



School Mobile Telephones Guidance (Updated July 2021)

This information should be read in conjunction with the Schools' Guide to Expense and Benefits.

School owned mobile phones should be registered in the name of the school and not the employee using the phone. The provision of a mobile phone to an employee for business purposes is free of tax if the following conditions apply:

- There is no private use of the phone
OR
- Private use is limited to a period when free call charges apply
OR
- The employee is both required to and subsequently does reimburse to the school the cost of the private calls made

A claim form should be used to authorise the deduction of the cost of private calls from pay.

Charges

The school will pay the monthly line rental charges for school mobile phones but will not pay for any private calls made. Therefore, on a monthly basis each member of staff will be informed of what additional cost they have incurred (normally through email). This amount will be deducted through their monthly salary unless they can confirm that the costs were work related.

Top Up Vouchers/ Pay As You Go

Pay as you go mobile telephones and top up vouchers should be paid for by the school. Alternatively, the employee can purchase a voucher and submit a reimbursement form to the school. Employees should seek permission to purchase a voucher before making the purchase.

School's Responsibilities

All reimbursements (calls and rental) must be made via Payroll. These are not required to be returned to HM Revenues and Customs. Where reimbursement of business calls is claimed it is essential that a list of business calls be attached, either as part of an itemised bill, or a separate list.

Annual Declaration

In all cases a declaration should be signed by the employee at the beginning of each tax year, stating that should the school owned mobile phone be used for private calls, the employee will reimburse the school with the cost of the call.

Picture Messages

Picture messages that are sent via text message may be chargeable. Consider if sending the photo via email or ChatPro would be more costs effective. Do not send via WhatsApp.

WhatsApp and Other Messaging Apps (Not Secure)

WhatsApp should not be used for work purposes because the app is not secure and there is a risk of data breach. This app can only be used to send personal messages to colleagues for example to see how they are etc.

ChatPro

ChatPro is a specialist communication app for organisations that need to comply with safeguarding and data protection regulations. It provides simple, effective communication in organisations where safety and security are paramount. It can be used to communicate every day, by setting-up individual

and group chats across the school. Text or pictures/ photos can also be sent via this method. A DPIA was carried out in June 2021 and checked by the DPO.

Text Messaging

Text messaging can be used by school staff as a communication tool between each other. This is a preferred method of communication if not using ChatPro.

Personal Mobile Telephones/ Devices

Personal mobile phones/ devices may be brought onto the premises for practical purposes but must similarly be used responsibly and appropriately and not left unattended where they may be accessed by pupils or other persons. Please note that the Trust does not accept any responsibility for personal belongings brought onto the premises, or elsewhere in relation to work or during working time.

At no time should a personal device be used to take photos of pupils or anything related to the school. They can be used to check work emails etc in the member of staff personal time or lunch break when away from pupils.

Personal devices can be used to log in to a web-based system such as emails but nothing should be downloaded to the device. Passwords should not be saved.