Cherry Tree Primary School

Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Policy

Version	Date	Action
1	March 2023	Reviewed and updated following external safeguarding audit.
2	October 2023	Updated with further guidance around mobile phones on school visits.
3	November 2026	Reviewed. Legal framework updated to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the DfE's statutory guidance 'Mobile phones in schools'. Wording clarified throughout.

Next review due: November 2028

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Statement of Intent

At Cherry Tree Primary School the welfare and wellbeing of our pupils is paramount. The aim of this Mobile Phone Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies while promoting safe and appropriate practice through clear and robust guidelines for acceptable mobile phone use. This is achieved by balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools.

It is recognised that the enhanced functions of many mobile phones cause the most concern. They can distract and disrupt the working day, and they are the most open to misuse, including the taking and distribution of images, exploitation and bullying. However, as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy applies to ALL mobile communication devices.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
- DfE (2026) 'Mobile phones in schools' (statutory guidance)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Online Safety Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

- Behaviour Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

1. Scope

1.1 This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. Staff mobile phones should be kept in a secure place. Volunteers, contractors, governors, young people, parents, carers and visitors who ask to keep their phone with them must agree to follow this policy.

2. Code of Conduct

2.1 A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce in which staff work as a team, hold high values and respect each other. This builds strong morale and a sense of commitment, leading to increased productivity.

2.2 Our aim is therefore that all practitioners:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse
- know how to minimise misuse
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to a possible allegation
- understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use
- are responsible for moderating their own behaviour
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

2.3 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 by all users.

3. Personal Mobile Phones – Staff

3.1 Staff are not permitted to make or receive calls or texts during contact time with children. The school office number should be given for all emergency contact.

3.2 Staff should have their phones switched off or on silent, and secured, during class time.

3.3 Mobile phones should not be used in spaces where children are present, e.g. classrooms, corridors and the playground.

3.4 Use of phones (including receiving texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time, when and where no children are present, e.g. the office, the staffroom or an empty classroom.

3.5 Social media apps should only be accessed on personal phones when staff are not working and not in contact with children.

3.6 Employees accessing work emails on a personal mobile phone must have appropriate security in place so that data cannot be accessed if the phone is lost or stolen.

3.7 In exceptional circumstances, e.g. an acutely sick relative, staff should make the Head Teacher aware, give a family member the school number and inform the office that an emergency phone call may come in.

3.8 Legitimate recordings and photographs should be taken using school equipment such as cameras, school mobile phones, tablets or other school electronic devices.

3.9 The school is not responsible for the loss, damage or theft of any personal mobile device.

3.10 Inappropriate messages must not be sent to any member of the school community.

3.11 Staff should report any inappropriate use of mobile devices to the Head Teacher.

4. School Trip Mobile Phones

4.1 We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities. However, staff should ensure that:

- the school mobile phone is only used for communication with staff on the trip, in the event of an emergency and when contacting the school
- only school mobile phones, cameras or other school electronic devices are used to take pictures or videos of children on a trip
- these pictures and videos are downloaded onto a school PC on return and then deleted from the devices
- no apps are downloaded onto the mobile phone other than those used and added by the school, such as SeeSaw or ParentApp
- mobile phones are not used to contact parents during a school trip; all communication is through the school office, unless the trip is an overnight residential visit
- parents accompanying a trip are asked not to use their mobile phone at any time for any reason. Our preference is that they leave their phone at home or in school during the trip and give relatives the school mobile phone number to use in an emergency
- mobile phones are never used while driving, which is a criminal offence
- the trip leader, together with the School Business Manager, makes sure the mobile phones are charged and have credit before any trip
- all mobile phones, cameras and devices are returned to school and secured at the end of each trip.

5. Issue of Mobile Phones for Work-Related Purposes

5.1 Any employee who is provided with a mobile phone for work use must sign the school's Mobile Phone User Agreement and follow all of its conditions and procedures.

5.2 The school will monitor usage on a regular basis.

6. Use of the School Landline

6.1 The school landline must only be used in connection with school business. Personal calls may only be made from the landline with permission from a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

6.2 The school landline must not be used to contact premium rate numbers.

6.3 The school landline must not be used to promote any external private business.

6.4 The school landline must not be used in a manner that could bring the school into disrepute.

7. Personal Mobile Phones – Pupils

7.1 We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can be a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others.

7.2 Pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones in school, on school day trips or at PTA events held in school.

7.3 Children are allowed to take a mobile phone on a residential visit to a city as an emergency backup. There are strict protocols in place for the use of these phones:

- parents must give consent for their child to have the phone with them and take full responsibility for its use and for any loss or damage
- the parent and child must sign an agreement to follow the school protocols on use of the phone
- phones may only be used at agreed points during the day, as specified by staff
- phones must be put away and not used when walking around the city
- phones will be collected from children once they are in their dormitories at bedtime
- children will be given emergency staff contact details in case they are separated from the group. These will be in a sealed, numbered envelope handed out on the first day of the trip and collected when the children board the coach home.

7.4 If a parent wishes their child to bring a mobile phone because the child walks home alone, the phone must be handed to the class teacher on arrival. It will be kept in a locked box until the end of the school day.

7.5 A child found using their mobile phone during the school day will have the phone confiscated until the end of the school day.

8. Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

8.1 All volunteers, visitors, governors, parents and contractors are expected to follow this policy while on the premises. On entry to the school, they sign an agreement to follow the code of conduct.

8.2 Visitors are asked to keep all phones switched off or on silent while on the premises.

9. Parents – Events

9.1 It is school policy that performances and events may not be photographed or videoed. Parents are asked to respect this policy.

10. Dissemination

10.1 This policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It is also available on the school website.

11. Monitoring and Review

11.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if relevant legislation or statutory guidance changes.