



Mobile Phone Policy

1 INTRODUCTION

Mobile phone and smart technology use is now a routine part of everyday life. Mobile phones and other personal interactive communication devices can provide useful communication and safety functions; however, they can also create safeguarding, privacy, distraction and wellbeing risks within a school environment. Devices may provide access to messaging, social media, cameras, audio and video recording, the internet and other applications.

The school recognises that pupils need to be taught how to use technology safely and responsibly. Risks associated with mobile phones and smart technology include inappropriate content, unwanted contact, cyberbullying, sharing of images, loss of privacy and disruption to learning. The school therefore promotes a calm, safe and focused environment in which pupils do not have access to personal mobile phones during the school day, while ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for communication and safeguarding.

2 AIM

The aim of this Mobile Phone Policy is to establish clear and consistent expectations for the possession and use of mobile phones and similar smart technology in school. The policy supports safeguarding, positive behaviour, privacy, wellbeing and learning, and is intended to ensure that the school is a mobile phone-free environment throughout the school day, subject only to agreed exceptions and reasonable adjustments.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, contractors, parents, carers, visitors and other individuals who bring personal or work-related mobile phones or similar smart technology onto the school premises. It applies throughout the school day, including lessons, transitions, breaktimes and lunchtime, and to school activities where the school has responsibility for pupils. The term "mobile phone" includes smartphones and other personal interactive communication devices with similar functionality, including devices capable of sending or receiving notifications or messages over mobile networks or recording audio or video.

4 POLICY STATEMENT

The school is committed to maintaining a calm, safe and distraction-free environment. In line with current Department for Education statutory guidance, pupils must not have access to their personal mobile phones or similar smart technology during the school day. The school's approach is designed to reduce distraction and disruption, support positive behaviour and learning, and reduce opportunities for inappropriate contact, recording, image sharing or other misuse.

The school also recognises the importance of protecting pupils and staff from risks associated with the inappropriate use of mobile phones, including cyberbullying, harassment, exploitation, privacy breaches and the taking or sharing of inappropriate images or recordings.

When mobile phones or similar devices are misused, this can affect an individual's dignity, privacy, confidentiality and wellbeing. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and any concern involving a mobile phone or smart device must be dealt with promptly in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

The school will maintain a mobile phone-free environment by default. Personal mobile phones and similar devices must not be used by pupils during the school day. Staff must not use personal mobile phones for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day. School-owned devices may be used where this is authorised and appropriate for the member of staff's role.

Designated mobile-free areas within the school must be observed at all times. Personal mobile phones must not be used in areas where privacy and safeguarding are particularly important, including:

- toilets
- changing areas
- medical or first-aid areas
- any other area designated by the school

The school operates a zero-tolerance approach to the inappropriate use of personal or work-related mobile phones in these areas. Any safeguarding concern arising from the use of a mobile phone or smart device will be reported and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

5 CODE OF CONDUCT

The school promotes a consistent and professional approach to mobile phone use. All members of the school community are expected to model safe, respectful and responsible use of technology and to follow this policy consistently.

It is therefore expected that all staff and volunteers:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes inappropriate or prohibited mobile phone use.
- follow the school's expectations consistently and challenge inappropriate use appropriately.
- understand how mobile phone use can create safeguarding, privacy, behaviour and learning risks.
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid situations that could be misinterpreted or lead to allegations.
- do not use personal devices to photograph, film or record pupils or other members of the school community.
- do not use personal mobile phones to communicate directly with pupils or their families for school-related purposes.

- report concerns about inappropriate device use, images, messages or online activity promptly to the appropriate member of staff, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead where safeguarding concerns arise.

The school does not rely on informal agreements or individual discretion where this would undermine the mobile phone-free environment. Expectations are clear, proportionate and consistently applied, with reasonable adjustments and specific exceptions considered where legally or operationally necessary.

All pupils, parents, staff and visitors will be made aware of the policy and the consequences of not following it. The policy will be communicated regularly and will be applied consistently alongside the school's behaviour, safeguarding, online safety and acceptable use arrangements.

