

## **Mobile devices (including Smart Watches) Policy**

### **Introduction and Aims**

At Overton CE Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount.

The aim of the Mobile devices Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile devices are effective communication tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile devices that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the working day, and which are most susceptible to misuse - including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. However as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile devices on site and the use of mobile device refers to all devices that have capability to receive and send texts, images or calls.

Staff can leave mobile devices in their drawers next to our staffroom if they wish at their own risk, but must adhere to this policy if they wish to keep them with them.

This includes staff, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use of ICT

### **Code of conduct**

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

### **Our aim is therefore that all practitioners:**

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- know how to minimise risk.
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use.

- are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours.
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile devices within the setting, which is agreed to by all users:

### **Personal Mobile devices– Staff**

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. **Emergency contact should be made via the school office.**
- Staff should have their devices on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag or pocket) during class session time.
- Mobile devices should not be used in spaces where children are present (eg. classroom, playground).
- Use of devices (including receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- It is also advised that staff security-protect access to functions of their device.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Head Teacher aware of this and can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use the camera feature to take photographs or record on their mobile devices, for example: to take photographs, recordings/videos of children, or sharing for images.
- Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and ipads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Head Teacher.

### **Mobile devices for work related purposes**

We recognise that mobile devices provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities. However staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).

- Mobile devices should not be used to make contact with parents
- during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office.
- Where parents are accompanying trips they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children.

### **Personal Mobiles – Pupils (Phones, Smart watches, Fitbits)**

We recognise that mobile devices are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others. Therefore:

- Pupils in Year R to 6 are not permitted to have mobile devices at school or on trips
- If in the rare event of a parent wishing for his/her child ( we ask only Year 6) to bring a mobile devices to school to contact the parent after school: the parent must first complete the form on the website and explain why their child needs it
- The device must be named, handed in at the School office or to the class teacher and switched off, first thing in the morning and collected from there by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk)
- From September 2025, only Year 6 are allowed to bring a smartphone to school and from September 2026, only brick phones will be allowed and for children only in Year 6 ( please see for more information)  
<https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/about>
- Mobile devices brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- Where mobile devices are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the Head Teacher does have the power to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site'.

### **Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors**

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile devices policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises.

However, these groups of people are to be classified into two groups.

**Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors without child contact and or interaction.**

This group will be expected to adhere to our mobile devices policy.

**Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors with child contact and or interaction.**

This group will be expected to turn their mobile devices off and place securely in secure place.

**Parents**

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile devices while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as essential means of communication at all times.

We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile devices, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment.

We also allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile devices – **but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.**

**Dissemination**

The mobile devices policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents via the school office and website.

**Created:** September 2019

**Reviewed:** September 2020, 2021 and 2022, April 2024, September 2025

**Next review:** September 2026