

Mobile Phones and Personal Electronic Devices Policy

Policy Statement

Redgate Sports provides sports coaching and mentoring support to children and young people referred by schools, local authorities and other appropriate referral partners.

The children and young people we work with may have SEND, SEMH needs, disrupted education, previous experiences of exclusion, safeguarding vulnerabilities or other circumstances that require a highly individualised and supportive approach.

We are committed to providing a safe, structured and positive environment in which children and young people can participate in sport, develop relationships with trusted adults, build confidence and resilience, and engage positively with others.

We recognise that mobile phones and personal electronic devices can have legitimate benefits, including:

- communication with parents/carers
- personal safety
- medical monitoring
- accessibility and assistive technology
- communication support
- emotional reassurance

However, unrestricted access to mobile phones during coaching and mentoring can also:

- distract from participation
- interfere with engagement
- contribute to conflict or disruption
- facilitate bullying or inappropriate communication
- create safeguarding concerns
- enable unauthorised photography, filming or recording
- expose children and young people to inappropriate online content

Our expectation is therefore:

If a student brings a mobile phone or personal electronic device to a session, it should be switched off or placed on silent and kept securely in the student's own bag throughout the session. The device should not be used during the session unless an agreed exception applies.

Redgate Sports does **not normally take possession of, store, carry, search or physically remove** a student's personal mobile phone or electronic device.

This policy mirrors the principles of the Department for Education's mobile-phone-free approach for schools from September 2026, while being proportionately adapted to our role as a sports coaching and mentoring provider.

Policy Principles

Our approach can be summarised as follows:

In School

We follow the school's mobile phone and electronic-device policy and support the school in maintaining its expectations.

Out of School

Young people may bring a mobile phone, but our expectation is that it is switched off or on silent, kept in the student's own bag and not used during the session unless an agreed exception applies.

We avoid staff looking after phones

Staff will not normally take possession of, store, carry, search or physically remove a student's personal mobile phone.

Individual Needs Matter

SEND, disability, medical and safeguarding needs may require reasonable adjustments.

Exceptions Are Proportionate

Where access is necessary, it should normally be specific, purposeful, time-limited and proportionate.

Safeguarding Comes First

A phone-related incident may be a safeguarding concern and must not automatically be treated as poor behaviour.

Clear Boundary, Individual Response

We maintain consistent expectations while recognising the particular needs of the young people we support.

Partnership

We work closely with referring schools, local authorities, referral partners, parents/carers and other professionals to provide consistent expectations and safe, effective support.

In School

Where Redgate Sports staff deliver coaching or mentoring on school premises during the school day, **the school's mobile phone and electronic-device policy will apply.**

Our staff will follow the school's arrangements and support the school in maintaining its expectations.

Out of School

Where Redgate Sports delivers coaching or mentoring away from school premises, including in community settings or hired venues, this policy applies.

Young people may bring a mobile phone or personal electronic device to a session. However, our expectation is that:

- the device is switched off or placed on silent
- the device is kept securely in the student's own bag
- the device remains there for the duration of the session
- the device is not used unless an agreed exception applies

Young people should not use their devices during sessions for:

- making or receiving calls
- texting or messaging
- using social media
- browsing the internet
- gaming
- taking photographs
- recording audio or video
- using headphones or earbuds connected to a personal device
- using a smartwatch or similar device for communication

The student remains responsible for the safe custody of their own device.

Where a referring organisation has asked us to mirror a specific mobile phone arrangement, we will seek to do so wherever reasonably practicable, provided that the arrangement is appropriate to our setting and agreed with Redgate Sports.

Why This Is Particularly Important for Our Provision

Our young people may have very different experiences of education, authority and relationships with adults.

Some may have:

- SEND
- SEMH needs
- anxiety
- difficulties with emotional regulation
- communication difficulties
- autism or other neurodevelopmental differences
- previous experiences of exclusion
- disrupted education
- trauma or adverse childhood experiences
- difficulties with trust
- safeguarding vulnerabilities
- a strong reliance on their phone as a source of reassurance

We therefore recognise that difficulty separating from a phone or anxiety about not having immediate access to it may sometimes be a manifestation of an underlying need.

Staff must not automatically interpret this as deliberate defiance. However, clear and consistent boundaries are also important.