6 PROCEDURES

Personal mobile phones – pupils

Pupils are not permitted to use or have access to personal mobile phones or similar smart technology during the school day, including lessons, transitions, breaktimes and lunchtime. The school will provide a clear and consistent system for pupils who need to bring a mobile phone to school because of their journey to and from school or other agreed circumstances.

At this school, pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must hand it to the school office on arrival. The phone will be stored securely and will not be accessible to the pupil during the school day. It will be returned to the pupil at the end of the school day in accordance with the school's agreed collection arrangements.

Pupils

If a pupil is found using, accessing or attempting to access a mobile phone or similar device during the school day, the device will be dealt with, which may include confiscation and secure storage until the appropriate collection arrangements are followed. Repeated or serious breaches may result in further sanctions.

Parents, carers, visitors and contractors are expected to support the school's mobile phone-free environment. Personal mobile phones should not be used in front of pupils during the school day, except where specifically authorised or where there is an emergency. Where a call or message is necessary, it should be taken away from pupils and in accordance with the school's expectations.

Staff

Staff are permitted to have their mobile phones in their bags; however there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to allocated lunch and/or tea breaks and use must take place in one of the school's designated areas. Practitioners are not permitted, in any circumstance to use their phones for taking, recording or sharing images and 'mobile free' areas must be observed at all times. Practitioners are not permitted to use their own personal phones for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside of the setting.

All staff are expected to comply with this Mobile Phone Policy and to model appropriate and professional use of mobile phones and other personal devices at all times.

Any breach of this policy by a member of staff will be addressed promptly, fairly and consistently. The school will consider the nature and seriousness of the breach, the circumstances in which it occurred, whether there has been any previous breach, and any potential safeguarding, confidentiality, data protection or professional boundary concerns.

A breach may include, but is not limited to:

- using a personal mobile phone for personal purposes during working time, other than during authorised breaks or in agreed exceptional circumstances;
- using a personal device in the presence of pupils where this is not authorised;
- photographing, filming or recording pupils or other members of the school community using a personal device;
- using a personal mobile phone to communicate with pupils or parents/carers outside approved school systems;
- accessing, storing or sharing inappropriate, offensive or confidential material using a personal or school device;
- failing to follow the school's requirements for the secure storage or use of mobile phones;
- using a mobile phone in a designated mobile-free area;
- failing to report a safeguarding concern arising from the use of a mobile phone or other smart device; or
- deliberately disregarding or undermining the procedures set out in this policy.

Where a breach is identified, the matter will normally be discussed with the member of staff by the Head of School or Assistant Head of School or an appropriate member of the senior leadership team. The school will establish the facts and determine the appropriate response.

Minor or inadvertent breaches may be addressed through an informal reminder, clarification of expectations, or management guidance. Repeated breaches, deliberate breaches, or more serious breaches may result in formal action under the school's disciplinary procedure.

Any breach involving safeguarding, inappropriate images or recordings, confidentiality, data protection, contact with pupils, or other conduct that may place a child or member of the school community at risk will be treated as a serious matter and referred immediately to the appropriate senior leader and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where appropriate, the school will follow its safeguarding, disciplinary, data protection and other relevant procedures.

Where a staff member is found to have breached this policy, the school may require additional training, supervision or monitoring to ensure that expectations are understood and consistently followed.

All staff are expected to cooperate fully with any investigation into an alleged breach. Nothing in this policy prevents the school from taking immediate action where necessary to protect pupils, staff or the wider school community.

The application of this policy will be consistent with the school's disciplinary procedures, safeguarding arrangements, staff code of conduct and other relevant policies. Staff will not be subject to disciplinary action without appropriate consideration of the circumstances and the opportunity to respond to any allegation.

