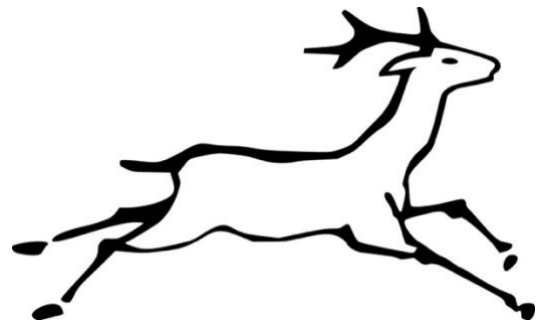


Mobile phone policy for students



Introduction and aims

At Running Deer, we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our students, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community. Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Provide a framework so that phones do not interrupt learning
- Provide a framework so they cannot be a vehicle that causes harm to selves or others.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for students, 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
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

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.

Use of mobile phones by students

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that students should not use mobile phones throughout the school day. At Running Deer, we endorse this and are a mobile phone free site except for mobile phones owned and controlled by the organisation. This policy is for our students, but our staff aren't allowed to use their mobile phones at the school.

A "no phones" approach is in keeping with the Running Deer ethos. We are a woodland site and a school that seeks to benefit from the impact of nature, the outdoors and biophilia. Students should not be accessing phones during the school day to maximise the benefit of the school uniqueness.

- Students have a few options if they wish have phones for taxi journeys or other reasons. Staff can collect mobile phones on arrival and keep them safe in the locking them in the office.
- Students are provided with secure lockers to keep personal belongings in.
- Unless it is specified in an EHCP phones are unlikely to be considered a tool for self-regulation and alternative method will be taught to support students.
- Where there is a further need other options that suit your individual context and needs.

Use of smartwatches by students

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

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 have wellness and health-related features.

A "no smartwatches" approach is in keeping with the Running Deer ethos. We are a woodland site and a school that seeks to benefit from the impact of nature, the outdoors and biophilia. Students should not be accessing smartwatch functions during the school day to maximise the benefit of the school uniqueness.

We discourage smart watches at school for key stage 4 students as they are prohibited items in examinations and we would seek to prepare them as thoroughly as possible to meet this expectation.

Exceptions for special circumstances

There is time where exceptions to this policy need to be made. This list below is example when an exemption will be made, this list is not definitive, and exemptions will be made on a case-by-case basis, including a student's ability to adhere to all restrictions that may be put in place.

- Young carers who need to be contactable
- Students who require apps to monitor their health, e.g., students with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar

To discuss such permission, students or parents/carers should contact The Head of School, Geraldine Carter.

Restrictions

For students who struggle to adhere to the policy or whose actions may be detrimental to others may have some restrictions applied while they are at school.

Restrictions that may be applied are:

- Although the school has the backing in policy to confiscate mobile phones (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from students under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006). This is not something Running Deer School will seek to do. Students may be asked hand over phones for safe storage, but they will not be taken by force by staff.
- Parents maybe called to support the school in collecting phones from students to allow the learning to continue.
- Students may be directed to leave site with a parent if there use of mobile phones continues to cause disruption to their own or others learning.

In each case, the restrictions 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 student'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

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

Persistent failure to adhere to this policy, particularly those which may cause harm to others may result in permanent exclusion or the termination of a placement.

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 students, 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 students

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 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.

Loss, theft or damage

Should a student bring a mobile phone into school the school cannot accept liability for any loss or damage to any device that has not been directly agreed in writing.

Students bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled and are stored, as directed by staff, securely when not in use.

Students must secure their mobile 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.

To ensure maximum compliance with this policy:

- The details of the policy will be shared in student friendly language around school
- copies of the policy will be provided to parents regularly.
- signs will be up in the school office to inform staff and visitors of the policy and of the liability disclaimer.

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