

Mobile Phone policy for staff, visitors, volunteers and children

Portsmouth Primary School and Early Years



PORTSDOWN
Primary School & Early Years

Approved by:	Governing Board	Date: January 2024
Last reviewed on:	January 2024	
Next review due by:	April 2025	

Contents

Mobile Phone policy for staff, visitors, volunteers and children	1
Portsmouth Primary School and Early Years	1
1. Introduction and aims	2
2. Roles and responsibilities	2
3. Use of mobile phones by staff	3
4. Use of mobile phones by children	4
5. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors	5
6. Loss, theft or damage	5
7. Monitoring and review.....	6
8. Links with other policies.....	6
8. Appendix 1 SAMPLE LETTER	7
9. Appendix 2: Information for staff	8
10. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors	9

1. Introduction and aims

At Portsmouth Primary School and Early Years we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones and smart watches, are an important part of everyday life for our children, 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 children, staff, parents 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 headteacher, supported by all staff, is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and children accountable for its implementation.

2.2 Governors

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Board every 2 years.

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 children are present. Mobile phones must not be on show during contact times.

Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where children are not present (such as the staff room).

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance, in emergency situations in school, to allow for the completion of the additional security verification of websites and cloud-based sites such as CPOMS or Gmail or during school trips. (See Section 3.4 below)

Occasionally, staff may be waiting for an important message for example from health professionals or from family members. In this case school staff should use the school office number, 02392378991, as a point of contact and not their own personal mobiles.

The headteacher or deputy headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements. An example of this is when front office staff are receiving calls on the absence mobile from staff informing of their attendance or otherwise at school.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary or agreed, school staff can use the school office number, 02392378991, as a point of emergency contact.

Smart Watches

A small number of children bring in smart watches, such as Apple Watches or Fit Bits. These must be put on silent during the school day. As their phones would be off, their watches will not be linked to their phones.

Adults with smart watches should have them on silent. They can have them on vibrate if that function exists but should not be engaging with them during child contact time in the same way that they would not interact with their phone.

Some smart watches have the facility to take photos. This must be disabled in school. If this is not possible, then the watch must not be worn.

3.2 Data protection

Many staff use their mobile phones to access information to support them with their main professional duties. This includes work emails and access codes to CPOMS (The School's online Safeguarding reporting system). All staff must keep this information secure by for example, password protection. All staff must follow General Data Protection Regulations. Further information on Data Protection can be found at the following website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents/carers or children, 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 children.

We recognise that some staff may be 'friends' with members of our school community before starting working at Portsdown Primary School and Early Years or have become 'friends' as they live in the same community. If this is the case, staff must ensure that they continue to support the aims and values of the school and that all school information is treated with the upmost confidentiality. Staff should follow the School's Social Media Policy at all times.

Staff must not use their mobile phones, cameras or other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities to take photographs or recordings of children, their work, or anything else which could identify a

child. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment. However, the school recognises that very occasionally, in order to capture a learning point, that it may become necessary to use personal equipment, e.g. mobile phone. This should only be done with senior leadership approval. The image or recording should then be transferred to the school's system at the earliest convenience and deleted from the staff's personal equipment. No image or recording should be kept on personal equipment indefinitely.

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 are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Accessing codes to enable them to pass the security codes on a program for work (e.g. CPOMs or Gmail)

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 children, their work, or anything else which could identify a child (as aforementioned in 3.3)
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office or via a school mobile phone e.g. when there is a residential operating out of office hours

Staff should ensure that the school has their most up to date contact details.

3.5 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 by a member of the senior leadership team.

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 safeguarding and child protection policy.

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 and smart watches by children

Children in Years 5 and 6 may bring their mobile phones into school providing they adhere to the following rules:

- Parents/carers must sign the agreement letter before their child can bring in their mobile phone to school
- All mobiles phones must be switched off before entering the school site
- All mobile phones must be handed in to the class teacher or teaching assistant when entering the classroom. The phones will be stored away by the adult for the day
- All mobile phones can be switched back on when exiting the school site

- Smart watches with photo taking capability will not be permitted

4.1 Sanctions

Any proven allegation of cyber bullying, inappropriate content or inappropriate messaging by a child will result in the child not being allowed to bring their phone into school. The duration of this ban will be set by the class teacher. If the child brings in a mobile phone into school without agreement, school will confiscate the phone. This is a right the school has under Government legislation (sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006). Parents/carers will be asked to come into school to collect the phone.

An example of a letter sent to parents/carers can be seen see Appendix 1

Staff have the power to search children's' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a child'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.

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
- › 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 children, 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 or smart watches to make/receive calls and take photos where children are present. If you must use your phone or smart watch for making/receiving calls, you may ask a staff member to find a location away from children.
- › Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone/smart watch 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 children, their work, or anything else which could identify a child

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for children 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

All children who bring their phones to school must ensure that phones are handed in to the class teacher or teaching assistant when entering the building.

