

AYCLIFFE DRIVE PRIMARY

SCHOOL



Mobile Phone Policy

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1.Definitions:

For ease of reference, throughout this policy the term “**mobile phone**” will be used to refer to any personal communication device capable of making calls and/or sending messages, whether through a cellular network or via the internet. This includes, but is not limited to, mobile phones, smartphones, smartwatches, tablets and other similar personal communication devices.

2.Introduction and aims

At Aycliffe Drive Primary School, we recognise that mobile phones, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for some of our pupils, parents, staff and the wider school community. We understand that, when used appropriately, mobile phones can provide a valuable means of communication and support. Our policy aims to:

- Promote and model safe, responsible and appropriate use of mobile phones.
- Provide clear and consistent expectations regarding the use of mobile phones by pupils, staff, parents, carers and volunteers.
- Help ensure that mobile phone use does not compromise the safety, wellbeing or learning of members of our school community.
- Support and complement the school’s existing policies and procedures, particularly those relating to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and online safety.

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

3.Roles and responsibilities

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 is responsible for monitoring the policy, reviewing it, and ensuring that it remains appropriate and effective. The Governing Board will review and formally approve the policy every two years, or sooner if there are significant changes to legislation, guidance or school practice.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff, including volunteers, visitors, governors, contractors and any other individuals working or engaged by the school, must not use personal mobile phones to make or receive calls, send or respond to messages, or access personal content while supervising or working directly with pupils. Personal mobile phone use is also not permitted during professional meetings with other adults.

Personal mobile phones should only be used during designated non-contact times, such as break and lunchtime, and in areas where pupils are not present, for example, the staff room.

When working with pupils in classrooms or any other area of the school, personal mobile phones must be switched to silent and securely stored out of sight and reach, such as in a bag, drawer or designated storage area. Mobile phones should also be stored away during staff meetings and other professional meetings.

There may be occasions when staff need temporary access to their personal mobile phone during contracted hours for legitimate work-related purposes, such as two-factor authentication for school systems, including CPOMS. Where this is required, staff should access their phone only for the necessary information or authentication and return it to secure storage immediately afterwards.

4.2 Exceptional Circumstances

The school recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where a member of staff needs to be contactable during working hours. This may include:

- An emergency involving their child or their child's school.
- A dependent or family member who is acutely unwell or requires urgent support.
- Other exceptional circumstances that may reasonably require immediate contact.

Any member of staff who believes they have a valid reason to have access to their personal mobile phone during contact time or professional meetings must discuss this with the Headteacher in advance, where circumstances allow.

The Headteacher will consider each request on an individual basis and determine whether special arrangements are appropriate. Where an arrangement is agreed, the member of staff must ensure that mobile phone use remains limited to the agreed circumstances and does not compromise the safety, supervision or privacy of pupils.

Where special arrangements are not considered necessary, the school office telephone number may be used as an emergency contact number for staff and their families.

4.3 Data protection and Safeguarding

Staff must not use personal mobile phones to access, store, process or transmit personal data or confidential school information, unless specific authorisation has been given by the school.

Staff must not share their personal contact details with pupils or parents/carers. This includes personal telephone numbers, email addresses and social media or messaging accounts. Staff must not connect with pupils or parents/carers through personal social media accounts or messaging applications.

Staff should take care not to make their personal contact details publicly available through social media platforms, websites or other online services where this could result in unwanted or inappropriate contact from pupils or parents/carers.

Personal mobile phones must not be used to take photographs, videos or other recordings of pupils, their work, or any other information or activity that could identify an individual pupil.

Where photographs or recordings are required for educational purposes, school activities, trips, residential visits or other school-related events, these must be taken

using the designated class or school-owned device. Images and recordings must be handled and stored in accordance with the school's data protection, safeguarding and acceptable use procedures.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the use of personal technology and/or mobile data is necessary to support a specific school activity. In such circumstances, prior permission must be obtained from the Headteacher or an appropriate member of the senior leadership team.

Any information, photographs or recordings captured using personal technology under an agreed exception must only be used for the specific authorised purpose and must be transferred to the appropriate school system or device as soon as reasonably practicable. Once this has been completed, all copies of the data must be permanently deleted from the personal device.

For example, staff may be permitted to use a personal mobile phone and/or mobile data to upload photographs taken during an offsite trip visit where suitable Wi-Fi is unavailable. Such use must be specifically authorised and limited to the agreed purpose.

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 aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil unless specific permission has been granted.
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4.5 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 are not permitted to use mobile phones on school premises at any time when they are under the direct care of the school staff. For other events related to the school but not led by the school, such as PTA events and the provider of the event will have their own procedures/guidance/policy related to mobile phone use by children in their care.

As a school we recognise there may be occasions where it may be supportive to families to allow a child to bring a phone to school, such as when a child who lives in more than one parental home is dropped off and collected by different parents or when Year 6 children are permitted to walk home alone with parental permission, when parents have provided written consent.

In these circumstances, children are identified as permitted to bring a phone to school but not use it on the school grounds. The child must bring turn their phone off before entering the school grounds and hand it straight to their class staff on entry. It will then be stored safely (preferably a sealed box) until the child leaves the school building. Phones are not to be turned on until they leave the school premises.

