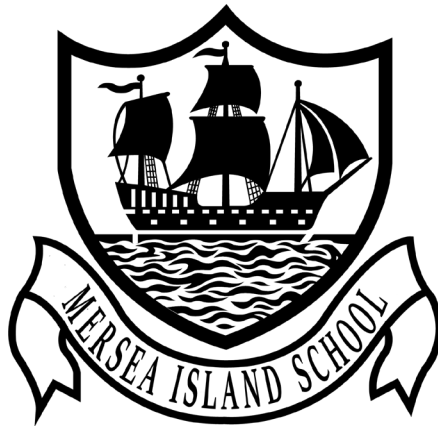


Mersea Island School



Mobile Phone Policy March 2023

Approved by:	Date:
Last reviewed on:	22 nd March 2023
Next review due by:	23 rd March 2025

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1. Introduction and aims

At Mersea Island 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 Governing Board, HT and DHT are responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff, pupils, parents and visitors accountable for its implementation.

2.2 Governors

The Governing Board have a duty of care to protect all members of the school community, in order to do so, they take an active role in the reviewing of this 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 or during contact time. Mobile phones should be off or on silent, out of sight and may only be used in designated staff areas.

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

The headteacher 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 01206 382736 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. Or Data Protection Policy should be referred to.

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.

Our Social Media Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy should be read in conjunction with this Mobile Phone Policy.

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.

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 the event of a residential visit, a school mobile phone will be issued to the Visit Lead for purposes of communication.

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

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

Whilst we understand that some children have mobile phones, we actively discourage them from bringing them to school

- Children are permitted to bring mobile phones into school. Their phone must be turned off and handed in to the office at the start of the day. It will then be given out at the end of the day to take home.
 - Parents are required to sign a Parent Consent form and to acknowledge that they are responsible for checking their child is using their device safely and that they will take the necessary measures to keep their child safe from harm (see Appendix A).
- The school does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to mobile phones brought to the office by the children

- Children must not use their mobile phone to take photographs of any kind whilst in school, in the playground or on visits

Pupils and parents must adhere to the school's mobile phone policy and take all reasonable steps to keep safe whilst using their device, as set out in this policy and in our consent form (see appendix A).

4.1 Sanctions

- If a child is found with a phone on their person or in their bag, the phone will be confiscated and handed to the main office. It will be returned to the child or parent after a discussion with parents.
- If a member of staff suspects there may be inappropriate content on a child's phone, they will inform the parent immediately and follow procedures in line with our school's safeguarding policy.

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 when dropping off or collecting 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 handed directly to a member of staff in the school office and that they remained stored in the office for the duration of the school day.

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 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. This is made clear to parents on the Parent Consent form which they complete, giving permission for their child to bring their phone in to school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the School Office. 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 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

This policy has been updated on 22nd March 2023

8. Appendix A



Appendix A - Mobile Phone – Parent Consent

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you know, the safeguarding of our pupils is our top priority. If your child has a mobile phone, we are asking for your cooperation and help in ensuring that together, we are doing everything possible to safeguard and protect them from online harm.

With more and more children having mobile phones younger and younger, the risks have increased dramatically. This is where we need your help...If your child brings a mobile phone to school, we are asking for your reassurance that you have put the appropriate settings, filters and safeguards in place to ensure your child's online activity is not putting them or anyone else at risk. Sadly, we have seen an increase in outside of school incidents, involving mobile phones, which have impacted negatively on relationships in school and consequently have also proved detrimental to pupil wellbeing and learning. Together we can reduce risk and ensure our children know how to keep themselves safe when using their devices.

Please can you complete the form below and return it to the school office.

I GIVE PERMISSION FOR MY CHILD TO BRING A MOBILE PHONE TO SCHOOL	
CHILD'S NAME	CLASS
DESCRIPTION OF PHONE	

PARENT/CARER	
NAME	
RELATIONSHIP TO PUPIL	
CONTACT DETAILS (Phone/email)	
I am aware that I am responsible for ensuring the necessary filters, settings and safeguarding measures are in place for my child. Signed: Date: Please note: If your child brings a mobile phone to school, the school does not accept any liability for loss or damage.	

9. Appendix B

Use of mobile phones in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds and out of sight.
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the school office.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils or staff, unless given permission to do so by a Senior Leader, within the context of a performance event. No photos or recordings should be posted on any form of social media platform.
- If volunteering or visiting classes, do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils.

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.
