

Mobile Phone & Smart Devices Policy

Meare Village Primary School



Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: 1 March 2023
Last reviewed:	1 March 2023	
Next review due by:	January 2024	

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1. Introduction and aims

At Meare Village Primary School we recognise that mobile phones and smart devices, including smart watches, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community. Mobile phones, alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance; however, there are also associated risks. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use.
- Set clear acceptable use guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers
- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors.
- Deliver an effective approach to online safety, which empowers us to protect and educate the whole school community in its use of technology.
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate.
- Support the school's other policies, especially the Online (e-safety) Safety Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

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

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones on site and during off-site visits including residential trips and sporting fixtures. This includes Meare Village Primary School's staff, Governors, children, parents/carers and visitors.

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

2.2 Governors

The Governors are responsible for the approval of the Mobile Phone and Smart Devices Policy and for reviewing the effectiveness of the policy.

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 in child-accessible spaces during the school day (08:30-15:15). This includes through use of smart watches and other personal internet-enabled devices.

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 offices and staff room). Non-contact staff (e.g. HR, administration, finance) are permitted to keep mobile devices in offices, but must not be carried on their person or used in child-accessible spaces.

Smart watches that are not camera enabled may be worn in school and should be kept on airplane mode or similar to prevent incoming messages from displaying.

Staff should leave their mobile phone at home, in the car, at the school office, or in the staff room, where they should be kept in bags or in pigeon holes.

There may be circumstances in where a member of staff needs to be available 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

School staff should use the school office number as a point of emergency contact.

Any exceptional circumstances should be consulted with a member of SLT and permission may be given to keep a mobile phone away from pupils in a locked drawer or cupboard (e.g. for a medical need).

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.

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.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils 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.

In the event that school equipment cannot be used (e.g. on a school trip/ residential, equipment failure) permission may be given from SLT to use a mobile phone.

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, 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.

3.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, 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.

3.6 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, provided that they have signed permission in advance from their parent or carer and this has been agreed by a teacher or member of SLT. Permission may be granted in the event that pupils are:
 - Travelling to school by themselves
 - Young carers who need to be contactable
 - All mobile phones must be handed to the class teacher to be placed in the teacher's cupboard. Phones should be on airplane mode or switched off. They can only disable airplane mode or switch them on once out of the school gates
- › No mobile phones should be on a pupil's person or belongings during the school day, unless permission has been granted in advance by a member of SLT for exceptional circumstances. The correct permission form in Appendix 2 should be signed.
- › Pupil mobile phones are not permitted on school trips or residential.
- › Smart watches (and other personal devices) with cameras are not permitted in school.

4.1 Online Safety

At Meare, we educate children about Online Safety (see our Online Safety Policy) through: computing curriculum; Internet Safety Day; NSPCC assemblies; and weekly tips and hints in whole-school assembly. Parents receive support in our fortnightly newsletter about safe internet use at home and how to control setting on devices that children have access to.

Older pupils will receive lessons on safe and correct use of personal electronic devices and social media more generally, to encourage healthy interactions with mobile phones beyond school.

4.2 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy:

- Phones will be confiscated (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#))
- If they are confiscated, parents or guardians will need to attend school to collect them
- If the school has reason to believe that a pupil phone carried onto the school site or handed into the office contains pornographic images, or is being/ has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury, staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#).

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)
- Up-skirting
- 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) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while in child-accessible spaces during the school day (08:30-15:15). 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 offices and staff room).

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. Usually, the school office will ask parents, visitors and volunteers if they can leave their mobile phone at the school office, where it will be kept in a locked drawer and returned to them when they leave.

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.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must have prior permission from a parent or guardian and ensure that phones are handed in to the school office to be stored securely before they enter the school site.

Permission forms can be found in Appendix 3.

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.

Pupils and parents will be made aware of this via:

- Signs in the school entryway or office
- Disclaimers in permission forms for bringing a phone to school

Confiscated phones will be stored in the office in a locked drawer/ cabinet. Headteachers and members of SLT will be responsible for ensuring that confiscated phones are kept in this safe and secure location.

Lost phones should be returned to the school 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 parents 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
- Feedback and review from the governors and Board of Directors

8. Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for staff and volunteers

Staff and Volunteer Acceptable Use Policy

School Policy

This Acceptable Use Policy reflects the school Online Safety Policy. The school will ensure that staff and volunteers will have access to technology to enable efficient and effective working enabling learning opportunities for pupils and will, in return, expect staff and volunteers to agree to be responsible users.

Scope of Policy

This Acceptable User Policy (AUP) policy applies to staff, volunteers and guests who have access to and are users of school technology systems, school related use of technology systems outside of school, and make use of social networks personally and professionally.

