible for it.

Lost phones should be returned to the site centre office. The Academy will then attempt to contact the owner.

7. Monitoring and review

The academy is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the academy 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

8. Links to other policies

- Staff Code of conduct
- Acceptable Use ICT policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- EMAT Data Breach policy
- EMAT Data Protection policy
- Staff disciplinary policy

Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils

Acceptable Use Agreement

You must adhere to the following expectations if you bring your mobile phone to the academy sites:

1. You should lock your mobile phone away, upon entry to the academy site, in the storage areas provided.
2. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons.
3. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
4. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
5. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of academy staff or other pupils without their consent.
6. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
7. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
8. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
9. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
10. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't on site.
11. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the academy's behaviour policy.
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or turn over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the academy's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. 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 these appropriately, or turn them 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.

Appendix 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones in our academy

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the academy grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to academy office
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils or in public areas.

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

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