



# Mobile Phones and Devices Policy for Garswood Primary School

February 2025

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to outline the guidelines and expectations regarding the use of mobile phones and electronic devices at [Primary School Name]. This policy aims to maintain a safe and conducive learning environment, where students are not distracted or disrupted by personal devices during school hours.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all students, staff, and visitors on school premises during school hours, including break times, and during school events or trips, unless otherwise stated.

**Rationale:** Garswood Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety of children in its care. We recognise the importance of mobile phones in school for communication purposes but are aware that casual or inappropriate use of mobile phones in the school could pose a risk to children and adults. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. It is also recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

When mobile phones are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile phones is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

Please note that for the purposes of this policy, the term 'mobile phone' also covers any electronic device with the capacity to be used as a form of communication, either through the device itself or any applications stored on the device.

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## 1. General Principles

- The use of mobile phones and personal electronic devices is not permitted during school hours unless prior permission has been granted by a teacher or school staff member.
- Mobile phones should not be visible or used during lessons, in assembly, or in any other part of the school day where they might interfere with teaching and learning.
- Devices must be kept in the student's bag or in a designated storage area, such as a locked drawer or safe place, during school hours.

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## 2. Use of Mobile Phones and Devices Before and After School

- Students may use mobile phones or electronic devices before school (up until the bell rings) and after school (once school has ended and they are leaving the premises) as long as it does not disrupt the learning environment or interfere with other students.
- Students are encouraged to turn off or silence their devices before entering school grounds to avoid disruptions.

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## 3. Emergency Situations

- If students need to make an emergency call, they must request permission from a teacher or school staff member. The phone may be used in a designated area under supervision.
- Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the school office if they need to reach their child urgently during the school day. The school will relay any important messages.

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## 4. Exceptions to the Policy

- In specific cases, such as for medical reasons or special needs accommodations, students may be permitted to carry and use a device with prior approval from the school administration. Requests must be submitted in writing.
- If a teacher integrates mobile phones or other devices into a lesson for educational purposes (e.g., for research, educational apps, etc.), students will be informed in advance.

## Staff Personal Mobile Phones

- Staff will not carry personal mobile phones while working. This protects staff from being distracted from their work and from allegations of inappropriate use. Phones must be safely stored out of sight of children and should be on silent so that they cannot be heard by children.
- If staff have a break time during their working hours they may use their mobile phones during these times but this must be in an area not used by children, i.e., the staffroom, family room or the school office.
- In an emergency, staff needing to make a personal call during a lesson or whilst on duty should first obtain agreement from their line manager, ensure that adequate cover has been put in place and make the call in an area not used by children.
- Staff must give the school telephone number to their next of kin in case it is necessary for the staff member to be contacted, in an emergency, during school working hours.
- A personal mobile phone may be taken on school journey outings in accordance with guidance – see ‘The use of Mobile Phones on School Trips’ section below.
- Camera or video functions on personal mobile phones must not be used in the school by staff to take images of children under any circumstances.
- Staff should not be required to make work calls on their own phones, either mobile or landline, however, if this is necessary then they are advised to use the prefix 141 before dialling the recipients number to ensure their own number is protected.
- Failure of staff to comply with the mobile phone policy guidelines could result in disciplinary action.

## Children

- The school recognises that children who walk to and from school without an accompanying adult may carry a mobile phone for safety. In these cases children may bring a mobile phone onto the school premises but must deposit it with the school office at the start of the day and collect it from the office at the end of the day.
- Mobile phones deposited in the office by children will be kept safely. Whilst the school will take every reasonable care, it accepts no responsibility whatsoever for the theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure mobile phones are properly insured. It is recommended that pupil’s phones are security marked and password protected.
- Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones into any other areas of the school.
- Any mobile phones discovered to have been brought into school and not handed in at the office will be confiscated immediately and parents informed.
- Children are not allowed to carry mobile phones on any school trips.
- If a member of the staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone brought into school by a pupil has unsuitable material stored on it the pupil will be required to hand over the phone immediately to a member of staff and parents will be asked to collect it from a member of the SLT.

## Visitors and Parents/Carers

- The school will display a notice advising visitors and parents/carers that mobile phones are not to be used in all necessary areas. This includes all uses including phone calls, texting and photographing. If a visitor or parent/carer is seen using their mobile phone they will be asked politely to turn it off /remove it from children's view.
- It is recognised that many parents/carers use their mobile phone as a camera/video device to record their child at special performances in school e.g. class assemblies, music concerts etc. On these occasions the use of a phone will be permitted for photographing/videoing only; a member of the staff will always remind parents/carers before a performance that images should only be taken if they include their own child and that the use of these images is for their own personal use and must not be uploaded for any internet use including Facebook or any other social networking sites or used in any form of publication unless they are solely of their own child.
- The school recognises that children may inadvertently be included in photographs by another parent; the school, therefore, is obliged to warn parents of the legal and safeguarding risks of publishing such photographs on any platform. The placing of any photographs of children on social media is dangerous and parents may be in breach of the Data Protection Act if they upload photos of other children without the explicit consent of that child's parents.

## The use of Mobile phones on School Trips

The school recognises that the use of mobile phones on school trips can be beneficial in ensuring safety for all members of the school party. However, it is important that the following guidance is adhered to in order to keep children safe and protect staff and volunteers from accusations of inappropriate use:

- The Party leader should carry the school mobile phone for use in contacting other staff members or volunteers on the trip, contacting the school or contacting the emergency services.

Members of staff and volunteers may carry their own, personal mobile phones within the guidelines below:

- Personal phones should only be used to contact staff members or volunteers on the trip , the school or emergency services. If possible these calls should be made away from the pupils.
  - Personal phones should not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of the day trip.
  - Mobile phones must not be used under any circumstances to take photographs or videos of pupils. Volunteers are acting as staff members for the duration of the trip and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including their own child, using a mobile phone or any other mobile device e.g. cameras or ipads.
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## 5. Consequences for Misuse

Failure to follow the policy may result in the following actions:

- **First Offense:** A verbal reminder and the phone/device will be taken and stored in the office until the end of the school day.
  - **Second Offense:** The phone/device will be taken, and the student's parent/guardian will be required to collect it from the school.
  - **Repeated Offenses:** Further disciplinary actions, such as detention or loss of mobile phone privileges, will be implemented in accordance with the school's behavior policy.
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## 6. Loss, Theft, or Damage

- The school is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal mobile phones or electronic devices brought onto school premises.
  - Students are encouraged to keep their devices safe and securely stored at all times.
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## 7. Cyberbullying and Online Safety

- Students are reminded that they are bound by the school's behavior policy, including rules regarding cyberbullying and responsible online behavior.
  - Any instances of cyberbullying, inappropriate content, or online safety concerns related to the use of mobile phones or devices will be addressed promptly in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy.
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## 8. Social Media and Digital Etiquette

- Students are prohibited from using mobile phones or devices to access social media during school hours unless explicitly part of the curriculum under teacher supervision.
  - Students should act responsibly and respect others when using their devices, both at school and in online spaces.
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**Conclusion:** This policy is in place to ensure that mobile phones and electronic devices do not interfere with the educational environment at [Primary School Name]. Students are encouraged to respect the guidelines and use their devices responsibly and safely.

For any questions or concerns about this policy, please contact the school administration.

**Date of Policy Adoption:** February 2025

**Review Date:** February 2026 (annually)

This policy helps ensure the safety, security, and focus of students while maintaining a balance between technology use and traditional classroom learning.

