



Faith, Family and Fascination

Mobile Phone Policy

Boutcher C.E. Primary School

Reviewed by:	Senior Leadership Team
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Approved by:	Governing Body
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"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."
John 13:34

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

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1. Introduction and Aims

At Boutcher CE Primary School, we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices are an important part of everyday life for children, parents and carers, staff and the wider school community. We are committed to supporting our community in using these devices safely whilst in school, outside in our local community and in their futures.

The school aims to:

- promote safe and responsible use of mobile phones and similar devices;
- set clear expectations for children, staff, parents and carers, visitors, volunteers, governors and contractors;
- support the school's other policies, particularly those relating to safeguarding, behaviour, data protection and acceptable use of technology;
- minimise disruption to teaching, learning and the wider school environment;
- protect children and staff from safeguarding, privacy and data protection risks associated with mobile phone use; and
- provide clear procedures for responding to inappropriate or unsafe use of mobile phones.

2. Relevant Guidance

This policy has been developed in accordance with relevant Department for Education guidance, including the statutory guidance *Mobile phones in schools*, and should be read alongside:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE);
- the school's Safeguarding Policy;
- the school's Behaviour Policy;
- the school's Data Protection Policy; and
- the school's ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

This policy will be reviewed in response to relevant changes in legislation, statutory guidance or Department for Education requirements.

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3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff, including teachers, support staff and supply staff, are responsible for following and consistently implementing this policy.

Staff should model appropriate and professional use of mobile phones and similar devices.

Volunteers, contractors and anyone else working or volunteering within the school community are expected to follow the requirements of this policy and should alert a member of staff if they witness or become aware of a breach.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, monitoring its effectiveness and ensuring that staff and children understand their responsibilities.

Staff should respond to questions or concerns from parents and carers professionally and clearly explain the reasons for the school's approach to mobile phone use.

3.2 Governors

The Governing Body is responsible for approving the policy and will be informed of significant changes to the policy through the school's policy monitoring schedule.

4. Use of Mobile Phones by Staff

The school expects staff to maintain professional boundaries and to model appropriate use of technology.

4.1 Personal Mobile Phones

Staff, including volunteers, contractors and anyone else working or volunteering within the school, must not use personal mobile phones for personal purposes when children are present, except where an agreed exceptional arrangement applies.

Personal mobile phone use should normally be restricted to non-contact time and to areas where children are not present such as the staff room.

There may be exceptional circumstances where a member of staff needs to remain contactable during the school day, for example because of an emergency involving a dependent or family member. Such arrangements must be agreed in advance by the Headteacher or a member of the SLT. Where an exceptional arrangement has not been agreed, staff should use the school office as their emergency contact point.

The Headteacher's mobile phone may be used in a professional capacity where this is necessary to conduct school business and discharge their professional duties. Such use must be in accordance with the school's relevant policies and procedures, including those relating to safeguarding, data protection, confidentiality and acceptable use of technology. Where required in the course of their professional duties, other members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) may also use their mobile phones for school-related purposes. Any such use must be limited to legitimate school business and must comply with all relevant school policies and statutory requirements.

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4.2 Data Protection

Staff must not use personal mobile phones to process, store or transmit personal data or confidential school information.

This includes entering personal data, confidential information or information that could identify a child into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools or other online services.

Staff must comply with the school's Data Protection Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Policy at all times.

4.3 Safeguarding and Professional Boundaries

Staff must not give their personal contact details to children or parents and carers, including through social media, messaging applications or other personal communication platforms.

Staff should take reasonable steps to avoid making their personal contact details publicly available on social media platforms or websites where this could result in inappropriate contact from children or parents and carers.

Staff must not use personal mobile phones to photograph, video or audio-record children, their work or anything else that could identify a child.

Where photographs, videos or recordings are required for a legitimate school purpose, school-owned equipment must be used.

4.4 Using Personal Mobile Phones for Work Purposes

Personal mobile phones should only be used for work purposes where there is a clear operational need and where such use is consistent with the school's Data Protection Policy, ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- uploading and marking homework;
- accessing google classroom;
- emergency evacuations;
- supervising off-site trips;
- supervising residential visits; and
- other circumstances where access to a mobile phone is necessary for the safety or effective supervision of children.

A school mobile phone will be used wherever one is available and appropriate.