Our aim is to support young people to:

- engage in activities
- develop relationships
- build confidence
- practise emotional regulation
- communicate appropriately
- develop independence
- develop healthier boundaries around technology

Our approach is:

The expectation is consistent; the support provided to meet it is individualised.

SEND, Disability and Reasonable Adjustments

Redgate Sports will consider the individual circumstances of children and young people with SEND and disabilities.

Where a student's disability means that access to a mobile phone is necessary to avoid substantial disadvantage, we will consider whether a reasonable adjustment is required.

We will consider:

- whether the phone provides an assistive function
- whether it supports communication
- whether it is required for a disability-related need
- whether it forms part of a medical arrangement
- whether another device or method could meet the same need
- whether supervised access could meet the need
- whether access can be limited to particular functions
- whether access can be limited to a specific time or location
- whether an individual adjustment plan should be created

A diagnosis of SEND or SEMH need does not automatically provide unrestricted access to a mobile phone.

Where an adjustment is necessary, we will seek to make the **least restrictive adjustment that enables the student to participate safely and successfully**.

Any existing reasonable adjustment identified by the referring organisation should be considered as part of our planning.

SEMH and Emotional Regulation

We recognise that restricting access to a mobile phone can sometimes cause anxiety, distress or dysregulation. Our response will be relational, trauma-informed and proportionate. Staff should:

1. remain calm
2. avoid public confrontation
3. give a brief and clear explanation
4. allow reasonable processing time
5. remind the student that their phone remains with them and can be accessed after the session
6. offer an appropriate choice within the boundaries of this policy
7. use the student's known regulation strategies
8. involve a trusted adult where appropriate
9. consider whether the response indicates that an individual support arrangement needs to be reviewed

Staff should avoid:

- arguing about the phone
- humiliating the student
- threatening consequences unnecessarily
- escalating a minor incident into a significant confrontation
- treating distress automatically as deliberate non-compliance

Medical Needs

Where a student requires access to a mobile phone or smart device as part of the management of a medical condition, appropriate arrangements will be made. Staff will not prevent access where doing so could compromise the student's health or safety.

Relevant medical requirements should be identified during the referral and placement process and communicated to staff who need to know. The arrangement should be recorded on the student's referral information.

Safeguarding

Mobile phones can be relevant to safeguarding concerns including:

- cyberbullying
- sexual harassment
- sharing of sexual images
- exploitation
- contact with unsafe adults
- criminal exploitation
- threats or intimidation
- coercion or control
- inappropriate recording
- harmful online content
- other harmful online behaviour

Any safeguarding concern must be managed in accordance with Redgate Sports's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Staff must not assume that a phone-related incident is merely a behaviour issue where there may be a safeguarding element.

Contact with Parents and Carers

Parents/carers should normally contact young people through Redgate Sports rather than directly through the student's mobile phone during a session.

Staff will facilitate appropriate contact where necessary.

A student who needs to contact a parent/carer should speak to their coach.

Where appropriate, staff will provide a suitable and private opportunity for a necessary call.

Recording, Photography and Filming

Young people must not use personal devices to photograph, film or record during sessions. This includes smart glasses.

This is particularly important where images or recordings could be shared through social media or messaging platforms without the knowledge or consent of those involved.

Any concerns involving inappropriate images, recordings or sharing of content must be treated in accordance with safeguarding and data protection procedures.

Staff Use of Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

Staff use of mobile phones, personal electronic devices and online services is governed by the Redgate Sports'

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Statement

Staff are expected to comply with these policies and any associated procedures when using mobile phones or other personal electronic devices while working with children and young people.

This policy does not duplicate the requirements contained within those documents.

Breaches of the Policy

A breach may include:

- using a phone during a session without permission
- repeatedly accessing a phone during a session
- using a smartwatch for unauthorised communication
- taking photographs or videos without permission
- recording another student or member of staff
- using social media during a session
- using a phone to bully, threaten or intimidate another person
- deliberately attempting to circumvent the arrangements

The response will be proportionate and consistent with Redgate Sports's Behaviour Policy. Staff should consider:

- the student's age
- SEND
- SEMH needs
- known regulation difficulties
- the circumstances of the incident
- whether the expectation was understood
- any individual adjustment
- safeguarding concerns
- previous incidents

Significant or repeated incidents should be recorded on Redgate's information system and, where appropriate, shared with the referring organisation in accordance with agreed arrangements.

Refusal to Put a Phone Away

If a student refuses to put their phone away or continues to use it during a session, staff should not attempt to physically take the device from them.

