



# Mobile Phone Policy

## **Mobile Phone Policy**

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## 1. Introduction and aims

At Jubilee we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life parents, carers and staff, as well as the wider school community. However, we are concerned about the issues related to the use of personally owned mobile devices by children within schools and beyond. Mobile phones are valuable items which can be lost, stolen or damaged and can be used inappropriately for example accessing inappropriate content or cyberbullying. Internet access on phones and other personal devices can allow pupils to bypass school internet filtering platforms and lead to exposure to inappropriate and unsafe material.

Mobile phone cameras could lead to child protection, bullying and data protection issues with regard to the inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images of pupils or staff. The deliberate filming of events or people in order to humiliate, embarrass and intimidate by publishing to a wider audience such as on social media websites could put pupils and staff at risk of harm or embarrassment.

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 safeguarding 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 such as smartwatches.

## 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 the Governing body are responsible for monitoring the policy every year, 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.

### **4.1 Use of personal mobile phones**

Staff should understand that the primary purpose of the use of mobile/personal device in a school context is educational.

Staff are allowed to take digital/video images to support educational aims, but:

- must follow school policies concerning the sharing, storage, distribution and publication of those images,
- care should be taken when sharing digital/video images that learners are appropriately dressed
- must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission

The staff use of personal mobile phones for personal reasons must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom).

Mobile phones and personally-owned devices must be switched off or switched to 'silent' mode when in the classroom or in other spaces where children are present.

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have their phone during contact time for personal reasons. The phone would be set to vibrate rather than ring. 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

The Headteacher will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements and permission be sought from the Headteacher beforehand.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number as a point of emergency contact.

### **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).

### **4.3 Safeguarding**

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils and profiles should be set to a private setting.

All staff, including those who are also parents or ex parents, and those employed by parents after school should ensure that;

- no reference is made in social media to other children, parents/carers or school staff
- they do not engage in online discussion on personal matters relating to members of the school community
- personal opinions should not be attributed to the school
- security settings on personal social media profiles are regularly checked to minimise risk of loss of personal information
- they act as positive role models in their use of social media

If a pupil or parent makes contact with a member of staff through social media (Instagram, Facebook etc. and requests to follow) the Headteacher should be informed. The Headteacher will then inform the parent of said pupil or the parent and ensure they understand this is not appropriate.

#### **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 aren't limited to:

- To record trips and activities
- To issue homework, rewards or sanctions
- To use multi-factor authentication
- 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
- Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil, unless it is part of a lesson/school trip/activity. Any permitted images or files taken in school must be downloaded from the device and deleted in school before the end of the day.
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers, unless in the case of emergency. If a member of staff has to contact a parent in an emergency using their own phone, they should use their own device and hide (by inputting 141) their own mobile number for confidentiality purposes.

#### **4.5 Work phones**

Some members of staff may be 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.

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

## **5. Use of mobile phones by pupils**

The DfE's [non-statutory mobile phone guidance](#) says that pupils should not use mobile phones throughout the school day, unless there are exceptional circumstances, see below.

Any device seen while on school premises will be confiscated, held by the Headteacher and only returned to parents or carers.

Any pupil breaching the policy will be subject to appropriate sanctions outlined in the Positive Behaviour Policy.

### **5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils**

The DfE's [non-statutory mobile phone guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features. Smartwatches that allow texts to be sent or calls to be made are not allowed in school.

### **5.2 Exceptions**

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances, such as:

- If the child has moved, but still attends the school and therefore they travel on public transport
- If the child has transferred from another school and the distance means they live far away and travel on public transport
- If the child is vulnerable (has an EHCP or has been identified by SLT or learning mentor)
- If the child lives between two homes
- If the child has a medical condition which means they need access to a phone such as diabetes
- Young carers who need to be contactable

Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should complete a Personal Device and Pupil Mobile Phone Authorisation Form (Appendix 1). Any phone that is brought into school must not be a smartphone; that is, the only core functions should be calls and text messages, and the device should have no internet connectivity.

Parents will receive a formal response from the school giving permission and allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school or not.

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's 'Code of conduct for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances' (Appendix 2)

### **5.3 Searching devices**

Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. 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](#)

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows staff 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).

If the member of staff conducting the search suspects they may find an indecent image of a child (sometimes known as nude or semi-nude images), the member of staff should never intentionally view the image, and must never copy, print, share, store or save such images. When an incident might involve an indecent image of a child and/or video, the member of staff should confiscate the device, avoid looking at the device and refer the incident to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) as the most appropriate person to advise on the school's response. Handling such reports or concerns can be especially complicated and schools should follow the principles as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education

If the search reveals evidence of bullying or harassment, which can be classified as criminal conduct, the school may 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

## **6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors**

Volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone while children are present, unless in the case of an emergency or if they have been given permission.

In accordance with guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office, parents/carers are welcome to take videos and digital images of their children at school events for their own personal use (as such use is not covered by the Data Protection Act). To respect everyone's privacy and in some cases protection, these images should not be published/made publicly available on social networking sites, nor should parents/carers comment on any activities involving other learners in the digital/video images.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it is at a public event (such as a school fair, assembly, trip)
- 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/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception, attend a public event at school. They may be given an information slip about phone usage (see Appendix 4)

## **7. Loss, theft or damage**

Pupils who have been given permission by the Headteacher to bring their mobile phone to school must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled when handed in to the office.

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 the Headteacher's office and will be the responsibility of the Headteacher.

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

## **8. 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 staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

## **9. Related School Policies**

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy

<https://www.jubilee.hackney.sch.uk/about-us/school-information/school-policies/>

## 10. **Appendix I: Personal Device and Pupil Mobile Phone Authorisation Form**

**Form to be completed electronically on ParentMail.**

Child's name		
Class		
Reason a phone is needed. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If the child has moved, but still attends the school and therefore they travel on public transport</li><li>• If the child has transferred from another school and the distance means they live far away and travel on public transport</li><li>• If the child is vulnerable (has an EHCP or has been identified by SLT or learning mentor)</li><li>• If the child lives between two homes</li><li>• If the child has a medical condition which means they need access to a phone such as diabetes</li><li>• Young carers who need to be contactable</li></ul>		
I have read and agree to the school's policy on mobile phones and devices.	Yes / No	
I understand that, if authorised, the device is the sole responsibility of the parent / carer and that a breach to the policy will result in confiscation and possible behaviour sanctions thereafter.		

## **11. Appendix 2: Code of conduct for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances**

Any mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices brought into school are the responsibility of the device owner. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

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

1. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent'). This must be done before entering school premises.
2. Phones will be left at the school office.
3. Phones will be collected at the end of the day and must not be switched on until off school premises.
4. Parents must not attempt to contact their child via their mobile phone during the school day, but contact the school office.