

Potterspury Lodge School

Mobile phone policy

Approved by:	Ben Billington	Date: May 2024
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1. Introduction and aims

At Potterspur Lodge School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, 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, and set an example for safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers 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

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for 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 Pastoral Lead, Behaviour and Attitudes Lead and the Principal are responsible for monitoring the policy annually, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while working directly or supervising students or during direct contact time.

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 instance:

- 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 01908 542912 as a point of emergency contact.

3.2 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).

See Potterspurty Lodge School's Data protection policy and ICT acceptable use policies in addition to this policy.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving 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 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.

See also Potterspurty Lodge School's ICT acceptable use and Online Safety policies in addition to this policy.

3.4 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:

- 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 which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

See Potterspurty Lodge School's Educational Visits Policy in addition to this policy.

3.5 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.

3.6 Sanctions

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

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Due to the fact that the vast majority of our students need to complete a long journey to and from Potterspurty Lodge School, we understand that they may need to carry a mobile phone or device with them as follows:

- › To keep themselves occupied whilst travelling in the taxi or car.
- › Needing to contact home or the school if their journey is delayed for any reason.
- › In the event of a Road Traffic Incident

If students do decide to bring a mobile phone or device to school then they should follow the Potterspurty Lodge School Mobile Phone Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement (see appendix 1).

4.1 Sanctions

Misuse of mobile phones and devices could result in them being confiscated and then returned to the owner at the end of the school day. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#))

Parents will be informed if a student has their phone confiscated and the reason why it was confiscated.

Following a confiscation, a temporary phone ban could be applied.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, 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 you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

Be as detailed as possible so that staff, pupils and parents/carers all understand what steps they should take if they find inappropriate content on a phone, or if they suspect inappropriate behaviour.

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

5. 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 a public event (such as a school fair), 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.

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 4 above.

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.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are easily identifiable and handed into the school office on arrival. Their mobile phone will then be individually bagged and securely stored until the end of the school day, when they can collect their mobile phone before leaving the school site.

Pupils must secure their 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 location.

Lost phones should be returned to the School Office.

The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

7. 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 teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

8. Appendix 1: [Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement] for pupils

Potterspurty Lodge School Mobile Phone Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement

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

1. **ALL** phones should be handed into the School Office on arrival and collected at the end of the school day on departure. (Unless your teacher has specifically asked you to retain your phone for a particular reason).
2. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
3. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
4. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
5. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
6. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
7. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
8. 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
9. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
10. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
11. 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.
12. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
13. 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.
14. 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 these appropriately, or turn them 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.

9. Appendix 2: Permission form for pupils to use mobile phones during lessons

Potterspurvy Lodge School

Permission Form for use of mobile phone during lessons

PUPIL AND LESSON DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Date:	
Class/lesson details:	

PURPOSE
Teachers should fill out this box explaining how the phones will be used during the lesson

Pupil agreement

I understand that I am being allowed to use my phone during lesson time as part of an educational or class activity.

I will not use my phone for any other purpose than the one listed above. If my teacher, or any other member of staff, finds that I'm using my phone for any other reason, I understand that it will be confiscated.

I understand that the school's code of conduct/acceptable use agreement on the use of mobile phones still applies.

Pupil signature: _____

Teacher signature: _____

10. Appendix 3: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

Potterspury Lodge School Permission Form to bring mobile 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
- Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed
- Need the phone for an educational activity during class time
- Attend before or after-school 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 code of conduct/acceptable use agreement.

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if pupils don't abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Date: _____

Pupil signature: _____

Date: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

11. Appendix 4: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Print out copies of this slip to give to visitors when they arrive at your school.

Potterspurty Lodge School **Mobile phone information slip for visitors**

Use of mobile phones 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 School Office / Reception Area.
- 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.