

Mobile Phone Policy

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

| Approved/reviewed by | |
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| SLT body | |
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1. Introduction and aims

At Work Skills Learning (WSL) we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our students, parents and staff, as well as the wider WSL 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 students, staff, parents/carers and volunteers
- Support WSL'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 WSL, 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

2.1 Staff

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

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

The Centre Manager is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and students accountable for its implementation.

2.2 The Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team is responsible for reviewing the policy every 2 years, and holding the Centre Manager 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 WSL) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while students are present/during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of WSL where students are not present.

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

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

The Centre Manager will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, WSL staff can use the WSL office number 07983 934 923 as a point of emergency contact.

3.2 Data protection

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

More detailed guidance may be found in WSL's Data Protection Policy and ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy, both of which may be found on WSL's website.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or students, 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 students.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else which could identify a student. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/WSL trip/activity, this must be done using WSL 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 are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

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 students, their work, or anything else which could identify a student
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the WSL office

3.5 Work phones

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

Only authorised staff are permitted to use WSL 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.

3.6 Sanctions

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

See WSL's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

4. Use of mobile phones by students

- Students are allowed to bring their mobile phones to WSL. However, students are not permitted to use their mobile phone during lesson times.
- During lesson times a student's mobile phone(s) must remain in their bag or pocket.
- Students' mobile phones must be set to silent.
- If necessary, during break times a student may contact their parent/guardian for reassurance purposes only.
- Students are not permitted at any time to access live video apps via their mobile phone(s).
- Students are not permitted at any time to access inappropriate content via their mobile phone(s).

It is recognised that students at WSL have special needs. Students who persist in using their phones during lesson times or accessing inappropriate content will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. This could include temporary confiscation of the mobile phone(s) and/or the student not being permitted to bring their mobile phone(s) to WSL.

4.1 Sanctions

In exceptional circumstances, WSL is permitted to confiscate phones from students under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#))

If the phone is confiscated, and depending on the reasons for confiscating the phone, the young person/parent as appropriate will be able to collect the phone from the main office at the end of the day.

Please refer to WSL's behavioural policy.

You may also wish to refer to the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows you to search a student's phone if you 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.

Please refer to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy in ensuring all staff, students and parents/carers all understand what steps they should take if they find inappropriate content on a phone, or if they suspect inappropriate behaviour.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. WSL 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 and other protected characteristics as set out in the Equalities Act 2010.

5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including contractors) must adhere to this policy.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of students, unless it is a public event (such as an open day) when prior permission has been sought, 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, 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 WSL.

Parents or volunteers supervising WSL trips or residential visits must not:

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

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing WSL's policy for students using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

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

6. Loss, theft or damage

Students bringing phones to WSL must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use.

Students 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.

WSL accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on WSL premises or transport, during WSL visits or trips, or while students are travelling to and from WSL.

7. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents and students
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations