

Social Networking, Phones and other Mobile Devices Policy

Last Updated September 2023

This policy follows the Department for Education guidelines applicable to the statement set out in February 2022:

Mobile phones must not be used for private or personal use during lessons or in formal school time. They should be switched off (or set to silent) at all times. Use of mobile phones by staff during working hours for social networking activity (other than in accordance with curriculum use) is strictly prohibited.

The aim of this policy is to provide clear guidance to all education professionals (supply staff and tutors) about the use of social networking, phones or any other mobile devices in schools (schools and any other educational establishments).

- Mobile phones should be switched off or set to silent while in school.
- Never have your phone out and visible to pupils during school hours.
- Phones should not be carried in your pocket during the school day. Either keep them in your bag and do not take them out the whole day or ask at reception for a safe place to leave them.
- Social networking sites should not be visited during the school day from any device.
- Protect your mobile phone, laptop and computer with a PIN whilst in school to protect access to its content and potential misuse if it does get into the wrong hands.
- Turn off any notifications on other devices, for example Apple Watch, while working in a school or on assignment with pupils anywhere.
- Headteachers, parents, pupils and prospective employers may look you up on social media. Ask yourself if you would be comfortable about your

content being viewed. If not, remove any material that you would not be comfortable with them viewing.

- Do not engage in online activities that may bring yourself, the school or Zen Educate into disrepute. Derogatory, defamatory or offensive comments about pupils, parents and carers or colleagues must not be posted.
- Always maintain a professional tone online. Use of expletives, sexual content or any form of discrimination or harassment is always unacceptable. Do not allow pupils or parents and carers to make you their online 'friend' and do not instigate any befriending yourself. Parents and carers should be encouraged to use more formal channels to contact you.
- Do not exchange private texts, phone numbers, personal email addresses or photos of a personal nature with pupils or parents and carers.
- Do not allow others to tag you in photos without your permission – this needs to be agreed with your friends, especially on a night out.
- Do not disclose any information about pupils, parents and carers or colleagues on social networking sites.
- Do not use networking sites to raise concerns about work or your colleagues – call Zen Educate instead.
- If you do post your opinions online, make it clear that these are your personal views and not those of your employer and not those of Zen Educate by adding a statement to that effect.
- Contact the Zen Educate Customer Experience team if you come across any material that is likely to reflect badly on yourself, the school or Zen Educate.