



Ottery St Mary Primary School

Mobile Phone Policy

September 2024



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1. Introduction and aims

At Ottery St Mary Primary School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for 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 the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

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 are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy annually in line with updates to the school safeguarding policy.

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

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

A safeguarding lead will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01404 812977 as a point of emergency contact.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.

3.3 Safeguarding

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

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

Staff may use their mobile phones to generate a CPOMS code to access CPOMS.

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 aren't 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 pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office. If an emergency arises staff would be expected to shield their own number before calling a parent.

3.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

3.6 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 by pupils

Children in Year 6 are permitted to bring a mobile phone into school. The school recognises that these children are developing independence and that parents may wish for them to travel to and from school with peers. Parents may therefore prefer for their child to be contactable before and after school if they are travelling home unsupervised.

Children in Year 6 must ensure that they turn off their mobile phone when they enter the school and that they give the phone to a designated adult. These mobile phones will be stored securely during the day and returned to the child at the end of the school day. The child is only permitted to turn their phone back on after leaving the school building.

We do not encourage children in other years to bring in Mobile phones. *If there is a justified and valid reason for a child not in Year 6 bringing in a mobile phone this will be agreed on an individual basis. Please complete the mobile phone permission form for your child and school will contact you if clarification is needed on the reasons for this.*

4.1 Medical Exceptions

For some children it may be necessary for them to need access to a mobile phone to monitor their medical care within school.

In this instance the school will meet with parents/carers and the child (if appropriate) to outline a specific agreement for this.

4.2 Sanctions

If a child does not adhere to the expectations of this policy the school may:

Confiscate the mobile phone and request that a parent or carer attend the school to collect it.

Request that a child does not bring their mobile phone to school.

If the school has reason to believe that a mobile phone has been used inappropriately, and following the DFE guidance, the mobile phone may be searched. This search would be overseen by a safeguarding lead and would be witnessed by at least one other member of staff. Parents/carers would be informed of this search, why it was happening and the outcome.

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 (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- 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 by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, 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 pupils, unless it's a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

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

Parents 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 his/her personal mobile during the school day.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately identifiable, and that they turn off the phone before giving it directly to the designated member of staff.

Pupils 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, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

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

The school will do the following to reinforce this:

- Put signs up in appropriate places in school that are visible to children and parents.
- Include disclaimers on the school website.

If a child's phone is confiscated the phone will be stored in the front office and will be returned directly to the parent or carer who attends the school to collect it.

7. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

8. Rules that the children must follow.

You must follow these rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You must turn off your phone before entering the school.
2. Phones must be given to the designated person in your area.
3. Phones will not be returned during the school day unless the child is going home early. Children are not permitted to have their mobile phone in their bag or on their person whilst in school
4. Mobile phones will be returned at the end of the day. They must not be turned on until the child has left the school building.
5. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
6. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. Do not use your phone to view or store any material that would be unacceptable in school. This includes the sharing of material both before and after school whilst on the school premises.

10. Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

Please complete the relevant form by following this link.

<https://forms.office.com/e/upfiaTNF9N>

