

<b>Telephone Policy</b>	
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## **1 Guidelines**

The purpose of these guidelines is to regulate the management, operation and use of the installed telephone system (Landline) and mobile phones for internal and external calls, and for personal use.

This policy is intended to be read by all staff for general information and awareness.

## **2 Introduction**

This policy provides guidance on when to use telephones, making and responding to calls in a way which reflects positively on both the individual employee of the South Downs Education Trust (SDET).

Any incoming (or outgoing) telephone call is potentially the first point of contact with parents, members of the public or other customers of the SDET. The first impression given when making, and in particular when answering, a call goes a long way towards the perception of the SDET level of performance and quality of service.

The SDET recognises that the use of mobile telephones is an essential part of many employees' working lives and access to a mobile phone is necessary for certain roles. The advantage of mobile phones to lone workers and those working in remote areas is recognised. Landlines and, where there is a business need, mobile telephones are provided for business use, and this Telephone Policy includes guidance on how they should be used and managed.

## **3 Responsibilities**

In making use of SDET landlines and mobile telephones all users are expected to act responsibly.

The SDET expects value for money in its telephony provision and therefore employees will not be able to select specific mobile phone handsets or types and may not be given a choice unless there is a specific business reason for a specific type of phone which must first be approved by the head of department.

When making or receiving any calls, internal or external, employees should aim to be pleasant, informative, helpful and brief.

Employees are responsible for all calls made on any SDET mobile phones, and for the safe-keeping of the phone.

Users are responsible for any fine or other penalty incurred for breach of legislation if using a mobile phone or "hands free" device whilst driving.

It is illegal to make or receive a call using a mobile telephone whilst driving if the phone is held in the hand during any part of the operation. Users should also be aware that they can be prosecuted for using "hands free" devices if they fail to properly control their vehicle.

SDET mobile phones remain the property of the SDET and must be returned if the user leaves the SDET employment. Failure to do so may result in the employee being charged an amount equivalent to the rental of the phone and any other charges made against the account. The SDET may also apply an administrative charge to cover costs incurred in recovering the phone and terminating the contract.

If a SDET mobile phone is lost it must be reported to the Trust schools IT Manager with which the phone is registered as soon as possible. If a SDET mobile phone with (work emails synchronised to the device such as iPhone, Windows Mobile etc.) is lost then it must be reported to that Trust Schools Data Manager and the IT Manager.

If the lost mobile phone is a smartphone staff may be required to purchase replacement handset themselves, if this loss is due negligence on the part of the user or if they would need a similar mobile phone.

SDET mobile phones are provided for SDET related use only. While the SDET recognises that occasional personal use may be necessary, this should be kept to a minimum. Apps should not be purchased for personal use at the SDET expense and may not be replaced or refunded if bought from personal funds and downloaded to a SDET handset.

#### **4 Breach of the Policy**

All employees are responsible for their compliance with the Policy, and for reporting any policy violation or other abuse of the telephone system. Any breach of this Policy will be dealt with in accordance with the SDET disciplinary procedure. If abuse of a mobile phone is suspected, in addition to any other sanctions imposed the phone will be withdrawn.

#### **5 Service Standards: Making Calls**

Employees should be aware that calls to mobile phones are expensive and therefore any calls should be clear, succinct, and as brief as possible.

The use of chargeable mobile services such as premium rate text messages, directory enquiries etc. is not permitted on SDET mobile phones without prior and specific written permission from a line manager.

Text or picture messages (SMS or MMS) must not contain, or have attachments that contain: defamatory, offensive, or harassing language, fraudulent material, sexually explicit images or language, material that infringes copyright or other intellectual property rights of third parties, or offensive cartoons or jokes or otherwise involve lawful or wrongful conduct. Nor should they contain any remarks that might be potentially embarrassing to the SDET, its employees, or the general public.

#### **6 Confidential Data and Information Security**

Information must never be given out over the phone unless it is absolutely clear who it is being given to and that they are entitled to the information and are ready and able to accept it.

Care must be taken to ensure that conversations involving confidential and/ or personal information cannot be overheard.

Voicemail messages containing personal information should only be left after due consideration has been given to any security and confidentiality risks involved.

Mobile phones must be kept secure at all times, and out-of-sight whenever possible.

All SDET and personal smartphones setup with email accounts and/or internet based access to SDET data must be protected with four digit passcode. This is to protect your information and SDET data. After enabling passcode on your device, each time you turn on or wake up the device, it will prompt for the passcode before you can access applications or information on the device. Please contact the Schools/Trust IT Manager with who that phone is registered with should you require assistance.

Mobile phones may not be used to store and/or transmit personal data for which the SDET is the Data Controller or any other sensitive data relating to the SDET and its activities.

## **7 Personal Use**

The SDET telephones are provided primarily for business use in order to assist staff in carrying out official SDET business. SDET landline and mobile phones must not be used for any secondary business purpose unless approved as part of a formal SDET scheme.

It is accepted that there are occasions when making personal calls at work cannot be avoided. However, it should be remembered that calls are logged and abuse of a telephone system or mobile telephone may result in disciplinary action.

## **8 Landline Call Recording**

All incoming and outgoing telephone landline calls are automatically recorded.

The recording of telephone use will comply with the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018. Recordings will be used to establish facts, confirm legitimate business use and compliance with this Policy, monitor standards of service and training, maintain effective operation of systems, and identify unauthorised use.

A disclaimer is posted on the SDET website indicating that “calls are recorded or monitored for quality and training purposes”.

Incoming calls to SDET Schools are routed through an auto attendant, callers are advised that “calls are recorded or monitored for quality and training purposes”.

All staff when making outgoing calls must ensure that the recipients are aware that “calls are recorded or monitored for quality and training purposes”.

Access to landline telephone recorded conversations is restricted and controlled by the telephone system administrator.

Requests for copies of specific conversations can be requested by line managers in accordance with the above regulations. All downloaded conversations are to be listed in the telephone recordings log. Line Managers are to ensure that access to the recording is controlled at all times.

All copies of any recording are to be deleted on completion of the process for which they were required. Deleted files are to be confirmed as such to the telephone system administrator and the log amended accordingly.