Staff should:

1. calmly remind the student of the expectation
2. explain that the phone should remain in their bag until the session has finished
3. allow reasonable processing time
4. consider any SEND, SEMH, medical or safeguarding needs
5. use agreed regulation and de-escalation strategies
6. seek support from a senior member of staff where appropriate
7. manage persistent refusal in accordance with Redgate Sports's Behaviour Policy

The focus should remain on enabling the student to return to the activity safely and positively.

Community and Lone-Working Considerations

Where staff deliver one-to-one mentoring or coaching in the community, additional safeguarding considerations apply.

Staff must comply with the Redgate Sports':

- Lone Working Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Risk Assessment procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct
- communication and recording requirements

A student's mobile phone remains their responsibility and should remain in their own bag unless an agreed exception applies.

The student's phone must not be used as a substitute for the Redgate Sport's safeguarding or emergency procedures.

Staff should retain appropriate means of contacting Redgate Sports and emergency services where required.

Information Sharing and Incident Reporting

Significant incidents relating to mobile phones may need to be shared with the referring school, local authority or other referral partner.

This may include:

- repeated breaches
- persistent refusal to comply
- safeguarding concerns
- inappropriate images or recordings
- cyberbullying
- threats or harassment
- suspected exploitation
- incidents involving other young people
- any incident that may affect the child's placement or risk assessment

Information will be shared in accordance with:

- safeguarding requirements
- applicable data protection legislation
- the specific arrangements agreed with the referring organisation

Parent/Carer Partnership

Parents and carers are asked to support this policy by:

- discussing the expectations with their child
- supporting their child to keep their phone switched off or on silent and stored in their own bag during sessions
- using Redgate Sports's agreed contact route
- informing us of relevant medical, SEND or safeguarding needs
- supporting their child to develop healthy and responsible technology habits

Parents/carers are encouraged to raise any concerns with Redgate Sports's designated contact and, where appropriate, the referring organisation.

Monitoring and Review

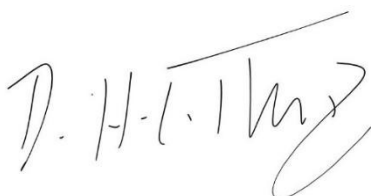
The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed at least annually.

Redgate Sports will consider:

- mobile-phone incidents
- safeguarding concerns
- behaviour incidents
- engagement and participation
- young people's views
- parent/carers feedback
- staff feedback
- reasonable adjustment arrangements
- feedback from referring organisations
- complaints
- changes to government guidance or legislation

The policy will be amended where necessary to ensure that it remains appropriate for our sports coaching and mentoring provision.

This policy is recommended for approval by:



Dan Thorp
Redgate Sports Founder

Date: 10th August 2026

POLICY REVIEW:

Redgate Sports review all policies every August. Policies may be reviewed and amended more frequently if the need arises. Changes in legislation and guidance or learning from incidents/near miss event may require a review and change to take place.

Policy/ Procedure	Date Last Reviewe d	Amendments Made	Date Next Review	Amended By

This policy is circulated to all staff annually. The policy is also circulated to all referring partners.

Redgate Sports holds staff training 3 times a year and aspects of this policy are included in every training session.

This Policy has been developed by the Redgate Sports team and approved by the Board.

Appendix 1 – Coach and Mentor Quick Reference

If a student has their phone out:

1. Where are you?

In school: Follow the school's policy and arrangements.

Out of school: Follow Redgate Sports's Mobile Phone Policy.

2. Stay calm

Give a brief reminder and avoid unnecessary confrontation.

3. Explain the guidelines clearly

Explain that the phone should remain in the student's bag until the session has finished.

4. Give processing time

Allow the student reasonable time to put the phone away.

5. Consider the individual

Could SEND, SEMH, anxiety, communication, medical or safeguarding needs be relevant?

6. Do not take the phone

Staff should not physically remove, search, store or carry the student's phone.

7. Safeguarding comes first

Refer safeguarding concerns to the DSL.

8. Record significant incidents

Record and share significant incidents in accordance with Redgate Sports's procedures and agreed arrangements with the referring organisation.

9. Keep the relationship intact

The objective is not to win an argument about a phone. The objective is to maintain a safe, positive environment in which the student can participate.

Clear boundary. Calm response. Individual support. Consistent safeguarding.