



## Mobile Phone Policy

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## Contents

<b>1. Introduction and aims .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Relevant guidance .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Roles and responsibilities .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. Use of mobile phones by staff.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5. Use of mobile phones by pupils .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7. Loss, theft or damage .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8. Monitoring and review .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances.....	8
Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school .....	9
Appendix 3: Mobile phone information slip for visitors .....	10

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## **1. Introduction and aims**

At Cann Bridge School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones and watches, 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 and smart watches 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 including smart watches.

## **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 is responsible for monitoring the policy every 3 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**

### **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 and during school operating hours. 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 and offices).

Staff should not have their mobile phones on them. A designated safe and secure area for staff to store their personal belongings during the working day is available. Staff have the option to store their mobile phones in this area, should they choose. This however is not a mandatory requirement. Mobile phones should be put on silent. Smart watches turned to flight mode.

Staff leave their belongings in safe storage at their own risk. It is therefore recommended that phones are security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damages is accepted. As well as safeguarding children and avoiding any unnecessary disruptions during the day, this procedure also aims to protect staff against any unfounded allegations.

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

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

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01752 207909 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 and Google Bard).

You can find more detailed guidance in our data protection or ICT acceptable use 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.

You can find more detailed guidance regarding connecting with parents/carers or pupils over messaging apps or social media in your ICT acceptable use or online safety policies and 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. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/educational visit/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

#### **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 use multi-factor authentication i.e. CPOMS
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site educational visits (to make emergency calls only)
- 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
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

#### **4.5 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.

If any staff are required to drive in a working capacity, and has responsibility for the work mobile, the phone must be switched off whilst driving. It is strongly recommended that staff follow the same procedures regarding their own personal mobile phones.

Under no circumstances should staff driving whilst on school business receive or make a phone call. This also applies to hands-free and wireless connections, which are considered a distraction rather than a safer alternative.

#### **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**

Pupils should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

The school does not allow learners to have their mobile phones at school. Should they need to bring their mobile phone to school this must be handed in to reception at arrival at school and collected at the end of the school day. The school will not be held liable for lost or theft.

#### **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.

Learners should not wear smartwatches to school. Smartwatches are more fragile than mobile phones can be easily damaged when stored. The school will not be held liable for lost or theft. If pupils require smart watches for wellness or health-related benefits, this should be first discussed with the headteacher.

## **5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances and for sixth-form pupils**

The only time pupils will be allowed to use their phone is during planned teaching and learning activities i.e. learning to use their phone to communicate or increase independence in the community i.e. looking up bus timetables. This must be discussed with the headteacher before being arranged.

Other examples may include:

- Pupils travelling to school by themselves
- Young carers who need to be contactable
- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the headteacher.

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

## **5.3 Sanctions**

Mobile phones if found or heard will be confiscated. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. These will be returned to pupils at the end of the school day. Parent/carers will be notified if a mobile phone is confiscated from a pupil and reminded of the mobile phone policy. Details of searching, screening and confiscation can be found in the schools behaviour policy.

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 you 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 sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. 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](#)

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

## **6. 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 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 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.

If arriving for a meeting, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be asked to lock their mobile phones in the lockers provided in reception. During larger events with large numbers of parents/carers, visitors and volunteers mobile phones will not be required to be locked away but all visitors will be given a slip outlining the mobile phone policy.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising educational visits 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 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.

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

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled and are handed in at reception.

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 school office in a secure locked cabinet.

Lost phones should be returned to the headteacher. 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

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of headteacher in a timely manner.

## **Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances**

### **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 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 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 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.
- 14) Mobile phones should be handed in to reception on arrival at school and collected at the end of the school day.



## Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

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

The school has agreed to allow [pupil name] to bring their mobile phone to school because they:

List the appropriate reasons here. We've listed some common reasons below (you can delete as required):

- Travel to and from school alone
- Are a young carer
- Need the phone to support their medical needs
- Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed
- 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 acceptable use agreement.

The school reserves the right revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

### **Appendix 3: 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. If you must use your phone, you must leave the school grounds
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils or staff

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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