MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Written by:	Sue Maher	**Date:** September 2022
Last reviewed on:	2nd November 2026 by Natalie Bartlett	
Next review due by:	November 2027	

This policy should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff, the school and the Local Authority. Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy is likely to result in the enforcement of the Whistleblowing Policy and other associated procedures.

Introduction and Aims

At Borrow Wood Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone 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 phones are effective communication tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones 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 phones on site. 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
- E-Safety
- Anti-Bullying Policy

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 phones within the setting, which is agreed to by all users:

Personal Mobiles - 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 phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag or pocket) during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (e.g. classroom, playground).
- Use of phones (including receiving/checking and sending texts and emails) should be limited to noncontact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- During staff meetings and on INSET Days mobile phones should be kept out of sight.

- 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 recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as school cameras and school iPad.
- Staff should **never** contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents.
- Staff must not allow themselves to be photographed by pupils.
- Staff must never sent to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Head Teacher.
- It is also advised that staff protect access to functions of their phone using security settings.

Mobile Phones for work related purposes

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

- On offsite visits school mobile phones are used to make contact with the school office (and in exceptional cases parents). In normal circumstances mobile phones 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

We recognise that mobile phones 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 are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips
- If in the rare event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school:
    - A permission slip (Appendix 1) must be signed by the parent and handed in to the Head Teacher.
    - Consent given via Class Dojo for the child to have their phone at school.
    - The phone must be handed in, switched off, to the Class Teacher first thing in the morning during registration and collected from them by the child at home time.
    - Parents are advised that Borrow Wood accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into school or school grounds.
- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.

If a pupil is found taking photos or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the Behaviour Policy. If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a senior teacher.

Should a pupil be found to be using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a phone into school.

We ask that parents should talk to their child about the appropriate use of text messages as they can often be used to bully pupils.

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, the 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' - refer to Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy.

Should parents need to contact pupils or vice versa during the school day, this should be done via the usual school procedure of contacting the school office via phone or email.

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

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

On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones. We accept that there will be occasions when contractors will need to use their mobile phones on the premises. They will be asked to make their calls within the confines of the school office or staff room where no children are present.

Parents

We request that mobile phones are kept out of sight whilst on school premises.

It is our Policy not to allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones as there have been instances where parents have published images on social networking sites that include children other than their own.

Dissemination

The mobile phone policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will be available to parents via the school office and website. It will also be shared with the parents of Foundation Stage 1 (Nursery) children before transition visits to the school begin and with the parents of Foundation Stage 2 (Reception) children.

Mobile Phone Parental Consent Form

Dear Parent/Carer

In accordance with our mobile phone policy, if your child is bringing in a mobile phone to school on a regular basis, please could you sign the form below and give permission for your child to do this and remind them of our school policy.

Your child needs to hand their phone to their class teacher first thing in the morning as they go into their classroom.

The school bears no responsibility for the loss or damage to a mobile phone.

Should your child be found using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring their phone into school.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Natalie Bartlett
Head Teacher

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MOBILE PHONE PARENTAL CONSENT

I/we give permission for our child (name) …… in Year …….. to bring their mobile phone into school.

We have read the policy and understand its implications.

Signed …….. Date……

PLEASE RETURN PERMISSION SLIP TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE. THANK YOU.