

Oakridge Primary School

Use of Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices Policy

Adopted:	October 2025
Chair of Health and Safety Committee:	Mrs K Lincoln
Safeguarding lead Governor	Mrs N Lewis
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Wylde
Next review date:	October 2025

Introduction and Aims

At Oakridge Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable device user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that electronic devices are effective communication tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many electronic devices that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the working day, and which are most susceptible to misuse - including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

However, as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices able to take pictures, record videos, send or receive calls and messages. This includes cameras, mobile telephones, tablets and any recording devices including smartwatches. More and more devices are technically capable of connecting us to the outside world. We will adapt the policy to include all devices we deem required to safeguard children.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal electronic devices on site. This includes staff, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive. This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children in Schools
- Staff Code of Conduct

Code of conduct

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

Our aim is therefore that all practitioners:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.

- know how to minimise risk.
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use.
- are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours.
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

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 to by all users:

Electronic Devices in the EYFS

All personal electronic devices including mobile phones and smart watches must be stored securely out of reach within the setting during contact time with children. (This includes staff, visitors, parents, volunteers and students). No parent is permitted to use their mobile phone or use its camera facility whilst inside school buildings

Personal Electronic Devices - Staff

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office.
- Staff should have their phones switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag or pocket) during class time.
- Mobile phones and personal electronic devices including communicating using a smart watch should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground).
- Use of phones and smart watches (inc. receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- It is also advised that staff protect access to functions of their phone and devices.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Headteacher aware of this and can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as the school ipads.
- Staff should report any usage of any electronic devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher.
- In the event of an emergency lockdown staff should retrieve their phones at the earliest opportunity as this will be a means in which communication may well be made.

Mobile Phones for work related purposes

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

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).

- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office.
- Where parents are accompanying trip's they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children.

Personal Mobiles and Smart Watches - Pupils

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 prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others. Therefore:

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips
- If in the rare event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school then parents should first fill a consent form agreeing to the schools conditions of use policy (See Appendix 1). The phone must be handed in, switched off, to the school office first thing in the morning and collected from them by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk).
- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- The use of Smart Watches is not appropriate in school due to risks of loss and damage and of misuse in the same way as mobile phones or tablets.
- Pupils are not allowed to wear smart watches in school if they can be used to communicate. If any pupil arrives at school with a smart watch that can communicate then this will be confiscated until the end of the school day.

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the head teacher does have the power to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site' - refer to Anti-Bullying Policy.

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow this policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises.

On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones and electronic devices.

Parents

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as essential means of communication at all times.

We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is *courteous* and *appropriate* to the school environment. If a parent needs to make a call whilst attending a school event, then we ask that this is done in the school foyer or outside of the school building.

However, if family members do wish to take photographs or video with their own cameras/ electronic devices during a performance, or indeed during any other school

event, the school will only permit this, providing that the following ground rules are adhered to in order to respect others and ensure safeguarding is not compromised: -

In the case of concerts, productions and other performance events:

- As an invited guest of the school ensure that you follow their requests as to when and where you can safely take photographs of your own child. This will usually be at the end of an event and only in a particular area.
- Ensure that any and all images taken at school events are exclusively for personal use and are not uploaded to the internet, posted on social networking sites or openly shared in other ways.
- Refrain from taking further photographs and/or video if and when requested to do so by staff.
- During Hall of Fame assemblies we request that you only take a picture at the end of the assembly when all the presentations have been completed.

As noted above, it may be necessary for the school to request that no photography or filming take place at a school event (for example, to account for specific safeguarding needs). In such circumstances, this restriction will, as far as possible, be made clear to all those attending before the event begins. Anyone who continues to take photographs, video or other images after being informed of such a restriction will be asked by a member of staff to stop and to delete any material they have recorded. Where photographs / videos are taken by parents/guardians / grandparents then we ask that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.

Please refer to Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children in Schools.

The school reserves the right to stop photography at any time if a safeguarding concern arises.

The Role of the DSL:

The DSL (or deputies) will oversee and record any safeguarding concerns linked to device use, ensuring these are logged on the safeguarding system

Dissemination

This policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents via the school office and website.

Appendix 1

Mobile Phone Parental consent form

We do not believe that pupils require access to mobile phones at school. However we do acknowledge that some parents/carers may consider that their child needs to bring a phone into school because of special circumstances eg walking to or from school without adult supervision or going home with another parent etc.

Phones should only be brought in for children in Years 5 and 6.

If you wish for your child to bring their mobile phone into school then please can you complete the consent and conditions of use form below.

Conditions of use

- The phone will not be switched on within the school building or grounds.
- The phone must be handed into the school office as soon as your child arrives at school.
- The school bears no responsibility for the loss or damage to a mobile phone.
- Should your child be found using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring the phone into school.

If you have any queries regarding this please speak to the school office in the first instance.

Name of child

Child's class

Make and model of mobile phone