

# THE STOKE POGES SCHOOL

## Mobile Phone Policy for Staff, Visitors, Volunteers and Children

<b>Date Approved</b>	September 2024
<b>Recommended Review Period</b>	Biennial
<b>Date for Review</b>	September 2026
<b>Person Responsible for the Policy</b>	Headteacher

### 1. Introduction and aims

At The Stoke Poges School, we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life of our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers
- Support and develop children's learning and understanding of our whole school online safety rules
- Support parents in understanding the issues and risks associated with children's use of digital technologies

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

### 2. Roles and responsibilities

#### 2.1 Staff

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 aware of, a breach of this policy.

The headteacher, supported by staff, is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and children accountable for its implementation.

#### 2.2 Governors

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Board every 2 years.

### 3. Use of mobile phones by staff

#### 3.1 Personal mobile phones

**Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while children are present, mobile phones must not be on show during contact time.**

Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where children are not present (such as the staff room).

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance, in emergency situations in school, to allow for the completion of the additional security verification of websites and cloud-based sites such as CPOMS or during school trips.

Occasionally, staff may be waiting for an important message for example from health professionals. In these cases, the headteacher or deputy headteacher will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements. Phones on these occasions should be out of sight and on vibrate. In all other situations school staff should use the school office number as a point of contact and not their own personal mobiles.

### **Smart watches**

A small number of children bring in Smart Watches, such as Apple Watches or Fit Bits. These must be put on silent during the school day. As their phones would be off, their watches will not be linked to their phones.

Adults with Smart watches should have them on silent. They can have them on vibrate if that function exists but should not be engaging with them during child contact time in the same way that they would not interact with their phone.

### **3.2 Data protection**

Many staff use their mobile phones to access information to support them with their main professional duties. This includes work emails and access codes to CPOMS. All staff must keep this information secure by, for example, password protection. All staff must follow General Data Protection Regulations. Further information on Data Protection can be found at the following website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

### **3.3 Safeguarding**

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents/carers or children, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or children.

We recognise that some staff may be 'friends' with members of our school community before starting working at The Stoke Poges School or have become 'friends' as they live in the same community or their children attend our setting. If this is the case, staff must ensure that they continue to support the aims and values of the school and that all school information is treated with the upmost confidentiality. Staff should follow the School's Social Media Policy at all times.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of children, their work, or anything else which could identify a child. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment. However, the school recognises that occasionally, in order to capture a learning point for example, that it may become necessary to use personal equipment, e.g. mobile phone. The image or recording should then be transferred to the school's system at the earliest convenience and deleted from the staff's personal equipment. No image or recording should be kept on personal equipment indefinitely.

### **3.4 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 are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of children, their work, or anything else which could identify a child (as aforementioned in 3.3)
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

Staff should ensure that the school has their most up to date contact details.

### **3.5 Sanctions**

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

## **4. Use of mobile phones and smart technology by children**

Children will be educated regarding the safe and appropriate use of mobile and smart technology, including mobile phones and personal devices, and will be made aware of behaviour expectations and consequences for policy breaches.

Safe and appropriate use of mobile and smart technology will be taught to pupils as part of an embedded and progressive safeguarding education approach using age-appropriate sites and resources.

Children in Years 5 and 6 who walk to school without an adult may bring their mobile phones into school providing they adhere to the following rules:

- Parents/carers must sign the agreement letter before their child can bring in their mobile phone to school
- All mobile phones must be switched off before entering the school site
- All mobile phones must be handed in to the class teacher or teaching assistant when entering the classroom. The phones will be stored away in Reception
- All mobile phones can be switched back on when exiting the school gate

### **4.1 Sanctions**

Any proven allegation of cyber bullying, inappropriate content or inappropriate messaging by a child will result in the child not being allowed to bring their phone into school. The duration of this ban will be set by the headteacher. If the child brings in a mobile phone into school without agreement, school will confiscate the phone. This is a right the school has under Government legislation (section 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006). Parents/carers will be asked to come into school to collect the phone.

An example of a letter to parents/carers can be seen in Appendix 1.

Staff have the power to search children's phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a child's phone if you 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

## **5. Use of mobile phones and smart technology by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors**

Mobile phones and personal devices should not be used in any area, unless permission has been granted by the headteacher/deputy headteacher for use for a specific purpose, for example, as part of multi-agency working arrangements.

Appropriate signage and information are in place in the office entrance and around school to inform visitors of our expectations for safe and appropriate use of personal mobile or smart technology.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of children, unless it's a public event (such as a play or concert), or of their own child off site

- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones on school site if children are present, in lessons, or when working with children

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising school trips must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of children, their work, or anything else which could identify a child or the school

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for children using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

Parents/carers must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the school day.

Members of staff are expected to challenge visitors if they have concerns about their use of mobile or smart technology and will inform the DSL of any breaches of our policy.

## **6. Loss, theft or damage**

All children who bring their phones to school must ensure that phones are handed in to the class teacher or teaching assistant when entering the building.

Children must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches. All staff are offered a secure place to put their personal mobiles.

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

- Disclaimers will be in permission forms for bringing a phone to school
- A copy of this policy will be made available on the school's website. Paper copies are available on request from the front office.

Confiscated phones will be stored securely in the school office or other appropriate location with the understanding that **schools that confiscate phones from children become responsible for the phone, and can be held responsible for loss, theft or damage.**

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on children's education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents and children
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the DfE, the local authority or other relevant organisations

## **8. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- Data protection and privacy notices
- E-Safety policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

<b>Headteacher</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Chair of Governing Board</b>		<b>Date</b>	

Appendix 1 **Letter to Parents/Carers**

Date

Dear Parents/Carers,

If your Year 5 and 6 child walks home alone, without an adult present, then we fully understand some of you may wish to give a phone to your child in cases of emergencies and also for safeguarding. In these cases, we expect parents to sign the mobile phone agreement found below.

In order for your child to bring their phone into school they must:

- Switch off their phone as soon as they get on school site
- Hand in their phone to the class teacher. Phones will be put in a cupboard in Reception – they will get them back at the end of the day
- All Smart Watches such as Apple Watches and Fit Bits must be on silent when on school site. As the children’s phones will be off they will not be linked to their watches.

**Any proven allegations of cyber bullying, inappropriate content or inappropriate messaging will result in your child not being allowed to bring their phone into school. The duration of the ban will be set by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.**

The age restriction for many social media websites, such as Facebook, is 13 years of age. Please support us by discussing the appropriate use of mobile phones with your child.

If your child brings a mobile phone into school without this agreement, we will confiscate the phone. This is a right we have under Government legislation. You will be asked to come into school to collect the phone. **Mobile phones are brought into school at owners own risk.**

If you wish for your child to bring in their mobile phone into school as they are walking home alone without an adult, please complete the reply slip below and return it to the office.

Best wishes,  
Liz Astley  
Headteacher

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Name of child..... Class.....

- I agree that my child may bring in their mobile phone into school.
- I confirm that my child is walking home alone without an adult
- I understand that if they do not follow the guidelines set out below then they will not be able to bring their phone into school. **Mobile phones are brought into school at owners own risk.**

Children must switch off their phone as soon as they get on school site and hand in their phone to the class teacher or teaching assistant. They will be handed back at the end of the day. The phone should be switched back on as they go through the school gate.

**Any proven allegations of cyber bullying, inappropriate content or inappropriate messaging will result in your child not being allowed to bring their phone into school. The duration of the ban will be set by the headteacher or deputy headteacher.**

Parent/carer sign..... Date .....