



STUDENT MOBILE PHONE POLICY

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Introduction

Springboard has updated the student mobile phone policy in line with the new Mobile phones in school guidance published February 2024.

The term 'phone' in this policy denotes mobiles phones, iPods, iPads, MP3, MP4 players and any similar portable electronic devices. The school recognises that mobile phones, cameras, and digital devices are now an integral part of our culture and can be of considerable value, particularly in relation to personal safety. However, balanced with this is the need to safeguard children and staff from cyber bullying, inappropriate use of the Internet and telecommunications, and the misuse of social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram.

The policy at Springboard Education is that **student phones are banned from the school site during the academic day.** Aside from the safeguarding issue the rationale for this is that it has been shown that the effect of banning mobile phones from school premises adds up to the equivalent of an extra week's schooling over a pupil's academic year. This is according to research by Louis-Philippe Beland and Richard Murphy, published by the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics.

"Ill Communication: The Impact of Mobile Phones on Student Performance" found that after schools banned mobile phones, the test scores of students aged 16 improved by 6.4%. The economists reckon that this is the "equivalent of adding five days to the school year". According to Beland and Murphy, a phone ban produced improvements in test scores among students, with the lowest-achieving students gaining twice as

much as average students. The ban had a greater positive impact on students with special education needs and those eligible for free school meals, while having no discernible effect on high achievers. “We found that not only did student achievement improve, but also that low-achieving and low-income students gained the most. We found the impact of banning phones for these students was equivalent to an additional hour a week in school, or to increasing the school year by five days.

The Malicious Communications Act 1988 (MCA)

Offence of sending letters etc. with intent to cause distress or anxiety.

(1) Any person who sends to another person—

- (a) a [letter, electronic communication or article of any description] which conveys—
 - (i) a message which is indecent or grossly offensive;
- (b) any [article or electronic communication] which is, in whole or part, of an indecent or grossly offensive nature,

is guilty of an offence if his purpose, or one of his purposes, in sending it is that it should, so far as falling within paragraph (a) or (b) above, cause distress or anxiety to the recipient or to any other person to whom he intends that it or its contents or nature should be communicated.

(2)

[(2A) In this section “electronic communication” includes—

- (a) any oral or other communication by means of [an electronic communications network] (c. 12)); and
- (b) any communication (however sent) that is in electronic form.]

(3) In this section references to sending include references to delivering [or transmitting] and to causing to be sent [, delivered or transmitted] and “sender” shall be construed accordingly.

(4) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable—

- (a) on conviction on indictment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or a fine (or both);
- (b) on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or a fine (or both).

(5) In relation to an offence committed before [2 May 2022], the reference in subsection (4)(b) to 12 months is to be read as a reference to six months.

(6) In relation to an offence committed before section 85 of the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 comes into force, the reference in subsection (4)(b) to a fine is to be read as a reference to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.

Communications Act 2003, section 127

127 Improper use of public electronic communications network

(1) A person is guilty of an offence if he—

- (a) sends by means of a public electronic communications network a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character; or
- (b) causes any such message or matter to be so sent.

(2) A person is guilty of an offence if, for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another, he—

- (a) sends by means of a public electronic communications network, a message that he knows to be false,
- (b) causes such a message to be sent; or
- (c) persistently makes use of a public electronic communications network.

(3) A person guilty of an offence under this section shall be liable, on summary conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale, or to both.

(4) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to anything done in the course of providing a programme service (within the meaning of the Broadcasting Act [1990 \(c. 42\)](#)).

Confiscation, screening and searching

Searching, screening and confiscation is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Further information on how Springboard will deal with these specific situations can be found in the Confiscation and Screening Procedure.

Use of Personal Mobile Phones for Students

The school recognises that parents/carers in a feel the need for their children to have access to a mobile phone for communication home. This helps with safeguarding and child protection especially in the long dark winter months, independent travel and when travelling some distance to school. Springboard Education supports this approach wholeheartedly.

