



Balcombe C of E Primary School

Mobile Phone Policy

Date Agreed:	Feb 2025
Review Date:	Feb 2026, Feb 2027

Aim

Balcombe C of E Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. 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.

Responsibility

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, governors, 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:

Child Protection Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Online Safety Policy

Learning Outside the Classroom and Off-Site Educational Visits Policy

Volunteer Handbook

Whistleblowing Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Induction Policy

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
- Use of personal phones (inc. 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, outside
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in the staff room or drawer) during class time
- There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. Staff should speak to the Headteacher who will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements. For instance:
 - Medical
 - For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
 - In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

If special arrangements are not appropriate then emergency contact should be made via the school office

- It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions of their phone using a secure pin code
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings or images of children
- Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras or I-pads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern

Personal Mobiles - Pupils

Balcombe C of E School strongly discourage pupils from bringing mobile phones into school.

We also 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.

It has therefore been agreed that:

- Permission to bring mobile phones into school must be granted by school and will usually only be granted by school if the pupil is in Year 5 or 6 and is walking to or from school without parents/carers. It is an additional requirement that pupils must have written permission from their parents/carers prior to bringing mobile phones into school. Permission is granted by completing the mobile phone consent google form. This can be found on our website.
- The phone must be handed in to the class teacher at the beginning of the day and collected on the way out.
- The phone is left at the owner's own risk and school is not responsible for loss or damage
- Phones must not be taken on school trips/visits
- Children are not permitted to bring in any other communication devices, such as smart watches, that could be used to record sound or images, or send or receive messages.

Breaches of the above conditions could lead to the school confiscating the device and withdrawing permission for the child to bring their phone into school. If a device is confiscated it will be held in the school office and will need to be collected by a parent or carer.

Maintained schools and academies have a duty under the Children and Families Act 2014 to have arrangements in place to support pupils with medical conditions. In meeting this duty, the governing body must have regard to the statutory guidance supporting pupils with medical conditions at school. In some circumstances, supporting a pupil with their medical condition can involve the use of a mobile phone. For example, pupils with diabetes might use continuous glucose monitoring with a sensor linked to their mobile phone to monitor blood sugar levels. Where mobile phone use allows pupils to manage their medical condition effectively, it would not be reasonable for a school to prevent this.

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the Headteacher or Deputy Head has 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.' The DfE guidance allows us to search a pupil's phone if we have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

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. Reminders of school's expectations of mobile phone use on school site are included in the sign in procedure and our handbooks for staff, volunteers and visitors to the school.

Parents/carers

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones 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/carers usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment. Please also remember that your child will want to greet you at the end of the day and share their news, so please try to be 'available' as they come out of their classroom.

We appreciate that parents will want to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones, but this is on the understanding that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own. It is not permissible for parents to take photographs or videos at any other time on school premises.

We would really appreciate it if parents and carers would refrain from using FaceTime or any form of video calling whilst on site as this is a safeguarding issue potentially for other members of our school community.

Staff will challenge other members of staff/governors/volunteers/visitors/parents/contractors who use their mobile phone whilst children are present. This will then be reported to senior staff and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school policies.

Helping on Visits

Taking photographs on a personal device or using any forms of social media is strictly forbidden at all times.