



Burnt Oak Junior School

Mobile phone policy

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Contents

1. Introduction and aims	1
2. Relevant guidance	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	2
4. Use of mobile phones by staff	2
5. Use of mobile phones by pupils	4
6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors	6
7. Loss, theft or damage	6
8. Monitoring and review	7
9. Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances	8
10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school	9
11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors	10

Introduction and aims

At Burnt Oak Junior School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, 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 safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors 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

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Roles and responsibilities

Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently 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 three years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly, and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

Use of mobile phones by staff

Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- 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 (0208 3005854) as a point of emergency contact.

Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found within the GDPR manual.

Safeguarding

Staff must not give 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 personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that 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.

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:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

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 that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

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

Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. Our school recognises that some pupils, particularly those in Years 5 and 6, may need to bring a mobile phone to school for safety reasons, especially if they walk to and/or from school independently. To support this while maintaining a safe and focused learning environment, we have a clear procedure in place.

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are permitted to bring a mobile phone into school; however, phones must not be kept with them during the school day. On arrival, pupils are expected to hand their phone into the school office, where it will be stored securely. At the end of the day, once pupils have been dismissed from their class line, they can collect their phone from the office before leaving the school site.

This approach ensures that pupils can stay safe on their journey to and from school, while preventing disruption, safeguarding concerns, or misuse of mobile devices during the school day.

Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [non-statutory mobile phone guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

Our school's approach to smartwatches mirrors our mobile phone policy. This is because many smartwatches now have similar functionality to mobile phones, including the ability to send and receive messages, make calls, and access the internet. As a result, they present the same potential risks around safeguarding, distraction, and misuse during the school day.

Pupils, particularly those in Years 5 and 6 who travel to and/or from school independently, may bring a smartwatch to school for safety reasons. However, as with mobile phones, smartwatches must not be worn or used during the school day.

On arrival at school, pupils are expected to hand their smartwatch into the school office, where it will be stored securely alongside mobile phones. At the end of the school day, once pupils have been dismissed from their class line, they may collect their device before leaving the school site.

Exceptions

Our school recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, some pupils (not already covered above) may need to bring a mobile phone to school. This may include pupils with specific medical needs, such as those with diabetes, who rely on mobile devices as part of their health management outside of school hours.

The school may permit pupils to bring a mobile phone to school due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If parents or carers feel that their child needs to bring a mobile phone for a specific reason, they are asked to contact the school to discuss this with the Headteacher.

If permission is granted, the pupil will still be expected to follow the school's mobile phone procedures. This means that the phone must be handed into the school office on arrival and must not be used during the school day, unless it is required for an agreed medical purpose. In such cases, use of the device will be in line with the pupil's individual healthcare plan and agreed arrangements with the school. The phone can then be collected at the end of the school day once the pupil has been dismissed.

All pupils granted permission must also adhere to the school's acceptable use policy (see appendix 1), ensuring the device is brought into school safely and used appropriately outside of school hours.

Sanctions

If a pupil breaches the school's mobile phone policy, appropriate sanctions will be applied in line with the school's behaviour policy. These sanctions are intended to be fair, proportionate, and consistent, taking into account the nature and context of the incident.

If a pupil is found using, or in possession of, a mobile phone during the school day without permission, the device will be confiscated by a member of staff. This is in line with the school's authority under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Confiscated phones will be taken to the school office and stored securely. In most cases, the phone will only be returned to a parent or carer, and arrangements will be made for collection at a mutually convenient time. Depending on the circumstances, and following discussion with the parent or carer, the school may decide that the pupil is no longer permitted to bring a mobile phone into school.

The severity of the sanction will depend on a range of factors, including when and how the phone was used, whether the pupil followed adult instructions, and whether there have been previous breaches of the policy. Failure to follow a member of staff's instruction regarding mobile phone use will be treated as not following adult instruction and addressed in line with the school's behaviour policy.

In more serious cases, or where there is a concern about safeguarding, staff have the authority to search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so. This may include situations where the device is suspected to contain inappropriate content, or where it may have been used to cause harm or commit an offence. Any such actions will be carried out in accordance with Department for Education guidance on searching, screening and confiscation, and will be undertaken in conjunction with the child's parent or carer wherever possible.

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, disability)

- The pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in Part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

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

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 at 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 that 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 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

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 their personal mobile during the school day.

Loss, theft or damage

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.

To ensure that pupils and parents/carers are fully aware of this disclaimer, the school will communicate it clearly in a number of ways. The mobile phone policy, including this disclaimer, will be published on the school website. It will also be referenced in the school's code of conduct and, where applicable, included in permission forms for pupils who are allowed to bring a mobile phone to school. In addition, the disclaimer will form part of the home-school agreement and will be shared with all new pupils and parents/carers when they join the school.

Where mobile phones are confiscated, they will be stored securely in the Headteacher's Office in a locked cabinet. During this time, the school accepts responsibility for the safekeeping of the device while it is in its care.

Lost phones should be handed into the school office. The school will then take reasonable steps to identify and contact the owner.

Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be raised with the Headteacher via the school office in a timely manner.

Appendix 1: Acceptable Use Agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Acceptable Use Agreement:

If I bring a mobile phone to school, I agree to follow these rules:

I will hand my phone into the school office as soon as I arrive.

My phone will be switched off before I hand it in.

I will not use my phone on the school site during the school day.

I will collect my phone at the end of the day after I have been dismissed.

I will follow school rules when using my phone outside of school, including:

Not bullying, harassing or upsetting others

Not sharing inappropriate or harmful content

Respecting others' privacy (no photos or recordings without consent)

I will follow any instructions from staff about my phone.

I understand that if I do not follow these rules, my phone may be confiscated and sanctions may be applied in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Pupil name: _____

Pupil signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/carer name: _____

Parent/carer signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow (pupil name) to bring their mobile phone to school because they:

- Need the phone to support their medical needs
- Other :

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its Acceptable Use Agreement.

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the Staff Room/PPA Room.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- 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.

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