



# Mobile Technology Policy

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Approved by Head Teacher

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# Mobile Technology Policy

## Rationale:

Developments in mobile technology have been rapid in recent years, meaning that mobile phones (and other personal devices) can now do much more than make voice calls. Integrated cameras, video messaging, mobile access to the internet and location-based services are now commonplace, allowing access to a whole array of new content and services.

Children and young people have always been keen to grasp the opportunities offered by new technology and, with increasing rates of ownership at an ever lower age, mobile phones are no exception. However, as with any technology, there are associated risks: children and young people need to understand the issues and develop appropriate strategies and behaviours for keeping themselves safe.

This policy is based on the Be-Smart guideline and relates to personal mobile devices (eg phones, laptops, iPods, iPhones, MP3 players, memory sticks, DSs).

There may be times when students are photographed as part of normal school activity. Any parent not wishing their child to be included in this should make this known to the school in writing. This includes photos for display around the school, on our website or newsletter and in the local press.

This policy outlines the acceptable use of mobile technology.

## Aims of this policy:

- To inform staff, students and parents about safe mobile technology use in school.
- To ensure staff, students and parents are familiar with the school policy on student use of personal mobile technology in school.
- To highlight the child protection issues of using camera and video phone technology in the school.
- To counter the use of text messaging in school as a form of bullying.
- To determine exactly when and where mobile phone use is permitted in the school.
- Offer safety guidelines to the students/staff on general mobile phone use.
- To outline the consequences of not adhering to the school mobile technology policy.
- To outline who has responsibility in the case of loss, theft or damage of mobile technology.

## Staff Use: (this means School Staff, Volunteers and Governors)

- The school allows staff to bring in personal mobile phones and devices for their own use.
- Staff may only use personal mobile devices in the staff room or in their own office.
- Staff are advised to use passwords/pin-codes to ensure their phone cannot be used by an unauthorised person.
- The school expects staff to lead by example. Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, mobile phones should be switched off and left in a safe place during lesson times.
- In exceptional circumstances, e.g family emergency, staff should seek permission from SMT to use their personal mobile device when in contact with students.
- Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or personal email addresses to students, parents or carers.
- Staff personal mobile phones may be used on off site visits to contact the school or emergency services only.
- Staff should not contact students or parents from their personal mobile phone in or out of school time,

or give their mobile phone number to students or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, a school telephone should be used. This is unless teachers are having to work from home during the coronavirus pandemic and would need to contact parents/children to check on their wellbeing – in this instant, staff would need to precede any phone call with a blocking system so their phone number is not shared with parents/carers. E.g. 141

- Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or students, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.
- Staff are not permitted to take photos or videos of students on personal mobile devices.
- Only the mobile devices belonging to school may be used to take appropriate and relevant images of students, e.g. for observations/school events. Personal mobile devices should not be used, unless authorised by a member of SMT. These images should be downloaded and then deleted from personal mobile devices. Staff should not allow themselves to be photographed by a student(s).
- Staff bringing personal devices into school must ensure there is no inappropriate or illegal content on the device.
- Whilst school staff are encouraged to download the NHS Test and Trace App to their personal devices to support contact tracing, there is no need for personal devices to remain switched on or to be carried upon the staff member's person for the purposes of Test and Trace. Staff are advised to pause the app upon arrival school and store their phone in the usual way. In the event of a school based contact of a staff member testing positive for COVID-19, existing school protocols would enable close contact to be traced as guided by Public Health.
- This includes:
  - staff members avoiding skin to skin contact with students
  - staff members avoiding congregating in areas where social distancing cannot be maintained such as staff rooms
  - seating plans in place for all lessons being adhered to
  - children being organised into bubbles and contact between bubbles kept to a minimum
  - staff members who teach across bubbles maintained a distance of 2m from students wherever possible.

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for member of staff and the school. Any breach of school policy may result in disciplinary action against that member of staff.

### **Student Use:**

- As there is no legitimate use for mobiles on school premises, students may not use them for any purpose whilst on the school premises and must hand them in at reception/ school office on arrival for safekeeping.
- Students who ignore this policy and use of a mobile on school premises will be required to hand over their phone to a member of staff. Parents will be contacted to inform them that this has happened and asked to collect it from the school office.
- If a member of staff of the school has any suspicion that a mobile phone has unsuitable material stored on it, students will be required to hand over the phone to a member of staff and parents will be asked to collect it from a senior member of staff. In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the phone will be handed over to the police for further investigation. Parents will need to recover the phone from the police in such circumstances.
- Students remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses.
- Any failure to comply with the above guidelines may result in normal disciplinary action being taken up to and including the consideration of permanent exclusion of the student concerned.
- On off-site visits, student may not use personal mobile devices.

- Parents should be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to students having mobiles in terms of personal safety, there are also some associated risks such as potential for theft, bullying and inappropriate contact, including grooming by unsuitable persons.
- If a student needs to contact his/her parents/carers they will be allowed to use a school phone.
- If parents need to contact students they should contact the school and a message will be relayed promptly.

### **Parents, Visitors and Contractors Use:**

- Parents, visitors and contractors will be asked to hand in their mobile device at reception on arrival.
- Parents/carers are not permitted to take photos/videos during assemblies or other school performances as the school is unable to make sure photos are not edited or put on social media websites.
- School Photographers will be treated as any other visitor and appropriate levels of supervision will be in place at all times.
- Any individual bringing a personal device onto school premises, must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

### **Responsibility for mobile phones and other mobile devices**

The school accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile technology. It is the responsibility of staff, parents, students and visitors to make sure that mobile technology is properly insured.

### **Inappropriate or illegal content:**

Where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may be unsuitable and may constitute evidence relating to a criminal offence, the 'Allegations of Abuse' process will be followed (please refer to the school's 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy').

Staff, students or volunteers remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses.

### **Related Policies and guidance:**

Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings (April 2020)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021)

Guidance for schools and other establishments on the use of images (July 2019)

Data Protection: A toolkit for schools, DfE, (August 2018)