

Lincoln Minster School

Mobile Phones

1. Policy Statement

The majority of Lincoln Minster senior school pupils, mostly for reasons relating to travel and collection arrangements after school, feel the need to carry a mobile phone. However, as we are a working community, we need to have regulations governing the use of phones so that calls do not interrupt lessons and so that pupils do not use them unnecessarily.

The current generation of mobile phones have functionality beyond their use as just a telephone. There is a need to be aware of the wider uses of mobile phones, including their capacity to take photographs, record video and connect to the Internet. Consequently, the use of mobile phones in Lincoln Minster School raises important e-safety and safeguarding concerns. These include bullying via mobile phone, inappropriate use of a camera-phone, a potential case of grooming via interactive applications. Parents often legitimise purchasing a phone for their child on the basis of safety, being able to know where their child is for example, but parents may be unaware of the potential risks that mobiles can present, especially those risks associated with GPS-enabled devices or location-based services, including those associated with social networking.

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including boarders and those in our EYFS setting.

Lincoln Minster School is committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Treatment Policy.

Lincoln Minster School seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document.

In line with our Provision of Information policy, this document is available to all interested parties on request from the main school offices and should be read in conjunction with the following policies: Academic Integrity, Acceptable use of ICT for Pupils and Staff, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Child Protection, Controlled Assessment, Curriculum, Equal Opportunities, Searching Pupils and their Possessions, Social Media.

This document is reviewed annually by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Head of the Preparatory School or as legislation change requires. The next scheduled date for review is September 2024.

Reviewed By	C Brigden – Deputy Head Pastoral A Coupland - Head of the Prep School
Date	September 2025
Reason for Change	Annual Review
Next review date	September 2026

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2. Definition

In the context of this policy, mobile phone and smartphone are used synonymously.

3. Times when mobile phones may or may not be used

Senior School pupils

Mobile phones are not permitted to be used during the school day in any part of the school building or grounds. They should not be seen on the corridors or in classrooms. In addition, they are not to be used at break or lunchtimes. If a pupil requires a mobile phone in order to facilitate collection arrangements at the end of the day, the phone must be switched off upon arrival at school. Contact with parents or other parties within normal school hours should be made via the school reception. If parents need to contact their children in an emergency, they should telephone school reception and a message will be passed on in the usual way.

If a pupil is unwell, they should report to school reception or The Hub who will contact their parents and arrange collection. Pupils are not permitted to ring their parents directly to arrange to be collected.

Pupils attending Homework Club may have their phone turned on in order to receive notification that a parent or carer has arrived to collect them. The phone should not be used in any other way during the duration of Homework Club and any pupil doing so will have their phone confiscated by the member of staff on duty.

Sixth Form Pupils

Sixth Form pupils are allowed to use their mobile phones within the normal school day, but only within the confines of the Sixth Form Common Room. Outside this environment, the same restrictions of pupil mobile phone use apply.

Preparatory Pupils

Only pupils using the school bus may bring a mobile phone to school, but this must be handed into the main office on arrival and collected on departure. There may be some exceptional circumstances when other children need to bring a mobile phone to school, but the same procedures apply.

No child may take a mobile phone on a school trip.

EYFS Staff use of mobile phones and cameras

Staff are not permitted to use their personal mobile devices or cameras in school. Staff who wish to use or take photographs or video of students (whether on a personal or school device) must first speak with the Head to obtain their approval before using or taking any image of a student. Staff who wish to use their personal mobile devices or cameras in school for any other reason must first speak with the Head. Staff who act in breach of this may be subject to disciplinary action. Parents are not permitted to use their mobile phones or camera in or around the EYFS setting without prior approval from the Head.

All EYFS staff are also referred to United Learning E-Safety Policy (available on the United Learning Hub).

Boarding Pupils

Pupils who are part of the boarding community are permitted to have their mobile phones turned on outside mealtimes and prep time.

Junior boarders are not allowed mobile phones at bedtime. The mobile phones are collected in at the end of the day by boarding staff in line with the times published in the boarding house handbook. The time of hand-in relates to the age and bedtime of the child. The phones are subsequently securely stored in the boarding office until the start of the next day.

