



Mobile Phone Policy

Ratifying Committee	Health, Safety & Safeguarding
Date	March 2025
Review	Annually

1. Introduction and aims

At The Bridge School we recognise that mobile phones including smart phones are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, professionals as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use where it is needed.

Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, professionals 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/engagement of pupils.

Risk of theft, loss, or damage

Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

The policy reflects the DFE guidance '*Mobile phones in schools*' *Guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day (February 2024)*

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 Head Teacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

2.2 Governors

Governors will review and approve the Policy through the Link Governor for Safe-guarding and the Health and Safety committee reporting to the full governors.

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 personal calls, or send texts, while pupils are present. Use of personal mobile must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present that are designated as staff areas. Phones should be kept in lockers and not used until staff get to these areas.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. The headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements and

the rules around such arrangements including the Early Years regulation. The expectation however is that school staff can use the school office number as a point of emergency contact.

Guidance 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, please speak to the lead adult accompanying your visit who will advise.
- 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 (See below).

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).

All staff refer to the Data Protection and associative policies.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents 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 or pupils.

Staff must not use their own 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.

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 for emergencies – if agreed. School mobile phones are provided.

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. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office.

Following guidance in relation to cybersecurity, all staff should not have work emails on personal phones. All staff have been provided with devices/laptops to access emails. Please use these to access emails.

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. Any agreed personal use must be in line with this policy.

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

Pupils should not have mobile phones in school. If there was an exceptional reason this would need to be agreed by the Head of Phase/Head Teacher and there would be an agreed procedure in place with parents/carer.

Pupils may have access to other electronic devices such as an iPod/iPad as agreed with parents/carers on an individual basis.

If a pupil brings in a mobile phone, it will be kept by Head of Phase or admin and will be kept in a locked room.

Pupils must adhere to the school's code of conduct for mobile phone use (as outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy) with the support of those working with them due to their severe and profound learning needs and developmental age.

4.1 Sanctions

If a pupil brings a mobile phone into school and this has not been agreed with parent/carer it will be confiscated and contact to the parent/carer will be made. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#))

Staff in school 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. If it is thought that this is the case, staff members should alert a DSL who will carry out the search of the phone.

5. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents, 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, 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.

The detailed guidelines are in the parent handbook and form signed on starting school.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

Use their phone to make contact with other parents.

Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil.

Parents 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.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils should not have mobile phones in school. If there was an exceptional reason this would need to be agreed by the Head of Phase/Head Teacher and there would be an agreed procedure in place with parents/carer. Parents would be informed that the school accept no responsibility (as below) for loss, theft or damage.

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. All staff have access to a locker so mobile phones can be securely stored.

Lost phones should be returned to main 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 of 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 organisation.