

Mobile Phone Policy

Burton Road Primary School



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1. Introduction and aims

At Burton Road School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, 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 safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors 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 issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently 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 governing body are responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly, and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DFE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. This section of the policy outlines how this is applicable at Burton Road School.

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, 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, SLT Room, private office).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members
- Other urgent contact by dependents or family members
- Household emergencies or other urgent, private matters that are deemed acceptable by the headteacher

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

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process 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 information on data protection can be found within our data protection policy.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give 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.

There may be exceptions where staff are part of communities and groups, as part of their own, or their children's, social activities. However, these must remain distinctly separate from school related matters and business and there must be no crossover between the two.

Further details regarding these guidelines are evident in our Acceptable Use Policy.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that 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.

Where staff use classroom apps or programmes that require the use of a member of staff's mobile phones then these must be declared to the SLT.

Staff may use mobile phones for secure two factor authentication on databases such as CPOMs.

4.4 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 are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Designated staff may use their mobile phones or apps for residential visits. This may be for providing parental updates via WhatsApp or X. In these circumstances, to assist with expediency they may take photographs of activities that are then uploaded to school devices and deleted.
- Likewise, designated staff may use their mobile phones for school purposes at inter-school sporting events or day trips that are then uploaded to school devices and deleted.
- For residential visits an appointed member of staff is permitted to make their emergency contact details available to parents and carers

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 in way that could identify a vulnerable pupil
- Only use their phones to contact parents/carers where it is necessary

4.6 Sanctions

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

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

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

The DfE's non-statutory guidance states that pupils should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. Pupils are recommended not to bring mobile phones to school, however, it is acknowledged that some Y5/6 pupils may travel to, and from, school independently. In these circumstances, they may bring a phone to school in order to communicate with parents

In this scenario, the following rule must be adhered to at ALL times:

- Pupils are not permitted to bring a phone to school unless they travel to and from school independently
- Pupils may only use their phones to contact parents/carers where it is necessary and this is not during the directed teaching time or playtimes
- In this scenario, pupils must keep their mobile phones with them, on the condition that they are never used, seen or heard
- The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage to these phones as it is recommended that pupils do not bring them to school

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

- Pupils are not permitted to wear smartwatches in school

5.2 Exceptions

- Where pupils are travelling to school by themselves
- Any other exceptions, or requests, will be judged on an individual basis and the school's code of conduct must be adhered to (see appendix 1)

5.3 Sanctions

Sanctions for breach of mobile phone use as follows

- In the first instance parents will be notified and a warning will be issued and a repeat offence will lead to the phone being confiscated
- A second infringement will result in the phone being confiscated
- (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- Any confiscated phones will be at the discretion of the Headteacher (Headteachers can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the [DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools](#))
- All confiscated phones will be stored in the school office, or headteachers office
- The confiscated phone will only be returned to the parent/carer who will have to come to school to collect it
- Also please note that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, and bags, in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows a school to search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

In each case the school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, disability)
- The pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in Part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- The reason for each decision and sanction will be clearly explained and outlined.

6. Safeguarding Considerations

From the age of ten, children are at the age of criminal responsibility;

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

7. 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 at 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
- Not using phones in lessons, or at concerts, or when working with pupils, or when their child is with other 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.

Furthermore, 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 that 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 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

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 their personal mobile during the school day.

8. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are stored securely when not in use.

Pupils must secure their mobile 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 either the school office or headteacher's office.

Lost phones should be returned to the school reception area. 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 on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

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

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, they should be brought to the attention of the headteacher.

9. Appendix 1: Code of Conduct/Acceptable Use Agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Code of Conduct/Acceptable Use Agreement

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

1. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on silent)
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. 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.
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 password(s) or access code(s) 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. For instance, by 'sexting'.
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 it appropriately, or turn it 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.

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school (permission may be given via the School Gateway consent request online)

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

Burton Road School school has agreed to allow this pupil to bring mobile phone to school because they either:

- Travel to and from school alone
- Are a young carer
- Need the phone to support their medical needs
- Attend a before- or after-school activity where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its Code of Conduct/Acceptable Use Agreement

The school reserves the right to either revoke permission, or confiscate the phone, if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/Carer signature: _____

Pupil Signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices 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 school reception area or an isolated 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.
