

Sawston Village College

Mobile Device Policy



1. Introduction

Sawston Village College recognises that technology in the form of mobile phones and smart watches are powerful communication devices which can contribute significantly to learning. Almost all have camera applications, access to social media and the web, as well as having the facility to store huge amounts of data. The College also recognises that many parents consider phones to be an important tool for remaining in contact with their children and that they can have useful educational benefits.

However, our primary aim is to educate our pupils in a safe environment free of any distractions caused by such technology and as such we prohibit the use of mobile phones and similar devices of any kind for a specified period during the school day. The reasons for this are set out below.

2. Why mobile devices are prohibited during the school day

Our mobile device policy is based on four principles, agreed by the Senior Leadership Team and fully endorsed by the Local Governing Body of the College.

Firstly, all pupils have a right to privacy and should not be photographed or recorded by other pupils during the period of time they are at school.

Secondly, all pupils have the right to be taught in a safe, purposeful learning environment and lessons should not be disrupted by texts or calls made on mobile phones.

Thirdly, all pupils should be protected, as far as is possible, from inappropriate internet content and cyber-bullying. All internet and email access to and from pupils whilst they are in school should come through the College's filtering system so that it can be monitored and controlled.

Fourthly, College staff should not be placed in a position where their actions could be photographed or recorded without permission. Furthermore, parental contact which is not managed by the College may also lead on occasions to adverse reactions from pupils, which staff must then respond to.

Pupils are, in general, discouraged from bringing into College mobile devices and to take the opportunity of being free from the influence of digital media for the eight hours they are either in school or travelling to and from school.

3. Rules and Responsibilities Relating to Mobile Devices

3.1. Definition of Mobile Device in this policy:

A mobile device is any electronic device that is capable of any of the following: sending messages, taking photographs or video, playing games or music and accessing the internet.

4. Mobile devices on the College site:

- 4.1. Mobile devices should not be seen, heard or used on the College site between 8 am and 3:30 pm under any circumstances. Headphones are also prohibited as it will be deemed that a mobile device is in use. Where pupils are involved in an after school detention this prohibition is extended until the detention is complete and pupils have left the College site.
- 4.2. Where mobile devices have been brought on to the College site they should be turned off and stored in bags or, preferably, secure lockers. Pupils should not have devices in coats or trouser pockets or on wrists. Turning the mobile device to silent mode rather than off is not sufficient and will be deemed to still be in use.

5. Responsibility for Mobile Devices

- 5.1. It is at the discretion of parents as to whether pupils bring mobile devices on to the College site.
- 5.2. The College accepts no responsibility for lost, damaged or stolen devices that are brought onto the College site, where they have been left unsecured.
- 5.3. It is the pupil's responsibility to ensure the safety of the mobile device during the school day by using secure locker facilities that are available, especially for lessons where bags may be left unsupervised.

6. Usage to and from College on school transport

- 6.1. On the journey to and from school on College transport mobile devices with the use of headphones can be used to listen to music.
- 6.2. Under no circumstances should any photographs or video devices be used on the transport to and from school. To do so will be considered a breach of this policy.

7. Requesting access to mobile devices

- 7.1. The College retains the right to request access to a mobile device where it is suspected that a serious breach of the College's behaviour and/or safeguarding policies has taken place.
- 7.2. The College retains the right to withdraw the right of a pupil to have a phone or similar device where it is suspected that criminal activity and/or bullying has taken place and/or where the reputation of the College has been brought into disrepute.

8. Parental contact during a school day

- 8.1. All contact between parents and pupils during the school day needs to be made through the main office. At no point should a parent make direct contact to a pupil through a mobile device.
- 8.2. Any contact by a mobile device between a pupil and a parent will be deemed a breach of the mobile device policy and will be dealt with according to the consequences stated in section 9 of the policy.

9. Consequences for breach of policy

- 9.1. If a mobile device is seen or heard, or where there is evidence that a device has been used at school then it will be confiscated by staff and returned to the pupil at the end of the next school day.
- 9.2. A repeat offence during the same term will result in a longer period of confiscation, initially for a period of one week. The device will be returned to a parent only.
- 9.3. The College reserves the right to apply alternative sanctions if appropriate.
- 9.4. The College has the right to confiscate mobile devices under DfE Statutory Guidance 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation', July 2022.

10. Pupil and Parental understanding of the mobile devices policy

- 10.1. The policy will be clearly outlined to pupils at the beginning of each academic year.

11. Staff Use of Mobile Devices

- 11.1. Staff will model appropriate behaviours in regards to their mobile phone usage. Staff should not use personal mobile devices in lessons or in public areas of the school site. Senior staff may use mobile phones which are approved and owned by the College for the purpose of promoting the College's work and for communication.
- 11.2. Staff will confiscate any device seen or heard between 8 am and 3:30 pm, and deliver it to reception where it will be available for collection at the appropriate time, in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.
- 11.3. Staff should not contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone in or out of school time, or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, a school telephone should be used.
- 11.4. Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.
- 11.5. Staff are not permitted to take photos or videos of pupils. If photos or videos are being taken as part of the school curriculum or for a professional capacity, the school equipment will be used for this. Staff should not allow themselves to be photographed by a pupil(s).

12. Parents/Carers should

- 12.1. Remind their children of this policy if they permit them to bring a mobile device into College; contact the College reception via telephone, or email, if an emergency arises or they need to get an urgent message to their child. Direct contact with students via a mobile phone is in breach of this policy.
- 12.2. Acknowledge any communication from the College with regards to a confiscation in a timely manner; support the College when transgressions of this policy occur.

13.Visitors

- 13.1. Parents, visitors and contractors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones at all in any area where children are present. Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others.
- 13.2. Photos of children must not be taken without prior discussion with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 13.3. Any individual bringing a personal device into the College must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content. Where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile device may be unsuitable and may constitute evidence relating to a criminal offence, the 'Allegations of Abuse' process will be followed

14. Responsibility of any loss

- 14.1 Staff, pupils or volunteers remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses

Policy approved by the Local Governing Body on 31 January 2023

Review: Autumn 2024