Children 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. All staff are offered a secure, lockable place to put their personal mobiles.

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 children are travelling to and from school.

- Disclaimers will be in permission forms for bringing a phone to school
- A copy of this policy will be made available on the school's website. Paper copies are available on request from the front office.

Confiscated phones will be stored securely in the school office or other appropriate location with the understanding that **schools that confiscate phones from children become responsible for the phone, and can be held responsible for loss, theft, or damage.**

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 of children's education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

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

8. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- E-Safety policy
- Social Media Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

9. Appendix 1 SAMPLE LETTER



Portsdown Primary School and Early Years
Sundridge Close,
Cosham, Portsmouth,
Hampshire PO6 3JL
Tel: 023 9237 8991
Headteacher: Mr A Vaghela

Date

Dear Parents/Carers,

Over the last few years, for years 5 and 6, we introduced a mobile phone agreement which on the whole worked very well.

I fully understand some of you may wish to give a phone to your child in case of emergencies and also for safeguarding. I also understand some parents concerns over cyber bullying and inappropriate use of phones.

We will continue to allow **Years 5 and 6 only** to bring in their mobile phones into school but they must follow a strict set of guidelines.

In order for your child to bring their phone into school they must:

- Switch off their phone as soon as they get on school site
- Hand in their phone to the class teacher. Phones will be put in an unlocked cupboard in the classroom – they will get them back at the end of the day
- All smart watches such as Apple Watches and Fit Bits must be on silent when on school site. As the children's phones will be off they will not be linked to their watches.

Any proven allegation of cyber bullying, inappropriate content or inappropriate messaging will result in your child not being allowed to bring their phone into school. The duration of this ban will be set by the class teacher.

The age restriction for many social media websites, such as Facebook, is 13 years of age. Please support us by discussing the appropriate use of mobile phones with your child.

If your child brings in a mobile phone into school without this agreement, we will confiscate the phone. This is a right we have under Government legislation. You will be asked to come into school to collect the phone. **Mobile phones are brought into school at owners own risk.**

If you wish for your child to bring in their mobile phone into school, please complete the reply slip below and return it to your child's class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A Vaghela, Headteacher

Name of child..... Class

I agree that my child may bring in their mobile phone into school.

I understand that if they do not follow the guidelines set out below then they will not be able to bring their phone into school. **Mobile phones are brought into school at owners own risk.**

Children must switch off their phone as soon as they get on school site and hand in their phone to the class teacher during the school day – they will get them back at the end of the day

Any proven allegation of cyber bullying, inappropriate content or inappropriate messaging will result in your child not being allowed to bring their phone into school. The duration of this ban will be set by the class teacher.

Parent/Guardian sign Date

10. Appendix 2: Information for staff

Use of mobile phones in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please keep all smart watches such as Apple Watches and Fitbits on silent during the school day
- Please keep your mobile away out of sight of children
- Please do not use phones where children are present. If you must use your phone, you can use your phone in non-contact times and where children are not present such as the staff room.
- You are responsible for your phone – ensure that you have kept it secure
- Do not take photos or recordings of children or staff
- Do not use your phone when working with children
- If you are waiting for an important phone call, please use the school's main number as the main contact (02392378991) not your own mobile

All staff are expected to follow the school's policies

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

The headteacher or deputy headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements with regards to the need to use a phone in school e.g. to enable access to CPOMs where there is a requirement to complete additional security verification using the phone.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available on our school website and from the school office.

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

VISITORS - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY



Use of Mobile Phones and Smart Watches in our school

Please do not use phones or smart watches where children are present. If you must use your phone or smart Watch, you may ask a staff member to find a location away from children.



Fire Procedures

If you hear an alarm sound as a continuous bell, please leave any building by the nearest exit and report to the assembly point following directions given by school staff. The muster point is at the front of the school on Sundridge Close. When working inside buildings, please ensure you do not create/leave any fire hazards.



Safeguarding

If you are worried about the safety of any young person in the school, you must report this concern to the Headteacher, Mr Vaghela, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), the deputy DSLs (Mr Cowell, Mrs Thomas or Mrs Hardy) or any member of staff who will assist you. Please do not remain silent - report any concern to any member of staff.



Visitor's Lanyard

You will be given a visitor's lanyard. This must be worn at all times whilst on school premises and returned, by either you personally or the member of staff escorting you, to the point of issue.

Health and Safety



Whilst on site, you are legally responsible for taking reasonable care of your own health and safety and the safety of others affected by your activities and for complying with all statutory H&S requirements and safe working practices.

Accidents

All accidents must be reported to the front office where they will be addressed accordingly.

The designated first aider is Mrs Durow.



Smoking/Vaping Please note that both smoking and vaping are **NOT** allowed anywhere on the school site.



Vehicles and Personal Effects

The school cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to vehicles and personal

effects; they are brought onto the School site at the owner's risk.