

Mobile phone and smart technology policy

Berry Hill Primary School



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1. Introduction and aims

At Berry Hill Primary School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- › Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- › Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers and volunteers

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

- › Risks to child protection
- › Data protection issues
- › 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 DSL team is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

2.2 Governors

Governors will review the policy, including any amendments, every 2 years.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phones

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. 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 staffroom).

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.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information that makes children personally identifiable, including

entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents/carers 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/carers or pupils.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment. If there is ever a need to use personal equipment due to a lack of school equipment or if school equipment would not be suitable, this must be approved by the headteacher and should be deleted once the photograph / recording has been transferred to a school device (this needs to happen on the same day).

DSLs with enhanced access to CPOMS will need to use their personal mobile phone to authenticate their entry. As a result, they will sometimes need to use their phone in the presence of pupils, but this should be done quickly, with the device put away as soon as completed.

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

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, unless they have permission from the headteacher.

- › Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If possible contact must be made via the school office
- › It is strongly advised that school devices are used where possible or calls are made through the school office, but if not accessible, staff should turn off their caller ID to hide their personal number before making a call. This can usually be achieved through changing the settings on the phone.

3.5 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

- › Pupils are allowed to bring a mobile to school in the following circumstances:
 - Travelling to school by themselves
 - Young carers who need to be contactable
- › Pupils must not use their phones while on the premises, unless prior arrangements have been made with the headteacher. All phones must be handed to their teacher on entry to the classroom, which will be stored in a box. They must be turned off, unless prior permission has been given to keep the phone switched on (e.g. a young carer awaiting a call). Mobile phones can be collected at the end of the school day, but should not be switched on until exiting the site.

Pupils must adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

4.1 Sanctions

If pupils are in breach of this policy:

- › Phones will be confiscated and parents / carers will be informed to come to collect the phone from the school office (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- › If phones are confiscated, they will be collected by a member of SLT, who will hold the phone securely until it can be collect by a child's parent/ carer.

- › If a child's phone is confiscated, they will also receive a red card for not following school policy.
- › Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). Staff will search a pupil's phone if they have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being / has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

If staff, pupils or parents / carers find inappropriate content on a phone, or if they suspect inappropriate behaviour, they must report it to a DSL who will then conduct an investigation to determine next steps. Staff who are not DSL trained must not conduct an investigation. Staff are also reminded to never look at pornographic imagery on a phone if the concern is of this nature. Report this immediately to a DSL.

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 smart watches by staff

- › Use of phones (including receiving/sending texts and emails on smart watches and mobile phones) should be limited to noncontact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- › It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions of their phone/smart watch.
- › Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Head teacher aware of this and arrangements will be made with the school office so that the emergency call can be received.

- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones/smart watches, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and ipads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher.

7. Use of smart watches by pupils

We recognise that mobile phones/smart watches are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others.

Smart watches should not be brought to school; they may be valuable and could be lost or stolen. Where a pupil is found to be in unauthorised possession of a mobile phone/smart watch, the phone/watch will be confiscated by the Headteacher, locked away in the school office and returned only to the parent/carer.

Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents/carers, 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 taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent from all parents/carers of children in the photograph.
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents/carers, 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/carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

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

Parents/carers 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/carers 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.

8. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use.

Phones should be labelled with a sticky label, or a label tucked into a clear phone case.

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. 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.

Pupils, parents / carers will be made aware of our policy on mobile phones through:

- › Signs up in the school entryway or office
- › Visible access to this policy through the school website.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a secure location/locked cabinet.

Schools that confiscate phones from pupils become responsible for the phone, and can be held responsible for loss, theft, or damage. Adapt the statement above to explain where and how confiscated phones will be stored, and who is responsible for them.

All schools continue with:

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

9. Monitoring and review

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

- › Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- › Feedback from teachers
- › Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- › Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

School Governors will approve this policy before implementation.

8. Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils

Acceptable use agreement

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or in areas where other pupils might be getting changed. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store these appropriately, or turn them over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

9. Appendix 2: Permission form for pupils to use mobile phones during lessons

PUPIL AND LESSON DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Date:	
Class/lesson details:	

PURPOSE

Pupil agreement

I understand that I am being allowed to use my phone during lesson time as part of an educational or class activity.

I will not use my phone for any other purpose than the one listed above. If my teacher, or any other member of staff, finds that I'm using my phone for any other reason, I understand that it will be confiscated.

I understand that the school's acceptable use agreement on the use of mobile phones still applies.

Pupil signature: _____

Teacher signature: _____

10. Appendix 3: 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. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staff room or a quiet area out of view of pupils, such as an office or the resource room.
- › 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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