- The school will ensure that the policy is applied consistently across classrooms, communal areas, the playground, dining areas, school trips and other activities for which the school has responsibility, subject to agreed exceptions and reasonable adjustments.
- The Head of School or delegated senior leader will have oversight of the policy's implementation and will review its effectiveness regularly. Any concerns about inconsistent enforcement, repeated breaches or emerging safeguarding risks will be addressed promptly and may result in amendments to procedures or additional staff training.
- School leaders will monitor implementation through staff feedback, behaviour records, safeguarding records where relevant, pupil and parent feedback, and direct observation of practice. Any patterns of inconsistent implementation will be addressed through staff communication, reminders, supervision or training.
- Reasonable adjustments and agreed exceptions will be recorded and communicated on a need-to-know basis so that relevant staff understand what has been agreed and apply it consistently. Exceptions will specify the circumstances, times, location and arrangements for access and will be reviewed regularly.
- The policy and procedures will be communicated clearly to pupils and parents/carers at the beginning of each academic year and whenever there is a significant change. The school will make clear how parents/carers can contact the school during the day and how urgent communication with a pupil will be facilitated.
- All staff, including supply staff, temporary staff, volunteers and other adults working with pupils, will be made aware of the policy and the practical procedures for enforcement. New staff will receive the relevant information as part of their induction.
- Where a device is confiscated, the school will ensure that it is stored securely and returned only in accordance with the school's published procedures. Staff will not retain devices unnecessarily.
- The school will apply consequences for breaches. Consequences will be proportionate, clearly communicated and applied consistently. Repeated or serious breaches will be escalated and may include parent or carer contact and arrangements for the device to be collected by a parent or carer where this is the school's agreed response.
- The contents of a pupil's phone must not be inspected routinely. Where there is a safeguarding concern involving a device, including concerns about images, messages, bullying, harassment, exploitation or inappropriate online contact, the matter must be referred promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in line with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- If a pupil refuses to hand over a device, the matter should be dealt with using the school's normal behaviour and escalation procedures. Staff should not enter into a prolonged confrontation. A member of the senior leadership team should be informed where the pupil does not comply or where there are repeated breaches.
- If a pupil is seen using, holding, accessing or attempting to access a mobile phone or similar device, the member of staff should calmly instruct the pupil to hand the device over. The device should then be secured and the incident recorded.
- All staff are expected to use the same approach when a breach occurs. Staff should not ignore, negotiate or make informal exceptions to the policy unless an agreed individual exception or reasonable adjustment applies.
- At the end of the school day, devices will be returned in accordance with the school's agreed collection arrangements. Staff will ensure that the process is orderly and that pupils do not regain access to their devices before the school day has ended.
- Pupils will not be permitted to retrieve or access their device at breaktime, lunchtime, during transitions, during lessons or while participating in school activities during the school day.
- The school office will maintain a secure system for receiving, storing and returning devices.

- At the start of the school day, any pupil bringing a mobile phone or similar device to school will hand it to the school office in accordance with the school's agreed arrival arrangements. The device will be switched off or placed in an appropriate secure state and stored securely. It will not be returned during the school day.

The following procedures will be followed consistently across the school:

The school will implement this policy as a whole-school expectation. The Head of School, senior leaders, teachers and all other staff are responsible for applying the policy consistently and for supporting one another to maintain a mobile phone-free environment throughout the school day.

Implementation, consistency and enforcement

Volunteers, Contractors, Agency Workers

All volunteers, contractors, agency workers and other individuals working on behalf of or within the school are expected to comply fully with this Mobile Phone Policy and to model appropriate, professional and responsible use of mobile phones and other personal devices.

Any breach of this policy will be addressed promptly, fairly and consistently. The school will consider the nature and seriousness of the breach, the circumstances in which it occurred, whether there have been any previous concerns, and whether the breach has created or could have created a safeguarding, confidentiality, data protection, privacy or professional boundary concern.

Minor or inadvertent breaches may be addressed through an informal reminder of the school's expectations and, where appropriate, additional guidance or instruction.

Repeated, deliberate or more serious breaches may result in the individual being required to stop using their personal device while on the school premises or during school activities and may result in the withdrawal of permission to work or volunteer within the school.