When a personal mobile phone is used for a legitimate work purpose, staff must:

- use the device appropriately and professionally;
- not photograph, video or audio-record children or anything that could identify a child;
- avoid contacting parents or carers using a personal mobile phone wherever possible; and
- where contact with a parent or carer is necessary and no alternative is available, withhold the staff member's personal telephone number where possible.

On occasions, the Headteacher may need to share a personal mobile phone number with parents or carers in exceptional circumstances. This should, however, only occur where there is a professional need, where no appropriate alternative means of communication is reasonably available, and for the minimum period

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necessary. Any subsequent contact should remain strictly professional and in accordance with the school's relevant policies and procedures.

4.5 School-Provided Work Phones

Where staff are provided with a school mobile phone, it must be used for legitimate work purposes only.

Staff must ensure that communication and conduct using a school-provided device is appropriate and professional at all times and complies with the Staff Code of Conduct.

4.6 Breaches

Failure by a member of staff to comply with this policy may result in action under the school's disciplinary procedures.

Any response will be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the breach. Serious safeguarding or data protection breaches may be referred to the appropriate authorities or agencies where required.

5. Use of Mobile Phones by Children

The school recognises that some children may need access to a mobile phone for their journey to and from school.

The school operates a phone-free school environment during the school day.

Only children in Year 5 and Year 6 are permitted to bring a mobile phone onto the school site.

Children must not use mobile phones during the school day.

5.1 Smartwatches and Similar Devices

Smartwatches and other personal devices with communication or smart functionality will be treated in the same way as mobile phones where they have the ability to send or receive communications, access the internet, record audio or images, or otherwise provide similar functionality.

Children who are permitted to bring such a device to school must follow the same expectations as those set out for mobile phones.

5.2 Storage and Daily Procedures

Any Year 5 or Year 6 child who brings a mobile phone to school must switch it off before entering the school building.

The phone must be handed directly to the class teacher immediately upon arrival in the classroom.

Phones handed in will be stored securely by the class teacher during the school day.

Phones will be returned to the child at the end of the school day as they leave the school premises.

5.3 Contacting Parents and Carers

On arrival at school, children are permitted to contact their parent to inform them of their safe arrival at school and will do this in a designated space in the playground.

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Children must not use their mobile phones during the school day. If a child needs to contact a parent or carer during the school day, they should speak to a member of staff. Where contact is considered necessary, this will normally take place via the school office.

At the end of the school day, children may request permission to use their own device, the contact must take place discreetly and under staff supervision, in a designated area in the playground.

We encourage children to contact their parents or carers from within the school premises, rather than leaving the school site or attempting to make contact outside the school gates. This helps to ensure that children remain within a safe environment while making contact, this extends to usage at Ellen Brown.

Parents and carers should contact the school office if they need to communicate with their child during the school day. They should not contact their child directly on their mobile phone.

5.4 Exceptions and Reasonable Adjustments

The school recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where a child needs access to a mobile phone or similar device during the school day. For example, this may include medical needs.

Any exception will be considered on an individual basis and agreed by the Headteacher.

Where appropriate, the arrangements will be recorded and reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain necessary and proportionate.

5.5 Searching, Confiscation and Sanctions

The school may confiscate a mobile phone or other device where this is permitted under the school's Behaviour Policy and applicable legislation.

Children found to be using their mobile phones contrary to the expectations set out in this policy, will have their mobile phones confiscated for a period of one week. Parents/carers will be notified of this and will be required to collect the phone from the school. They will need to meet with the headteacher or a member of the SLT and will be given a copy of this policy and our online safety policy (if required). Parents/carers will be notified of the confiscation before the child leaves school that day.

Where a device is confiscated, it will normally be taken to the school office and stored securely.

The school may search a child's mobile phone or other device where there are lawful grounds to do so. Any search will be carried out by an appropriately authorised member of staff and in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation and the school's Behaviour Policy.

Any sanction will be reasonable, proportionate and consistent with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Where a safeguarding concern is identified, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

Where mobile phone use involves bullying, harassment, threats, exploitation, the sharing of inappropriate material or other conduct that may constitute a criminal offence, the school may involve the police or other appropriate agencies.

Repeated or serious breaches may result in the school withdrawing permission for a child to bring a mobile phone onto the school site for a specified period.

