



GADE VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Introduction and aims

At Gade Valley Primary 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.

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

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 -
Keeping children Safe in Education
ICT Acceptable Use
Behaviour 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 staff, pupils, visitors and volunteers, and covers both indoor and outdoor areas. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action.

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](#).

Staff 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

- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children, pictures or share images.
- Staff will not use personal mobile phones while working. This protects staff from being distracted from their work, and from allegations of inappropriate use. Their phones will be kept in an agreed area in the school.
- If staff have a break time during their working hours, they may use their mobile phones during these times, in an agreed area not used by children such as in the office / staff room.
- Where it is essential for staff to make a personal call during a session, they should, make this in the agreed area not used by children.
- A mobile phone will be taken on whole-group outings in accordance with guidance. The Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage states that providers should take contact telephone numbers and a mobile phone on outings.
- Mobile phones should not be turned on during lesson time. If expecting an urgent call, it should be directed to the school office.
- Mobile phones should be on silent.

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).

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:

- Use of 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
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office.

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises. On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones. The school will display a notice advising visitors that mobile phones are not to be used in the setting. If a visitor, governor or contractor is seen using their mobile phone, they will be asked to use it away from the pupils. This is also the case for school trips where we ask volunteers to not use their phones in front of other pupils or take photographs.

Parents

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their mobile phones as essential means of communication at all times.

We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment. For example, silent ringtones, calls outside of the school building.

We also allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones – **but insist that parents do not publish images or videos (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.**

Please refer to Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children in Schools (available from the school office).

Pupils

We are aware that many of the pupils in the school have a mobile phone and regularly bring it to school. We recognise the importance of such devices, particularly if pupils are walking to and from school. Please see below our expectations about phone usage in school:

- The phone must be switched off and handed in to the class member of staff first thing in the morning and collected by the pupil at home time (**the phone is left at the owner's own risk and the school will not take any responsibility for any loss or damage**).
- Pupils must not carry their phone out to the playground or have it in their pocket – it must be placed in their bag.
- Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to have their mobile phone out of their bag, the phone will be taken from the pupil, handed to a senior member of staff who will ensure the phone will be stored in the school office to be collected at the end of the day.
- If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the Schools Positive Behaviour Policy.

Use of Smartwatches by staff and 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, take photographs and listen to music.

The school will use the same approach for smartwatches as it does with mobile phones – see above.

Photographs

It is recognised that one of the key ways to support pupil's development, and engage parents in pupil's learning, is through photographs that record their pupil's activities and achievements.

We will seek permission from parents/carers via our Management Information System – Arbor, to take photographs of their children for this purpose, using the school's own camera/tablet. Camera or video functions on mobile phones must not be used in the school.

School Website

Your child's photograph may appear from time to time on the school website, for example on the class pages, front picture reel and during performances.

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).

Please see the following policies for further information:

Data protection policy

ICT acceptable use policy.

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.

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.

Roles and responsibilities

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 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.