



RIPPLEVALE

SCHOOL

Pupil Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy

Date of issue: 23.05.2024

Review Cycle: Annual

Next Review Date: May 2025

Ripplevale School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, health and safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values:

Ripplevale School provides a caring learning environment where our students make meaningful progress, relative to their individual starting points. Our aim is to encourage them to develop appropriate personal, social and employable skills enabling them to become confident, independent and aspiring young people

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Ripplevale School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

In the school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who

has care of the child. Department for Education guidance [Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility](#) considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a stepparent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

- Peninsula BrightHR
- Peninsula BusinessSafe (Health and Safety)
- Atlantic Data (DBS)
- Educare (online CPD)
- SchoolPro (GDPR)

Ripplevale School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Ripplevale School.

The policy documents of Ripplevale School are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

Rationale

Mobile phones and electronic devices are now a feature of modern society and most of our pupils own one. Increasing sophistication of mobile phone and electronic device technology presents several issues for schools:

- The high value of many phones and devices
- The technology of mobile phones and electronic devices has developed such that they now have the facility to record sound, take photographs and record video images. This new technology is open to abuse leading to the invasion of privacy. Taking of such images, without permission, contravenes the Data Protection Act of 1998
- Being able to use the device to surf the internet using 3G/4G/5G networks.

The following policy is implemented to ensure our pupils and staff are safeguarded. This policy has been updated to reflect and comply with the guidance from the Department of Education released in February 2024: *Mobile Phones in Schools - Guidance for schools for prohibiting the use of mobile phones*

throughout the school day. The guidance is clear that mobile phones are not to be used by students during the school day, including break and lunch times. The guidance refers to evidence of the detrimental effects of mobile phone usage on student performance, wellbeing and behaviour. Schools are required to ensure that mobile phones are either not brought into the school at all, or, if they are, that they are controlled so that they cannot be used during the school day. Any exceptions or adjustments to this policy are detailed below.

Pupils

1. Pupils can bring their phones and electronic devices into school, although they must not be used for any purpose (e.g.: phoning, texting, surfing the internet, listening to music, taking photos, taking videos) inside the school hours
2. Phones and electronic devices must be handed in each morning to class teacher/tutor and then returned at the end of the day. Staff should be aware that in some cases pupils may have more than one device, and that ALL devices must be handed in
3. If a pupil breaches these rules or is seen using their mobile phone or electronic device at any time during the school day, the phone or device will be confiscated by the member of staff and handed to the Head of School. If a pupil refuses to hand over their phone or device, the pupil needs to report to the Head of School's office to hand in their phone/device. The Head of School will hold the phone/device until the end of the school day. If the problem persists parents/careers will be asked to ensure the phone/device is not brought into school. Parents/careers may also be asked to attend a meeting at School
4. If there are repeat incidents, the pupil concerned will be banned from bringing their mobile phone or electronic device into School for an indefinite period
5. In the case where a mobile phone or device is used to record sound, pictures or video images which are deemed to be an invasion of privacy, the school will reserve the right to apply an appropriate sanction, which could include exclusion from school and, in extreme cases, permanent exclusion
6. The School has the right to search pupils and their belongings if they believe there is a good reason to do so (see page 10 of the guidance). For the purposes of this policy it is stated that mobile phones are identified as "an item that may be searched for."
7. Should there be any suggestion of inappropriate material being stored on mobile phones or electronic devices, the Head of School will request they are allowed to check this. If a pupil refuses, the Head of School will confiscate the phone/device and ask parents/careers to attend School so checks can be properly made
8. Mobile phones and electronic devices are banned from use in public examinations, such as GCSEs, and pupils are at risk of being disqualified should their device be misused or cause disruption
9. The calculator facility of mobile phones cannot be used as part of any examination
10. Pupils are not permitted to use their phone to listen to music. MP3 players which have no camera or 3G/4G/5G access are able to be used; although the School reserves the right to monitor the content being played to ensure it is appropriate
11. Pupils in Post-16 may keep possession of their phones. This reflects "this period of education as one of increased independence and responsibility." However, Post-16 pupils may only use their phones in the common room. They must not use their phones in front of other pupils who are not in Post-16. Pupils in Post-16 are also subject to the sanctions outlined above for misuse of their devices during the School day.

Pupils may be permitted to use phones and electronic devices in exceptional circumstances, such as long vehicle journeys on school trips and during times of transition, to avoid anxieties. Such usage must be agreed with SLT and not be assumed.

Emergencies

If a pupil needs to contact his/her parents/guardians, they will be allowed to use a school phone.

If parents need to contact children urgently, they should phone the school office and a message will be relayed promptly.

Responsibility for mobile phones or electronic devices

The school accepts no responsibility for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones or other electronic equipment in the possession of pupils or confiscated by staff, and will not undertake any related investigation. It is the responsibility of parents and pupils to ensure mobile phones and other electronic equipment are properly insured.