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5.6 Parental and carer responsibility

Parents and carers have an important role in supporting the safe and responsible use of mobile phones and other digital devices. They are expected to monitor their child's use of such devices, including the content and services they access, the people with whom they communicate and the contexts in which devices are used. Parents and carers should take appropriate steps to ensure that their child's use of mobile phones and online services does not place themselves or others at risk.

The school provides children with regular education and guidance on the safe, responsible and appropriate use of mobile phones, the internet and other digital technologies. This is delivered through the Computing curriculum, PSHE, Collective Worship and whole-school online safety initiatives. The school also maintains clear and robust expectations and procedures governing the use of mobile phones and digital devices within the school environment.

Parents and carers retain primary responsibility for supervising and monitoring their child's use of mobile phones, digital devices and online services outside school. They are expected to take reasonable steps to promote their child's online safety and to address any concerns regarding their child's online activity, including activity that may affect the wellbeing or safety of other children.

The school provides regular information, guidance and training opportunities for parents and carers to develop their knowledge and understanding of online safety and to equip them with the skills and confidence to support their children in using mobile phones and other digital devices safely and responsibly.

6. Use of Mobile Phones by Parents, Carers, Volunteers, Governors, Contractors and Visitors

Parents, carers, volunteers, governors, contractors and visitors are expected to support the school's approach to mobile phone use while on the school site.

6.1 General Use

Mobile phones must not be used inside school buildings or corridors unless authorised by the Headteacher or a member of the SLT for an exceptional reason.

Parents and carers are asked to refrain from using their mobile phones during morning drop-off and afternoon collection while on the playground. This supports effective supervision of children and promotes positive communication between families and staff.

Visitors and volunteers will be informed of the school's expectations regarding mobile phone use when they sign in at reception and through the school's safeguarding information.

6.2 Photography and Recording

Parents and carers must not photograph or record children other than their own unless the school has expressly permitted photography or recording as part of a specific event.

Where photography or recording is permitted:

- parents and carers must respect the privacy and safeguarding needs of other children and families;
- photographs and recordings should be for personal use only;
- photographs or recordings featuring other children must not be shared on social media, messaging groups or other public or online platforms without appropriate consent; and
- parents and carers must follow any specific instructions given by the school in relation to photography and recording.

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The school reserves the right to prohibit photography or recording at particular events where this is necessary for safeguarding or privacy reasons.

6.3 School Trips and Residential Visits

Parents, carers and volunteers accompanying school trips must follow the school's instructions regarding mobile phone use.

They must not use their personal phones to contact other parents or carers about children or to photograph, record or otherwise capture images, audio or video of children, their work or anything that could identify a child, unless specifically authorised by the school.

Volunteers accompanying trips may raise concerns about a child's use of a mobile phone with a member of staff but must not search or confiscate a child's device themselves.

7. Use of Mobile Phones Outside the School Day

The school will determine arrangements for mobile phone use during residential visits, school trips and other activities outside the normal school day.

Where mobile phones are permitted during such activities, expectations will be communicated to children and parents or carers in advance.

The arrangements will take account of the purpose and circumstances of the activity, safeguarding considerations and the age and individual needs of the children involved.

8. Loss, Theft or Damage

Children in Year 5 and Year 6 who bring mobile phones to school must switch them off and hand them in to their class teacher on arrival.

Staff are responsible for taking reasonable steps to secure their personal mobile phones. Failure to do so may result in a data protection or confidentiality breach.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones or similar devices that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises, on school transport, during school visits or trips, or while children are travelling to or from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored securely in the school office.

Any mobile phone or device found on the school site should be handed to the school office. The school will make reasonable efforts to identify and contact the owner.

9. Monitoring and Review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy supports children's education, behaviour, welfare and safeguarding.

The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and reviewed in accordance with the school's policy monitoring schedule, or sooner where there is a significant change in legislation, statutory guidance or school practice.

When reviewing the policy, the school will take account of:

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- feedback from children;
- feedback from parents and carers;
- feedback from staff;
- behaviour and safeguarding records;
- any relevant incidents involving mobile phones or similar devices;
- relevant Department for Education guidance;
- advice from the local authority and other relevant organisations; and
- any relevant changes in legislation or statutory requirements.