My Responsibilities

I agree to:

- read, understand, sign and act in accordance with the school Online Safety Policy
- report any suspected misuse or concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- monitor technology activity in lessons, extracurricular and extended school activities, including awareness of any access to extremist views
- model the safe and effective use of technology
- demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct especially in relation to use of social networks, making sure that these are in line with school ethos and policies especially at the time of a Critical Incident

Education

I agree to:

- provide age-appropriate online safety learning opportunities as part of a progressive online safety curriculum; and reinforce the learning throughout the school's curriculum
- respect copyright and educate the pupils to respect it as well
- teach about the need for using responsible and caring language when communicating with others

Training

I agree to:

- participate in online safety training
- request training if I identify an opportunity to improve my professional abilities

Online bullying

I agree to:

- ensure the school's zero tolerance of bullying. In this context, online bullying is seen as no different to other types of bullying
- report any incidents of bullying in accordance with school procedures

Sexting

- I will secure and switch off any device discovered with a sexting image and report immediately to the safeguarding lead.

- I will not investigate, delete or resend the image.

Prevent

- I will continually develop children's ability to evaluate information accessed online.
- I will follow the agreed reporting procedure where children are purposefully searching for inappropriate sites or inadvertently accessing inappropriate sites.

Technical Infrastructure

I understand that the school will monitor my use of computing devices and the internet. Unless I have permission, I will not try to by-pass any of the technical security measures that have been put in place by the school which include:

- the proxy or firewall settings of the school network
- not having the rights to install software on a computer
- not using removable media e.g. memory sticks

Passwords

- I will only use my own passwords
- I will never log another user onto the system using my login

Filtering

- I will not try to by-pass the filtering system used by the school
- If I am granted special access to sites that are normally filtered I will not leave my computer unsupervised
- I will report any filtering issues immediately

Data Protection

- I understand my responsibilities towards the data protection regulations and will ensure the safe keeping of personal and sensitive personal data at all times.
- I will ensure that all data held in personal folders is regularly backed up and kept secure.

Use of digital images, video and sound

- I will follow the school's policy on using digital images, video and sound, especially in making sure that only those pupils whose parental permission has been given are published.
- I will not use personal devices for taking or sharing digital images or sound.

Communication

- I will be professional in all my communications and actions when using school technology systems.
- I understand that I need to be open and transparent in all my communications.

Email

- I will use the school provided email for all business matters.
- I will not open any attachments to emails, unless the source is known and trusted (due to the risk of the attachment containing viruses or other harmful programmes).

Social Media and Personal Publishing

- I will ask permission before I use social media e.g. blogs, social networks or online communication tools with pupils or for other school related work. These will never be my personal accounts.
- I will check with the SLT before I use sites/apps with learner log ins to ensure that any pupil

personal data is being held securely.

- I will follow the online safety policy concerning the personal use of social media, never publishing disparaging or harmful comments or expressing extreme views. These are considered to bring the school into disrepute
- I will not post any comments about the school, any pupil, employer or colleagues on any personal social networking and publishing accounts
- When there is a Critical Incident, I will not post any comments online.

Mobile phones

- I will not have on my person or use a personal mobile phone during contact time with pupils. They will be stored in personal vehicles, in the allocated drawer of the school main office, in the staff room, or left at home. They will not be stored in classroom drawers, cupboards etc. during the school day, unless permission has been given by SLT for exceptional circumstances.
- I will not wear smart watches (or other personal devices) with camera capabilities. Smart watches with messaging capabilities will be worn on airplane mode.
- I will check that any personal devices left in the designated areas are switched off or on silent mode.
- I will not use my personal devices to contact pupils or parents.
- I am responsible for any use of my own 3G/4G data during agreed times and ensuring that my use complies with the school's online safety policy

Reporting incidents

- I will report and record any incidents relating to online safety to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and check actions taken have been recorded
- I understand that in some cases the Police may need to be informed.

Sanctions and Disciplinary procedures

- I understand that there are regulations in place when pupils use technology and will apply sanctions if they do not follow the rules.
- I understand that if I misuse the School technology systems in any way then there are disciplinary procedures that will be followed by the school.

I have read and understand the full School online safety policy and agree to use the school technology systems (both in and out of school) and my own devices (in school and when carrying out communications related to the school) in a responsible and professional manner as outlined in that document.

Staff/Volunteer Name _____

Signed _____

Date _____

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

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

PURPOSE

Parent/ pupil agreement

I understand that my child is being allowed to use my phone during lesson time due to exceptional circumstances.

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

I understand that Meare Village Primary School's acceptable use, online safety and mobile phone and smart devices policies on the use of mobile phones still applies.

Parent/ carer signature: _____

Teacher signature: _____

10. Appendix 3: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow the above pupil to bring his/her/their mobile phone to school because he/she/they:

- Travels to and from school alone
- Other

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school’s policy on the use of mobile phones, and sign their phone into the school office before they enter the school site. The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

The school reserves the right revoke permission if pupils don’t abide by the policy.

Parent signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	