To that end Springboard Education has adopted the following mobile phone best use policy:

- Students are allowed to bring mobile phones to and from school to always ensure their personal safety.
- If a student brings their phone to school, on arrival at school the phone must be handed to the member of staff at the school entrance, who will give it into the main office. The phones will be locked away in the school safe.
- The phone will be given back only at the end of the school day. Not before and not during any period of social time (break or lunch).
- Any student found in possession of their/a phone during the school day will have the phone confiscated. The headteacher will then decide when would be the most appropriate time to give the phone back, a letter could be sent home inviting parents to come in and collect the phone from school.
- The student may also incur an internal exclusion the following day.
- Confiscated phones will not be handed back to the child –only to parents/carers, who will need to come into school to collect.
- Any refusal to hand a phone over to members of staff at the beginning of the day will result in an immediate sanction and sent home. This would constitute the refusal of a reasonable request by a member of staff.
- Any refusal to hand the phone over and displays of physical behaviours towards others will result in an immediate sanction and could be sent home. SLT will discuss the most appropriate sanction in regards to the incident. Parents will be contacted on the day.
- Any refusal to hand the phone over and absconding from school, will result on staff following the missing person procedure, parents will be contacted and potentially report the student to the police as missing.
- Any requirement for a parent/carer to contact a student or a student to contact their parent/carer can be done through the school's main number.

We understand that many of our students are beginning to take their first steps towards life beyond school, for example, moving on to college, starting work experience, or simply becoming more independent. For these students, the Senior Leadership Team may agree, together with teachers and parents, that they can have access to their mobile phone during break and lunch times, as well as when they leave the school site for approved activities. When they return to school, they'll need to hand their phone back in straight away.

We're placing trust in students to use any equipment sensibly and to return it when asked. Decisions about who can have access to phones or other equipment will

continue to be made by the Senior Leadership Team on an individual basis, depending on each student's needs and circumstances.

We'll keep reviewing this policy regularly to make sure it stays relevant and reflects the most up-to-date guidance.

6th Form students' mobile phones.

In recognition of the students in the sixth form, being older and more responsible, we are going to provide lockers to keep their personal effects.

Therefore, the expectation is that they will lock their device away everyday upon arrival and will be allowed access during lunchtimes only, in their classroom. They must avoid communal areas as this would cause confusion on other students who have their phones locked away.

Failure to follow these simple instructions will result in the privilege of having access to their devices at lunchtime, will be removed.

This is in preparation of the real world where they would be expected to limit their mobile phone usage.

Springboard would like to encourage a fair balance of screen time to help students adjust to expectations after leaving their education.

Responsibility for loss and disclaimer

As previously stated, it is understood why parents may want their child to bring a mobile phone into school. Whereas this is understood the school retains no liability for any phone that is brought into school which is either lost, stolen or damaged or used in a manner which is against the owner's consent. The school's advice is to leave mobiles at home and use the old system of contact through the reception.

Online safety

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

Further information can be found on Springboard Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and ICT/Acceptable use and Online Safety policy.

Out of school hours phone usage

We as a school appeal to you (Parent) to monitor the use of devices and encourage kindness towards each other. The responsibility of device usage is with the parents, teach them that things said/posted or uploaded, never truly disappear from the internet.

Springboard does not consent for its name to be used or posted on social media. For consent, a request must be sent to the headteacher who will discuss it further with the rest of the SLT team.

Failure to follow this, restorative actions will follow depending on the severity of what has been said/posted.

Students often have group chats after school where they communicate with each other. Students and Parents must understand that it is their responsibility to deal with any negative incidents, school can support with this but ultimately the responsibility falls with the parent.

Behaviours at school because he/she/they said or posted online will be dealt seriously. Restorative actions will follow depending on the severity of the incident. If necessary the school can/will request support from outside agencies for example, the police and/or social care.

The role of staff

All staff should consistently enforce the school's policy on the use of mobile phones.

Further information on the role of staff can be found on the Staff mobile phone policy.

Restorative actions

Failure to abide by this policy Springboard will have no other option but to impose restorative actions.

Springboard will look at each incident on an individual basis to formulate the sanction.

Springboard will ensure that restorative actions are reasonable, lawful and proportionate for each individual case.

Restorative actions could vary from not having the phone given back for a period of time, to internal suspension or external suspension.

For serious incidents outside of school hours, school will seek advice from the police.

Link to other policies

[Attendance Policy](#)

[Anti-Bullying Policy](#)

[AI Policy](#)

[Behaviour Policy](#)

[Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)

[Discipline and Exclusion Policy](#)

[ICT/Acceptable use and Online Safety policy.](#)

[Positive Behaviour Support and Physical Intervention Policy](#)