Outside the restrictions outlined above, the normal school policy applies to boarding pupils.

Staff – Senior School and Preparatory School including EYFS

Staff must not use mobile phones in public places within school. They must be switched off during registrations, lessons, whilst on duty or at any school event with the exception of SLT or safeguarding colleagues. Staff should be sensitive to other colleagues, and keep personal calls to a minimum.

Photographs must not be taken using a mobile phone.

If there is an urgent personal call that staff need to make, then they can use the school telephone or use their own personal mobile away from the classroom, provided that this does not interfere with their work, or take up an unreasonable amount of time.

Staff – Boarding

A mobile phone is provided for the boarding house. This mobile number is given out to parents and pupils as and when necessary.

4. Inappropriate Usage

Pupils are made aware of the dangers of inappropriate use of mobile phones in PSHE lessons, assemblies and e-safety training as part of the Computing curriculum.

Cameras

At Lincoln Minster School, we take very seriously concerns over the safety, security and well-being of children and young people as victims of camera phone misuse as well as the distracting and disruptive effects this could have on the education of pupils in our care.

As smartphones all now include at least one embedded camera, this can lead to pupils being photographed without their consent or knowledge, possibly in an inappropriate situation. This is an invasion of privacy, and can be extremely distressing for the subject of the photograph. Camera-phones can also be used to bully others.

Any pupil who is a victim should not hesitate to report it to their tutor or another trusted adult. Any allegations will be investigated in accordance with our Behaviour or Anti-Bullying Policies and sanctions will be imposed, the nature of these being related to the individual situation.

There are also concerns that such technology can be misused by paedophiles.

Pupils are also made aware of risks associated with “sexting” or the sending of sexually explicit images.

Social Media

The use of social media raises concerns with regard to the level of personal information young people are making available, particularly with regard to their daily routines. Students are reminded of the age requirements for social media platforms through the PHSE curriculum.

5. Appropriate Usage

A common sense approach is followed regarding the use of mobile phones, although we do provide clear guidelines as to their use. We also enforce a clear set of sanctions should mobile phones be misused.

Many of the mobile operators are now developing guidance for children and young people on using mobile phones including tips on protecting identity, guarding privacy, bullying, respecting others and using multimedia chat responsibly.

6. Sanctions for Misuse

Senior School

Any phone used by a pupil during the school day, either in the building or on the grounds, will have the

phone confiscated and handed to school reception for safe-keeping. The pupil will need to report to school reception from the end of that day to collect their phone. The office will record the confiscation and a letter will be sent to parents.

The office will inform the relevant Form Tutor of any phone that is confiscated for a third time. The phone will then be kept in the office until such time that a parent is able to come into school to collect it. Parents will be informed of this by letter.

If a teacher suspects or is informed that a pupil has inappropriate images on their mobile phone then the teacher will confiscate the phone. Deputy Head Pastoral will investigate the matter and report to the Head. During the investigations, if there is a need to formally interview the pupil, then this will be in the presence of another member of staff. The pupil's parents may also be invited to attend this interview. In line with the school's policy on Exclusion, Expulsion, Removal and Review, the pupil may also be excluded whilst the allegation is being investigated. If it is discovered that the pupil's mobile phone contains inappropriate images of a child or young person, the Head will be informed and also the Police Liaison Officer if necessary. The mobile phone will remain in the possession of the Head until advice from the police has been acted upon. This may include asking all pupils in possession of the image to delete it; if the image has been forwarded outside the school, contact will be made to request they follow the same steps. If the image has been uploaded to any website or social networking site, contact will be made to have it removed. The parents of the pupil involved will be notified of the situation. If a formal disciplinary meeting is deemed necessary, this will be in accordance with the procedures set out in the school's behaviour policy.

1 Theft and Damage

The school does not accept responsibility for theft of or damage to mobile phones. Parents and staff are informed that mobile phones are not covered by the company's insurance policy.