

# Mobile phone policy

Giffard Park Primary School



**Approved by:**

Governors

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# Contents

1. Introduction and aims .....	2
2. Relevant guidance .....	2
3. Roles and responsibilities .....	2
4. Use of mobile phones by staff .....	3
5. Use of mobile phones by pupils.....	4
7. Loss, theft or damage .....	5
8. Monitoring and review.....	6
9. Appendix 1: Permission form allowing pupils to bring their phone to school .....	7
Appendix 2: Missing name on phone reminder slip .....	8
Appendix 3: Mobile phone information slip for visitors .....	8

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## 1. Introduction and aims

At Giffard Park 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.

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, including, but not limited to, child protection, behaviour, ICT and internet acceptable use 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

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 is 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.

## 3.2 Governors

- The governors will monitor and review this policy following updates from the Senior Leadership Team.
- They will hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

## 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 whilst 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).

If any staff member has a family emergency, or similar situation, which requires them to keep their mobile phone to hand then prior permissions must be sought from the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. If anyone has a personal emergency and needs to make a call then this needs to be done out of earshot of pupils.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number (01908 617868) as a point of emergency contact.

Please also refer to section 5.1.1 from the ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy:

### 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).

Please refer to more detailed guidance in the school's data protection policy and ICT and Internet acceptable use policy.

### 4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including phone numbers or 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.

For more details, please refer to our ICT and Internet Acceptable Use policy

### 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:

- 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. Contact with parents can be made via the school office. If the school office is closed and there is no alternative than to use a personal mobile phone, the number must be hidden to the recipient.

## 4.5 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 and other smart devices by pupils

Pupils should only bring their phones into school if they are walking to school alone or walking home alone and they need to have it in case of an emergency.

Pupils will need to switch their phone off completely before entering the playground and will need to hand the phone to their class teacher at the beginning of the school day. The phone must then not be switched back on again until after leaving the school site at the end of the day.

If a pupil does not abide by the above rules or mobile phones are brought onto school premises without permission, the mobile phone will be confiscated and parents will be required to visit the school to have the phone returned to them in person.

The school reserves the right to withdraw permission for a child to bring their mobile phone into school.

Mobile phones are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage to a mobile phone.

Smartwatches are not allowed to be brought into school under any circumstances. If a child does come to school wearing a smartwatch, they will be asked to remove it and give it to the teacher to then be returned at the end of the day.

### 5.1 Exceptions for special circumstances

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances (eg pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar). This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the headteacher or deputy headteacher.

Any pupils who are given permission must adhere to the school's acceptable use policy.

### 5.3 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy:

- Their mobile phone may be confiscated. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- If a device is confiscated, parents will be required to visit the school to have it returned to them in person.

- If a pupil has used their device (or it is suspected they have used it) in an inappropriate way, then this will be dealt with according to the school's ICT and Internet Acceptable Use policy.
- Sanctions from the school's behaviour policy will also be applied as appropriate.

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). Further details can be found in the ICT and Internet Acceptable Use policy (section 6)

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

The school will follow other relevant policies such as Child Protection and ICT and Internet Acceptable Use policy

## 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 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 play or assembly) and permission has been given by school.
- 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.

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.

## 7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are appropriately named.

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.

To make parents aware of the disclaimer above we will:

- Include disclaimers in the permission forms for bringing a phone to school
- Provide a copy of the policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents/carers
- A copy of this policy will be communicated to existing parents/carers

Confiscated phones will be stored securely either in the classroom or the school office and parents/carers will be informed.

## 8. 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, these should be brought to the attention of the headteacher in a timely manner.

## 9. Appendix 1: Permission form allowing pupils to bring their phone to school

Dear Y5 and Y6 Parents,

### Children's Mobile Phone Permission

Children should only bring their phones into school if they are walking to school alone or walking home alone and they need to have it in case of an emergency. If this is the case, could you please sign and return the slip below to your child's class teacher to indicate that due to safety reasons you wish your child to bring a phone into school.

Please note that your child will need to switch his/her phone off completely before entering the playground and will need to hand the phone to their class teacher at the beginning of the school day. The phone must then not be switched back on again until after leaving the school site at the end of the day.

If your child does not abide by the above rules or mobile phones are brought onto school premises without permission, the mobile phone will be confiscated and parents will be required to visit the school to have the phone returned to them in person.

School will only accept phones on the understanding that it will not be held responsible for loss, theft or damage to the phone. Parents must ensure that the phone is covered at all times by their own insurance. Mobile phones should be clearly marked with the child's name.

Yours sincerely,



Louise Cullen

Deputy Headteacher

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### Mobile Phone Permission

I wish my child \_\_\_\_\_ class \_\_\_\_\_

to bring their mobile phone to school. I understand that it needs to be handed in at the beginning of the day and switched off whilst on the school premises.

I also understand that should my child not do this; the school reserves the right to withdraw permission for them to bring it.

I understand that mobile phones are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage to a mobile phone.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR CHILD'S CLASS TEACHER**

**Appendix 2: Missing name on phone reminder slip**

Dear Parent,

We have noticed that \_\_\_\_\_ mobile phone is currently unnamed. Please can this be rectified for when the phone is brought to school next to meet the requirements in the mobile phone letter that you previously signed and agreed to. The school reserves the right to withdraw permission for a child to bring a mobile phone to school.

Thank you for supporting us in helping to correctly identify your child's phone quickly and easily to allow it to be returned correctly and to not get lost.

**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 where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the office
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child at a public event that the school has given permission for) 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.