

Mobile Phone Policy

February 2023

Federation of Boldmere Schools



Version: February 2023

Ratified by the Governing Body:

Signed by the Governing Body: Chair: Mr. Greg Bloom

To be reviewed: February 2025

1. Introduction and aims

At the Federation of Boldmere Schools we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, 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. As with e-safety issues generally, risks to children and young people can be broadly categorised under the headings of content, contact and conduct and managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

This advice also applies to the use of devices such as Smart watches in which a watch may receive calls, messages and also take photos and videos.

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. It is also recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

When mobile phones are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile phones is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

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 and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection, safeguarding, code of conduct 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 issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage

➤ Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

In the interests of equality, and to further promote safety, the following guidance applies to any individual who has a mobile phone on site, including children, parents and visitors, as detailed listed above.

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 Executive Head Teacher, Head of Schools and Assistant Head Teachers are responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

2.2 Governors

Governors are responsible for reviewing and agreeing this policy.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phones

1. Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are permitted to have their mobile phones about their person; however there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to allocated lunch, play times if not on duty and allocated non-contact time.
2. Other than in exceptional circumstances (see below) agreed by senior members of staff, phones must be switched off or on silent and calls and texts must not be taken or made during learning time.
3. 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

When awaiting vital appointment information

4. Staff are not permitted to use their own personal phones for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside of the setting, unless with the agreed permission of senior leaders on a case by case basis and where there is no alternative.
5. Mobile phones should be stored so they are not visible to the children for reasons of professionalism and as a way of protecting the staff.

3.2 Data protection

See school's data protection policy or ICT acceptable use 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.

Staff are not permitted, unless agreed with senior leaders in school on a case by case basis, to use their phones for taking, recording or sharing images of any child. Where agreement has been given, this is subject to the usual parental permissions and on the condition that images are deleted promptly after the event.

Designated mobile free areas: A zero-tolerance policy is in place with regards to the use of personal or work-related mobiles by any individual in these areas:

Changing areas – (classrooms whilst children are changing for activities)

Toilets.

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
- Accessing their emails for matters relating to work

In exceptional circumstances, such as on line parents' evenings or educational trips, emergencies staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office or 141 will be used to block the staff's number from the phone.

3.5 Sanctions

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

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils (Junior School Only)

Pupils in year 6 are permitted to bring their phones into school

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, and are stored in our mobile phone boxes which are kept securely.

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.

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

4.1 Sanctions

- Phones which are found to be used by pupils during school hours may be taken from a pupil and kept securely until the end of the day. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#))

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 contractors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones in where doing so causes either impacts on learning or poses a safeguarding concern. Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children in order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others. Under no circumstances is any individual permitted to take images or make recordings on a mobile phone. Any individual bringing a personal device into the setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

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 taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child (Photography and Filming Policy)
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

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. (*Refer to our Safeguarding visitor leaflet*)

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

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones of children, parents or staff 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.

Schools that confiscate phones from pupils become responsible for the phone, and can be held responsible for loss, theft, or damage.

Lost phones should be returned to the main 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 of 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

Should anyone witness a member of staff, parent, visitor, contractor, governor or adult in The Federation of Boldmere Schools breaching this policy they are bound to report it to the school's senior leadership team or in their absence, the most senior member of staff.

8. Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils

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

1. All phones should be handed in to class teachers to be stored in the school office throughout the working day.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
4. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
5. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
6. 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
7. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
8. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
9. 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.
10. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
11. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or turn over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
12. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment.

10. Appendix 2: 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 [pupil name] to bring [his/her] mobile phone to school because [he/she]:

- Travels to and from school alone
- Is a young carer

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones.

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:	

11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone 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 and in keeping with other relevant filming and photography policies)
- 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.
