



Foxton Primary School

Mobile Phone and Other Smart Devices Policy September 2024

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Date	September 2024
Approved by	FGB
Approved date	17/10/24
Due for review	September 2027

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1.0 Introduction

It is widely recognised that many children have access to personal communication devices including mobile phones, smart phones and smart watches. Children using these devices are likely to have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile networks such as 3G, 4G, 5G, Airdropping and 'Nearby Share' (see Appendix A for more details). For many these devices can provide security and reassurance; however there also associated risks. Safeguarding of children within the school is paramount.

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile, smart phone and smart watches causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against potential misuse.

The terms 'phone' or 'mobile phone' in this guidance denotes mobile phones, smart phones, airpods, iPods, iPads, MP3 players, MP4 players and smart watches.

1.1 The guidance aims to:

- Set out clear guidance for the use of mobile phones for staff (including supply staff), pupils and volunteers
- Set out clear guidance for visitors and contractors
- Ensure robust safeguarding
- Support schools' other policies relating to child protection and behaviour

2.0 Staff responsibilities

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) may wish to have their personal mobile phones at work for use in case of emergencies, however, there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to areas and times when there are no children present or likely to be present.

2.1 All staff:

- The school expects staff to lead by example and therefore should not make or receive personal calls, or texts (via mobile phone or smart watch), whilst children are present or during contact time.
- Staff (including volunteers and supply staff) should only use their mobile phones and smart devices for personal contact in designated areas such as a staff room.
- **Y** than in agreed exceptional circumstances, mobile phones should be switched off or on silent and left in a safe place (stored in a cupboard or under a desk) and smart watches silenced during lesson and work times.

In general, it is expected that staff use of mobile phones will be confined to the office and staff room areas of the school during school hours, for example at lunchtime, or in an emergency. After school hours teachers may keep their mobile phone with them in the classroom but never when there are children present (ie during an after-school club).

If there is an emergency, such as a family emergency, staff and volunteer's emergency phone calls to them should come through the office so that appropriate cover can be arranged for the pupils in their class

2.2 Safeguarding

- Staff should not contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone in or out of school time or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, a school telephone should be used.
- Staff should not share personal contact details through social media and messaging apps.
- Staff should regularly monitor and update their privacy settings on social media sites
- Staff should never accept a 'friend request' or respond to any posts that may deliberately or inadvertently include them but inform their line manager or Senior Leader of the contact.
- Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.
- Staff are not permitted to take photos or videos of pupils or anything else (e.g., work) that might identify the pupil.
- If photos or videos are being taken as part of the school curriculum or for promotional purposes, then school equipment must be used. Staff should not allow themselves to be photographed by a pupil(s).

There may, on occasions, be a time when it is necessary, for the safety of a child (such as a named child with an EHCP), where a teaching assistant is required (for emergency contact only - to alert the school office), to have their mobile phone on them. If this is the case, they must, in agreement with the Headteacher, sign the form (Appendix B) agreeing not to use their phone unless they are contacting the school office for support with relation to the named child.

2.3 Using a personal mobile for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use a personal mobile phone for work purposes. Where possible this should always be agreed with a line manager or Senior Leader in advance. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Parental contact in emergency's (mobile phones setting that allow for the number not to be identified should be used)

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff and the school. Any breach of school policy may result in disciplinary action against that member of staff.

3.0 Pupils responsibilities:

We recognise that the majority of pupils will bring mobile phones to school, and many may well wear a smart watch. Expectations around phone and smart watch usage should be clearly communicated to all pupils and parents.

3.1 Primary

- Pupils are dissuaded from bringing mobile phones to school.
- If it is deemed necessary for a pupil to bring a mobile phone to school, (e.g., in the case of older pupils because they travel to and from school independently), then the expectation is that the pupil hands their phone into the school office.

- Any children bringing a mobile phone into school will be expected to leave it, turned off, in the school office. It can be collected again at the end of the school day.
- Children may not use their mobile phone during the school day under any circumstances.
- Parents should ensure they have contacted the school office to make them aware of their child bringing in their mobile phone

4.0 Parents, visitors and contractors:

Parents, visitors and contractors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones at all on the school site/in any area where children/young people are present. Mobile phones must be out of sight at all times – volunteers, contractors and third parties will be informed of this on entry to school. For volunteers who are regularly in school – they will be referred to this policy.

- Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others.
- Should phone calls/and or texts need to be taken or made, visitors are asked to leave the premises to do so.
- Photos of children must not be taken without prior discussion with a member of the Senior Management Team and in accordance with the UK *General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018* and using the 'Use of images consent form' (please refer to the school's document "*Guidance for schools and other establishments on the use of images*" 2022. Any individual bringing a personal device into the school must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.
- At school events, parents may take photographs of children as long as they agree not to upload any photos onto social media sites and are aware of GDPR safeguards. Parents will be reminded of this at events.
- Occasionally, contractors make use of a mobile phone to take photographs of a job requirement or to contact a supplier or office; all contractors should be reminded on arrival at the school of the requirement to ensure that children are not present in any photographs taken.

5.0 Inappropriate or illegal content:

Where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may be unsuitable and may constitute evidence relating to a criminal offence, the allegations process will be followed (please refer to the school's 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy').

- For both staff (including supply staff), pupils, visitors and contractors the school retains no liability for any device that is brought into school which is either lost, stolen or damaged.
- For both staff (including supply staff), pupils, visitors and contractors, the school retains no liability for any device that is used in a manner that is against the owner's consent.

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff and the school. Any breach of school policy may result in disciplinary action against that member of staff.

Related Policies and guidance:

Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (September 2024)

Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings February 2022

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)

Guidance for schools and other establishments on the use of images (September 2023)

Data Protection: A toolkit for schools, DfE, (August 2018)

Appendix A - Airdrop and Nearby Share

Airdrop.

- AirDrop is a feature available on iPhones and Mac computers (iOS 7, iPadOS 13, OS X 10.10, or later required).
- It lets physically close Mac and iOS devices share files, photos, websites etc.
- There are no size limits on files.
- It uses Bluetooth and Wi-Fi to transmit the files.
- AirDrop automatically detects nearby supported devices within a maximum distance of 30 feet.
- When a receiver of content is selected, they will be notified and offered the option to accept or decline the incoming file.

Nearby Share.

- Nearby Share is available on Android 6.0+ phones.
- Like AirDrop, it allows users to instantly share files, links and pictures with people around them.
- It also works through Bluetooth or WiFi.
- When Nearby Share is turned on, a list of devices available within sharing proximity is visible.
- When a receiver of content is selected, they will be notified and offered the option to accept or decline the incoming file.

Safeguarding risks posed by both Airdrop and Nearby Share.

- Being exposed to age-inappropriate sexualised and/or violent content.
- Photo sharing as a form of cyberbullying, with the person featured in the image being the target.
- The sharing of self-generated sexual imagery, with or without the permission of the original image/video creator.
- Images of teachers or other staff members shared as part of teacher targeted bullying, including 'upskirting' images (the practice of taking an illegal photo of someone's genitals or genital area, without consent).

If a member of staff or a pupil report receiving inappropriate content then the school must follow their Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures.

Appendix B

Agreement to carry a mobile phone for use when working with a named child

When working with a named child, I agree to carry my mobile phone during the time I am working with the named child.

I agree to carry the mobile phone with me, **for emergency use only**, in order to contact the school office (01223 712447) to request support with the named child.

Named Child: _____

Teaching Assistant: _____

Headteacher: _____

Date: _____