

Heathlands

C of E Primary School

Helping everyone shine their light

Policy	MOBILE PHONE POLICY (INCLUDING SMARTWATCHES TRACKING DEVICES)
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This document is based on a model policy by The Key

1. Introduction and aims

At Heathlands 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 and/or Safeguarding lead are 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.

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 / during 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 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 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).

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 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.

Staff should not message parents directly, through any school platform (e.g. Class Dojo, Tapestry) on their personal mobile phones.

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:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- 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

4.5 Work phones

Some members of staff may be 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

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.

Students who need a mobile phone before or after school (e.g. if walking to school on their own) can place their mobile phone in a storage box on their teacher's desk at the start of the day. The boxes are kept in the Main office during the day and phones are collected at the end of the school day.

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.

At Heathlands we do not allow children to wear smart watches to school. If a smart watch is found it will be kept in the main office and a parent/carer will be asked to collect it.

5.2 Use of trackers (e.g. Air Tags)

Location trackers such as AirTags are small remote tracking devices which are often used to keep track of the location of luggage and personal items such as keys and wallets. Some other devices, such as smart watches and smartphones, may also offer this functionality.

Although not designed for this purpose, tracking devices are sometimes used by parents and carers to track their child's location.

We understand that location trackers such as AirTags can provide reassurance to parents and carers, when children are not in school and are on their own or with friends, unaccompanied. There is no need to track your child/ren when they are in school or on any external visit as they are always supervised by staff.

The reasons we are concerned and do not allow tracking are:

- Unauthorised tracking: where a pupil is tracked without their knowledge, or by a person who has no legal access to them. Trackers can also indicate the location of anyone travelling with the pupil who has not consented to be tracked in this way. When an AirTag is in close proximity to an Apple device (e.g. an iPhone) for a period of time, it notifies Apple device owners of its presence even if the AirTag is not connected to those people. Those people can then attempt to locate the AirTag (including by making it emit a noise) and in some cases disable it.

- It is illegal to track adults without their consent. Any adult accompanying a trip would need to consent to being tracked by an accompanying pupil's tracker.
- Additional functions: alarms, two-way communication, remote listening capability and other functions that some trackers provide can be disruptive and raise data protection and legal concerns
- Increasing anxiety: disruptions to expected location data – due to unavoidable changes of route or plan (e.g. on a school trip), or to device loss or malfunction – can cause anxiety to both parents/carers and to pupils and staff who are aware of potential parent/carer worry
- Loss or damage: School does not allow the wearing of jewellery in school or on trips other than a watch (not a Smart watch due to tracking potential) due to the risk of loss or damage.

If we do find that a pupil is carrying or using a tracking device or wearing a smart watch, the school will confiscate it until the end of the school day and contact the parents.

5.3 Sanctions

- o Mobile phones/Smart Watches/Trackers will be confiscated (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- o If a device is confiscated then a parent/carer will be contacted and asked to collect it from the school office. (Headteachers can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the [DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools](#))
- o If a child is found to have used a device, whilst in school, to record other children or access inappropriate sites/material, this will be dealt with in line with our Relationships and 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 staff to search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so)

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.

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:

- o Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's at a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- o Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- o 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:

- o Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- o 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 labelled and protected appropriately.

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.

Parents/carers will be made aware of the contents of this policy by

- o Signs up in the school entrance or office
- o Disclaimers in your permission forms for bringing a phone to school
- o A disclaimer in our home-school agreement

If your school confiscates phones from pupils, add:

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office

Lost phones should be returned to Mrs Chippefield (School Business Manager). 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 on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- o Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- o Feedback from staff
- o Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- o 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: Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Code of conduct / 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.

10. 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):	

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and our code of conduct / acceptable use agreement

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

Parent/carer signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

- o Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- o Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the school office
- o Do not take photos or recordings of pupils or staff
- o Do not use your phone in the building (unless you have permission from the Headteacher)

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.