Where a contractor or agency worker is involved, the school may also inform the relevant employer, organisation or commissioning body and take appropriate action in accordance with the terms of the relevant agreement or contract.

Where a volunteer is involved, the school may review or withdraw the volunteer's placement or access to the school, in accordance with the school's volunteer arrangements.

Any breach involving safeguarding, inappropriate images or recordings, unauthorised contact with pupils, confidentiality, data protection or any behaviour that may place a child or member of the school community at risk will be treated as a serious matter. The concern must be reported immediately to the appropriate senior leader and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Where necessary, the school may restrict or suspend an individual's access to the school while a concern is being considered or investigated. This will be a protective measure and will not, in itself, constitute a finding that a breach has occurred.

All volunteers and contractors are expected to cooperate fully with any investigation into an alleged breach and to comply with any reasonable instruction issued by the school in relation to mobile phone use.

The school will apply this policy consistently to volunteers, contractors, agency workers and other individuals working within the school, while taking account of the individual's role, responsibilities and contractual or volunteering arrangements.

Work mobile phone

The use of a designated school/work mobile phone is permitted where it supports the safe and effective operation of the school, for example:

- as an emergency communication device for educational visits and off-site activities.
- as an authorised communication aid for school business, including appropriate calls and messages.
- as a contingency communication method where the school's main telephone or other approved communication systems are unavailable.

Work mobile phones must be password protected where appropriate, stored securely and only accessed by authorised staff. Staff must follow the school's data protection, safeguarding and acceptable use requirements when using any work device.

Personal calls or messages must not normally be made or sent using a work mobile phone. In an emergency or other agreed exceptional circumstance, use may be permitted by an appropriate member of staff. Any use involving safeguarding or pupil contact must be recorded and managed in accordance with school procedures where appropriate.

Where a work mobile phone has camera, recording, messaging or other smart functions, these must only be used for legitimate school purposes and in accordance with the school's safeguarding, data protection and acceptable use requirements. Personal use is not permitted.

Driving

Any member of staff driving for work purposes must comply with the law and the school's health and safety requirements. A mobile phone must not be held or used while driving. Staff should ensure that devices are safely secured and that calls or messages are dealt with only when safely parked, unless an emergency requires contact with the emergency services.

Staff must not drive while using a handheld mobile phone. The school also expects staff to avoid unnecessary phone use while driving, including where a hands-free or wireless system is available, because this may still create distraction and risk.

Safe storage

A designated secure area will be provided for the storage of pupils' mobile phones during the school day. Staff should also follow the school's arrangements for the secure storage of personal belongings and mobile phones. Where pupils' phones are handed to the school, reasonable steps will be taken to keep them secure until they are returned.

Pupils and staff are responsible for following the school's storage arrangements. Personal devices should be password protected where possible. The school will deal with any reported loss or damage in accordance with its normal procedures and the circumstances of the incident.

The storage arrangements support safeguarding, reduce disruption and distraction, and help protect pupils and staff from allegations or concerns arising from inappropriate use of personal devices.

Emergency contact and exceptions

The school recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances in which access to a mobile phone or similar device may be necessary. Parents and carers should contact the school office during the school day rather than contacting pupils directly on their mobile phones.

Exceptions for individual pupils may be agreed where there is a specific safeguarding, medical, SEND or other legitimate need, or where a reasonable adjustment is required. Any exception will be agreed by an appropriate member of the school leadership team, recorded where appropriate, and will specify when, where and how the device may be accessed. Exceptions will be kept to the minimum necessary and reviewed regularly.

The school office telephone and other approved communication systems remain available for urgent and emergency contact. Staff should follow the school's emergency and safeguarding procedures when an urgent concern arises.

Where a pupil needs to contact a parent or carer during the school day, this will normally be facilitated through the school office or another approved school communication system. Any safeguarding concern relating to a mobile phone, online contact, image or message must be reported immediately in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.