



Mobile Phone Policy

Person(s) Responsible: Headteacher

Formally adopted by the Governing Body: March 2024

Review date: March 2025

This policy also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

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1. Rationale and aims

Rationale

The governors, staff and School Council of Biggin Hill Primary School recognise that staff, volunteers, parents and many students own a mobile phone. The use of mobile phones has become a key aspect of many people's lives and do not just simply serve the purpose of taking and receiving calls, this includes the ability to take photographs. However this brings many risks that we must protect all staff and children against while at school. The policy sets out clear expectations that must be adhered to so that all stakeholders are safe and the use of mobile phones does not impact on the education offered to children at our school.

We also recognise that some parents/guardians request that their child/ren bring a mobile phone to school for before and after school safety/security reasons. Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. Therefore the school strongly discourages the bringing of mobile phones to school by students. The school is prepared to allow mobile phones on the premises but only within the parameters of the policy as stated below.

Aims

- To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones at our school.
- To outline the procedures and processes of this policy.
- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers.
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issue
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phones

During teaching time, while on playground duty and during meetings, mobile phones will be switched off or put on 'silent' or 'discrete' mode and stored in a secure place. The school cannot take responsibility for the safety of staff mobile phones. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

Staff will be advised to:

- Ensure that Bluetooth or other forms of communication (such as 'airdrop') are hidden or disabled during lesson times.
- Ensure that any content bought onto site via mobile phones and personal devices are compatible with their professional role and expectations.

Members of staff are not permitted to use their own personal phones or devices for contacting learners or parents and carers. Any pre-existing relationships, which could undermine this, will be discussed with the DSL (or deputy).

The taking of pictures on mobile phones of children is not permitted at any time. Teachers are all provided with chromebooks with a camera that should be used for this purpose or school digital cameras.

If a member of staff breaches our policy, action will be taken in line with our code of conduct/staff behaviour and allegations policy.

If a member of staff is thought to have illegal content saved or stored on a mobile phone or personal device or has committed a criminal offence, the police will be contacted.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process anyone else's personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found in our Data Protection Policy and our Online Safety Policy.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils.

3.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- During times of remote learning

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office
- Staff will use 141 to conceal personal information

3.5 Work phones

The school has a mobile phone which can be taken on external school visits.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use the school phone, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

In general, children should not bring valuable items to school, as they can be easily lost or stolen, which is often distressing for a primary age child. Children remain responsible for all of their personal effects whilst at school.

Year 6 pupils may bring mobile devices into school, but are not permitted to use them during the school day. Mobile phones are kept in a tray in the classroom and are given back to pupils at the end of the day. Phones may only be used when a child is not on school premises. Children are advised that if they bring a mobile phone onto the school grounds during the school day, their parents need to complete the Mobile Phone Permission Slip.

When students enter the school grounds the school takes no responsibility for mobile phones. Mobile phones are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency the school office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.

Any use of mobile devices in school by pupils must be in line with the Acceptable Use Agreement in our Online Safety Policy (see appendices 1 and 2). This must be given to the class teacher on the first day that they bring in their phone.

4.1 Sanctions

Any breach of the Acceptable Use Agreement by a pupil may trigger disciplinary action in line with the school behaviour policy, which may result in the confiscation of their device.

Any child who does not follow the policy will have their mobile phone confiscated and handed to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will contact the parent to arrange the return of the phone. A repeat offence will lead to the child being refused permission to bring their phone to school.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. Staff have the power to search a pupil's phone if a member of staff believes the phone contains pornographic images, or it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils
- During times when parents are invited into school to spend time in classrooms or join in with children's work mobile phones are not permitted. Staff must challenge parents who do not follow this policy
- During special assemblies that parents are invited to attend, parents are permitted to take photographs of their children but must ensure they do not publish any pictures other than their own child on social media (this includes WhatsApp) or upload to public spaces on the internet

Parents, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil.

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

Parents must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while children are present.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the safe in the school office.

Lost phones should be returned to the office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

7. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from pupils, parents and teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education and the local authority.

8. Links with other policies

This online safety policy is linked to our:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- Complaints procedure
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Social Media policy

9. Appendix 1: Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Agreement for pupils

Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Agreement for Pupils and Permission Slip

1. Pupils are not allowed to use mobile phones on school premises and if a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either pupils or staff, this will be regarded as a serious offence and the pupils will be dealt with via the school's behaviour policy. If images of staff or pupils have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupils until the images have been removed in the presence of a senior teacher.
2. Pupils must not view or share harmful content.
3. Pupils are not entitled to log on to the school network using their mobile phones or other personal electronic devices.
4. Mobile phones are to be kept in a tray in the classroom and are given back to pupils at the end of the day. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
5. Pupils must avoid sharing their contact details with people they don't know, and must not share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Pupils must not share their phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
7. When students enter the school grounds, the school takes no responsibility for mobile phones. Mobile phones are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.
8. Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency the school office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.
9. Any breach of the acceptable use agreement by a pupil may trigger disciplinary action in line with the school behaviour policy, which may result in the confiscation of their device. The Headteacher will contact the parent to arrange the return of the phone. A repeat offence will lead to the child being refused permission to bring their phone to school.

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Class:	
Parent(s) name(s):	

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its acceptable use agreement. The school reserves the right to revoke permission if pupils don't abide by the policy.

Parent signature: _____

Pupil signature: _____

10. Appendix 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones in our school

Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds.
Please do not use phones where pupils are present.
Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff.
Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils.
The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.
A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

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