



Procedure 6.18 Guidance for Telephone Usage at the Academy					
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<b>Review No</b>		<b>Next Review Date</b>	August 2025	<b>Approved on</b>	24/08/2024

**Procedure Issued** : April 2014

**Procedure Owner** : Principal / CEO

- ❖ This procedure is shared with our staff and/or can be obtained:
  - on our website <https://docklandsacademy.co.uk/policies-and-procedures>,
  - on our internal server via their desktops of all computers in the library on the top floor,
  - by emailing us at [info@docklandsacademy.co.uk](mailto:info@docklandsacademy.co.uk).
- ❖ Also, our staff are informed about the main aspects of the procedure in the Staff Handbooks and Staff Induction.
- ❖ The policy is reviewed and monitored on a regular basis for currency and fitness as part of our 1.9 Review and Revision of Policies and Procedures.

## 1 Purpose

The purpose of this Procedure is to describe the standards and the operational procedures to be followed by all employees when using landline or mobile telephones for internal and external calls, and for personal use.

The procedure provides guidance on when to use telephones, making and responding to calls in a way which reflects positively on both the individual and the Academy.

Any incoming (or outgoing) telephone call is potentially the first point of contact with members of the public or other connections of the Academy. The first impression given when making, and in particular when answering, a call goes a long way towards influencing the perception of the Academy's level of performance and quality of service. It is therefore important that all employees are aware of and follow these guidelines.

It is recognized that the use of mobile telephones is an essential part of working lives and access to a mobile phone may be necessary during working hours.



## **2 Responsibilities**

When using Academy's landline and mobile telephones, all users are expected to act responsibly, keeping costs to a minimum and using alternative communication tools which are provided free of charge where possible.

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 the Academy's mobile phone (which is generally used for out of hours and emergencies by the designated members of staff), and for the safe-keeping of the phone.

It is illegal to make or receive a call using a mobile telephone whilst driving if the phone is held by 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. Users are responsible for any fine or other penalty incurred for breach of legislation if using the Academy's mobile phone or "hands free" device whilst driving.

The Academy's mobile phone remains the property of the Academy and must be returned if the user leaves the Academy's employment. Failure to do so may result in the employee being charged an amount equivalent of the phone and any other charges made against the account.

If the Academy's mobile phone is lost it must be reported to a line manager as soon as possible. Staff may be required to purchase replacement handset themselves, if this loss is due negligence on the part of the user. While it is recognised that occasional personal use may be necessary, this should be kept to a minimum. Apps should not be purchased for personal use at the Academy's expense and may not be replaced or refunded if bought from personal funds and downloaded to the Academy's handset.

## **3 Standards for Making Calls**

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

International Roaming is only enabled by the Academy's mobile phone for emergencies not on the landlines.

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

Text or picture messages 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 Academy, its employees or the general public.

#### **4 Confidential Data and Information Security**

Confidential information must never be disclosed 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 not be left.

Mobile phones must be kept secure at all times, and out-of-sight whenever possible and personal smart phones setup with Academy's email accounts and/or internet-based access to Academy data, must be password protected.

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

#### **5 Personal Use**

The Academy telephones are for business use in order to assist staff in carrying out official work. It is accepted that there are occasions when making personal calls at work cannot be avoided. However, it should be remembered that abuse of a telephone system or the mobile telephone may result in disciplinary action.

Examples of acceptable personal use may include:

- Emergency calls to deal with domestic situations. For example, making alternative arrangements for childcare or checking on an unwell family member.
- Advising others of working late.
- Returning important calls from a family member.
- Calls to, for example, a bank or building society, or to arrange doctors or dentist appointments where the call cannot be made outside of the employee's normal working hours.

Personal calls should be made during recognised break times where possible thus minimising disruption to others. Where this is not possible call duration must be kept to an absolute minimum.

National rate personal calls and personal calls to any mobile network should only be made in exceptional circumstances and the duration of the call must again be kept to a minimum. Where there is evidence of a high level of personal usage which is not compliant with this



Procedure the individual responsible will be liable to pay any excess call charges and may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Academy landline and mobile telephones cannot be used under the following circumstances:

- as a contact point in personal advertisements in the media, on the internet etc.
- to call premium rate phone numbers such as those associated with competition lines, racing lines, chat rooms and etc.
- for transmitting offensive material in either voice, text or image format

## **6. Related Documents**

### **6.1 Policies**

- **1** Governance
- **6** Human Resources

### **6.2 Procedures**

- **1.5** Equal Opportunities
- **1.7** Data Protection
- **1.9** Review and Revision of Policies and Procedures
- **6.2** New Starters and Induction
- **6.3** Equality and Diversity
- **6.5** Discipline at Work
- **6.13** Staff Code of Conduct