



# Mobile phone policy

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## 1. Introduction and aims

At Cedars Primary School and Nursery 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 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.

## 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 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).

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-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01908 610561 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).

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found on our Online and Acceptable Use of IT policy, Staff Safer Code of Conduct policy and 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.

Staff should not use personal mobile devices to contact a pupil or parent/carer unless in exceptional circumstances and with the prior approval of the headteacher.

See Online and Acceptable Use of IT and Staff Safer Code of Conduct policies for further information.

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/school trip/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
- 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 Safer Code of Conduct policy
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil (appropriate images can be taken using school iPads or iPods; these should be transferred as soon as possible to the school's network and deleted from the individual device)
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

See the Off-Sites visits document.

## 4.5 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. Staff or volunteers should follow the schools safeguarding procedures and guidance in the Child Protection policy and Whistleblowing policy to report concerns.

## 5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that pupils should not have access to mobile phones throughout the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

At Cedars Primary School and Nursery our approach to pupils bringing mobile phones is the following:

- Only pupils in years 5 and 6 can bring a mobile phone to school
- Parent/carer must sign a mobile phone permission form agreeing that their child must hand their mobile phone to their class teacher at the beginning of the school day
- The phone will be stored in the school's main office and returned to pupils at the end of the school day
- Pupils must turn their devices off (they must not be on silent mode) when they are on the school grounds
- Pupils are not permitted to use their mobile phones or other digital equipment to record images or recordings (either video or audio) of pupils or staff
- Pupils may not use their mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms
- Mobile phones are not permitted on any school visits or residential
- Pupils 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

### 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. Others can take images.

To safeguard all pupils, staff and volunteers, no pupil is allowed to wear a smartwatch. Smartwatches are not permitted in any test environment. If a pupil has a smartwatch, they will be asked to give it to an exam

invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a smartwatch into the test room can result in an exam being declared invalid.

Fitbits can be worn as they monitor physical fitness and activity.

### 5.3 Sanctions

If a pupil breaches this policy then their mobile phone or smartwatch will be confiscated. Their device will be kept in the school's main office and the headteacher (or in their absence) the deputy head will be informed. The pupil's parents/cares will be informed and the mobile phone or smartwatch will be returned to them at the end of the school day. If a pupil has used their mobile phone or smartwatch (or it is suspected they have used it) in an inappropriate way, then this will be dealt with according to the school's Attitude and Behaviour policy.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phone in specific circumstance, 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 has been used to commit an offence or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

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 of 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 its Child Protection and Attitude and Behaviour policies and parents/carers will be informed.

## 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, unless it's at a public event and permission has been given by their parent/carer, 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 during an induction (if relevant), when they arrive at the school or when they attend a public event at the 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 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. Their mobile phones will be 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 while pupils are travelling to and from school.

To make parent/cares aware of the disclaimer above we will:

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

Confiscated mobile phones (or smartwatches) will be stored securely in the school's main office and parents/carers will be informed. The school will be responsible for the device until it is collected by the pupil/parent/carer.

Lost phones should be returned to the school's main 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

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 Parent/Carer

Please complete this form if you wish to register a mobile phone to be brought into school by your son / daughter

Phones must be handed in on arrival at the classroom and will be stored securely in the School Office

Phones will be returned to the children in the classroom before they are dismissed at the end of the day or when leaving After School Club, if applicable

This form should be submitted prior to any phones being in school

Kind regards  
Mrs Goldsmith  
Headteacher

Reason for needing to have a mobile phone available:

New Text Field

- I understand that mobile devices are not normally allowed in school, but request that my child may store their phone in the Office for use after school during the Academic Year 2023-2024
- I understand that Cedars Primary School accepts no responsibility for mobile devices that are lost, damaged or stolen on the school premises or while pupils are travelling to and from school

Parent/Carer Name:

Date:

## Appendix 2: Mobile phone information to be displayed 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 staffroom
- 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 or on the school's website.