



## MOBILE PHONE AND WEARABLE DEVICE ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

### Rationale

At Great Binfields Primary School, we accept that mobile technology is part of the ever changing, digital environment we live and work in. We very much aim to encourage responsible and appropriate use of technology rather than seeking to enforce unrealistic bans or restrictions.

We are however, very aware of the possible dangers of the misuse of technology, specifically wearable devices. This policy therefore aims to provide guidance to staff, pupils, parents and visitors. It aims to do this ensuring privacy is protected, online safety is preserved and valuable equipment is looked after appropriately.

With the evolution of mobile and wearable technology including camera facilities as standard, it is of the utmost importance that the way we deal with mobile phones and wearable devices in school, is planned for.

### Aims:

- Promote and set an example for safe and responsible device usage
- Set clear guidelines on acceptable use of devices
- Support other policies, especially those relating to safeguarding and child protection

The policy aims to address some of the challenges posed by devices such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for disruption in lessons
- Risk of theft, loss or damage

### 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:

### Staff

- All staff are responsible for enforcing this policy.
- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts with children present or if they are close by. **Emergency contact to you 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 bag in the teachers' cupboard) during class session time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in spaces where children are present (eg. classroom, playground, hall). They are only to be used in the staffroom or dedicated break out area during break times and lunchtimes
- Use of phones (inc. receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present.
- It is also advised that staff security-protect access to functions of their phone. Adults should 'turn off 3G/4G data access on school premises'.

- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Headteacher 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/videos/pictures of children, or sharing for images. Adults should not take images of a child's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse) even if requested by children's social care; or make audio recordings of a child's disclosure.
- Legitimate recordings and photographs should only be captured using school equipment such as cameras and ipads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher.

Smart watches and Fitbits are permitted to be worn by staff but to be used only as a watch when working with children. Therefore, other functions must be disabled when staff are with the children.

### **Mobile Phones for work related purposes**

School has a work mobile phone and this should be used as a useful means of communication on offsite activities. However staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).
- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents/carers during school trips unless it is for an emergency – all relevant communications should be made via the school office email/text/phone system.
- Where parents/carers are accompanying trips they are informed not to make contact with other parents/carers (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children.

### **Misuse:**

Any member of staff found to misuse a mobile phone or wearable device will be subject to disciplinary action in line with the disciplinary procedure.

It is everybody's responsibility to enforce this policy, therefore any misuse of devices in classroom areas should be reported to the DSL in line with the safeguarding and whistleblowing policies and procedures.

### **Personal Mobiles/wearable technology – Pupils**

We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many older 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 in Year R to 5 are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips
- If a child wishes to bring their mobile phone into school in Year 6, then the parents/carers must complete a Microsoft Forms to inform the school of their request.
- The phone must be **named**, handed in to the class teacher where it will be locked in a box and switched off, first thing in the morning and collected from there by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk).
- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- The taking of photographs and video footage using a camera phone is strictly prohibited.
- Any child/children found to have taken photographs/videos will be asked to delete the photos in the presence of a member of the senior leadership team.
- Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the headteacher 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'.
- **Smart watches/devices e.g. Fitbits are not allowed in school. This is because they are a distraction and may interrupt learning.**

### **Misuse:**

Any children found to have made an infringement of the above expectations will be dealt with under the following guidelines:

- The school reserves the right to hold on to the phone and ask the parents/carer to collect from school.

- For serious incidents the school may withdraw the agreement to allow the child to bring the mobile phone to school.

### **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.

However, these groups of people are to be classified into two groups.

- **Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors without child contact and or interaction.**  
This group will be expected to adhere to this policy.
- **Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors with child contact and or interaction.**  
This group will be expected to turn their mobile phones off and place securely in secure place.

### **Parents/Carers**

While we would prefer parents/carers 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 is not permitted inside the school building but they can be used when on the school grounds – this use must be courteous and appropriate to the school environment.

We also allow parents/carers to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones – **but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.**

### **Loss, Theft or Damage:**

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

Any found mobiles or devices should be handed in to the school office where contact with the owner will be attempted.

### **Dissemination**

This policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents via the school office and website.

**Reviewed:** September 2024

**Next review:** September 2026