5.1 Breaches of the Mobile Phone Agreement

If a pupil breaches the school's mobile phone agreement, the school may withdraw permission for the pupil to bring a mobile phone onto the school premises for a specified period or, where appropriate, permanently.

If a pupil is found to have a mobile phone in school that has not been handed to the class staff member in accordance with the school's procedures, the phone will be confiscated. The phone will not be returned directly to the pupil. A parent, carer or other appropriate family member will be contacted and arrangements will be made for the device to be collected by an adult.

The school may confiscate mobile phones from pupils in accordance with its statutory powers and the relevant Department for Education guidance.

5.2 Searching a Pupil's Mobile Phone

If the school receives information or has reasonable grounds to believe that a pupil has used their mobile phone in a way that breaches the school's Behaviour Policy, safeguarding procedures or other school expectations, the school may consider searching the device where this is permitted under current legislation and Department for Education guidance.

Any search of a pupil's mobile phone will be carried out in accordance with the school's procedures and the DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. Staff will

only search a device where there are appropriate grounds to do so and will ensure that the pupil's dignity and privacy are respected.

Where appropriate, the situation will initially be discussed with the pupil. If a search is considered necessary and permitted, the pupil may be asked to unlock their device so that the relevant content can be checked. Searches will be limited to information relevant to the concern being investigated.

If inappropriate or concerning content is identified, the school will contact the pupil's parent/carer and discuss the matter with them. Where appropriate and lawful, the school may retain evidence, such as screenshots or copies of relevant content, in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

Where content or behaviour indicates that a criminal offence may have occurred, the school will refer the matter to the police or another appropriate agency. The school will also follow its safeguarding procedures where there is a concern about a child's safety or wellbeing.

5.3 Criminal or Serious Misconduct

The school takes seriously any use of mobile phones or other devices to engage in behaviour that may constitute bullying, harassment, abuse or criminal conduct. Depending on the circumstances, such behaviour may be referred to the police or other relevant agencies.

Examples of behaviour that may constitute criminal or serious misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Sharing or distributing nude or semi-nude images or videos, including consensual or non-consensual sharing (often referred to as "sexting").
- Creating or sharing AI-generated indecent image, manipulated photographs and/or "deep fakes", particularly involving nude or semi-nude images.
- Taking or sharing images under a person's clothing without their consent ("upskirting").
- Making threats of violence or physical assault.
- Sending abusive or threatening calls, messages, emails or social media content targeting an individual because of their ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or other protected characteristic.
- Using digital devices or online platforms to bully, harass, intimidate or threaten another person.
- Sharing or creating content that is abusive, discriminatory, threatening or otherwise unlawful.

The school will respond to such incidents in accordance with its Behaviour Policy, Suspensions and Exclusions Policy, Online Safety Policy and Child Protection Policy and relevant statutory guidance.

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

Parents, carers, visitors and volunteers, including governors and contractors, are expected to follow the same principles regarding mobile phone use as staff while on the school premises during the school day.

This includes:

- Not taking photographs or recordings of pupils, unless this is specifically permitted at a public event, such as a school fair, or relates solely to their own child.
- Ensuring that any photographs or recordings taken at permitted public events are for personal use only and are not shared or published on social media or other online platforms without appropriate consent.
- Not using mobile phones during lessons or while working directly with pupils.
- Following any additional instructions provided by the school regarding mobile phone use.

Parents, carers, visitors and volunteers will be made aware of the school's expectations regarding mobile phone use when signing in at reception or when attending a school event.

6.1 School Trips

Parents, carers and volunteers supporting school trips must follow the school's mobile phone policy and must not:

- Use their personal mobile phone to contact other parents or carers regarding pupils or the activities taking place.
- Take photographs, videos or recordings of pupils, their work, or any other information or activity that could identify a pupil.
- Share information, photographs or recordings relating to pupils through personal messaging services, social media or other online platforms.

Parents, carers and volunteers accompanying are expected to support staff in ensuring that pupils follow the school's mobile phone expectations, as outlined in Section 5 of this policy. Any concerns or breaches should be reported to a member of school staff.

Parents and carers who need to contact their child during the school day should do so through the school office. They should not contact their child directly on their personal mobile phone while the child is in school.

7. Loss, Theft or Damage

Pupils who are permitted to bring a mobile phone to school must ensure that the device is clearly labelled with their name and handed to the appropriate member of staff for secure storage in accordance with the school's procedures.

Pupils are responsible for taking reasonable steps to protect their device from unauthorised access, including using an appropriate password, PIN or other security feature.

Staff are also responsible for ensuring that their personal mobile phones are kept secure and protected from unauthorised access.

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

Any mobile phone that has been confiscated will be stored securely in the school office in a locked cabinet until it can be returned in accordance with the school's procedures.

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

8. Monitoring and Review

Aycliffe Drive Primary School is committed to ensuring that this policy supports the safety, wellbeing, behaviour and education of all pupils.

The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored and reviewed regularly. As part of the review process, the school will consider:

- Feedback from pupils and parents/carers.
- Feedback from teachers and other members of staff.
- Records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and incidents involving mobile phones.
- Any concerns or issues identified through the implementation of the policy.
- Changes to relevant legislation, guidance or national expectations.
- Advice and guidance from the Department for Education, the local authority and other relevant organisations.