



# Mobile Phone Policy

**Approved by:**

Full Governing Body

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**Next review due by:**

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## 1. Introduction and aims

At West Moors Middle School, we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/ carers 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/ carers and volunteers
- › Support the school's other policies, especially those related to Child Protection and Safeguarding, Behaviour for Learning and Anti-bullying.

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 every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

### 2.2 Governors

The Link Governor for Safeguarding will be involved in monitoring this policy which will be reviewed bi-annually at a Full Governing Board meeting.

### **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. 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). **Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag or pocket) during class time.**

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 01202 872474 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. For further information please read the ICT Acceptable Use Policy (Staff) and the school's Data Protection Policy.

#### **3.3 Safeguarding**

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents/ carers 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/ carers 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 should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher.

#### **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 are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

At West Moors Middle School, for educational visits, a school mobile will be used and/ or SIMS card however, staff may use their personal phones to communicate with the staff team supervising groups on site via WhatsApp.

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/ carers, choosing only to communicate via the school's mobile or office staff back at school.

### **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**

[UNCRC Article 3: The best interests of the child](#) ~~not~~ be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Pupils are allowed to bring a mobile to school when they are:

- Travelling to school by themselves
- Young carers who need to be contactable

A system is in place for children in each tutor group to hand in phones in the morning. Upon arrival children place their phones in a named plastic bag and place it in their tutor group's plastic box. This box is then returned to Reception where it is stored in the school office before all tutor groups' boxes are returned to each respective tutor group in the afternoon. Children then collect their phones before leaving school. During the academic year, the school emphasises the importance of Internet Safety in assemblies and tutor group times.

## 4.1 Consequences

If a pupil is in breach of this policy the phone will be confiscated until the end of the school day on Friday. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

In such instances, the child's parent/ carer will be informed immediately and he/ she will be offered the choice of collecting their child's phone in person on the same day or permitting the school to retain the phone in a locked storage facility and return to the child at the end of the school day on Friday.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows schools to search a pupil's phone if you have reason to believe the phone contains offensive images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

If any staff member is shown or told anything by pupils, parents/ carers, involving mobile technology which causes concern they are to report these to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

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
- › 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/ carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents/ carers, 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/ carers, 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/ carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

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

Parents/ carers 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/ carers 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 schoolday.

## **6. Loss, theft or damage**

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.

The school will make sure pupils, parents/ carers are aware of this disclaimer via:

- Signs up in the school entryway or office
- Home school agreement

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked cabinet. In the case of the latter, the school will become responsible for the phone, and can be held responsible for loss, theft, or damage.

In addition, any 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/ carers and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Feedback from Governors
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations