



Gardners Lane & Oakwood Federation

Mobile Phone Policy
Approved Sept 26
Review Sept 27

GARDNERS LANE AND OAKWOOD FEDERATION FEEDBACK POLICY

1. Purpose and Aims

At Gardners Lane Primary School, the safety, wellbeing and education of our pupils is paramount.

Mobile phones and other smart devices are an established part of everyday life. However, their use in school can cause distraction, disruption and safeguarding concerns. Devices with cameras, internet access and communication functions can also provide opportunities for inappropriate recording, communication, cyberbullying and the sharing of inappropriate material.

Gardners Lane Primary School therefore operates a mobile-phone-free environment for pupils during the school day and all school-provided activities, except where an agreed exception applies.

Our aims are to:

- protect pupils from distraction and inappropriate use of technology;
- promote positive face-to-face interaction, play and social development;
- support teaching, learning, behaviour and wellbeing;
- protect pupils and staff from inappropriate recording, communication and sharing of images;
- establish clear and consistent expectations for pupils, staff, parents and visitors;
- ensure that any necessary exceptions are managed safely and consistently.

This policy has been developed with regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance Mobile phones in schools, which schools must have regard to from 1 September 2026.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals using or bringing personal mobile phones or smart devices onto the school premises or when participating in school activities.

This includes:

- pupils;
- teaching and support staff;
- volunteers;
- governors;
- parents and carers;
- visitors;
- contractors and other adults working on the school site.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, a mobile phone means any personal device capable of making or receiving calls or messages, accessing the internet or communicating with others.

The policy also applies to other smart or connected devices which provide similar functionality, including smartwatches.

Examples include:

- smartphones;
- mobile phones;
- Apple Watches and similar smartwatches;
- smartwatches capable of making or receiving calls or messages;
- devices capable of accessing the internet;
- devices capable of taking photographs or recording audio/video;
- other personal connected communication devices.

Simple digital watches and fitness/activity trackers which do not have communication, internet, recording or similar interactive functions are permitted.

4. Our Core Principle

The key expectation at Oakwood is that:

Pupils must not have access to personal mobile phones or prohibited smart devices during the school day or while receiving school-provided provision.

This includes:

- lessons;
- movement around the school;
- breaktimes;
- lunchtimes;
- assemblies;
- Breakfast Club;
- after-school clubs;

- discos and other school events;
- educational visits and residential.

A phone being switched off does not, by itself, constitute compliance if the pupil continues to have access to it. Where a pupil is permitted to bring a phone onto the school site, it must therefore be handed to an appropriate member of staff for secure storage.

5. Pupils Bringing Mobile Phones to School

Years Reception to Year 4

Pupils in Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 are not permitted to bring mobile phones to school.

Years 5 and 6

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 may bring a mobile phone to school only where written parental/carers permission has been given.

Permission will only normally be granted where the child:

- walks home from school independently; and
- requires the phone for communication or safety when travelling to or from school.

Permission is valid until the end of the current academic year.

A pupil who has valid permission may bring their phone on any school day. This applies even where they are occasionally collected by a parent/carers rather than walking home.

Permission to bring a phone does not give the pupil permission to use or access the phone during the school day. The Headteacher may withdraw permission where the pupil repeatedly breaches this policy.

6. Arrival at School

Pupils who are permitted to bring a mobile phone must:

1. Ensure the phone is switched off before entering the school site.
2. Keep the phone switched off and securely in their bag while travelling across the school site.
3. Hand the phone to the appropriate member of staff once inside the school building.
4. Ensure the phone is not taken into the classroom or retained in their personal possession.

Phones must not be used while pupils are arriving at school.

Breakfast Club

A pupil attending Breakfast Club who is permitted to bring a phone must hand it to the Breakfast Club staff on arrival. Breakfast Club staff will ensure that the phone is stored securely and transferred into the school's normal storage arrangements at the appropriate time.

The pupil will not have access to the phone during Breakfast Club or during the school day.

Late Arrivals

A pupil arriving after the normal start of the school day with a permitted mobile phone must hand the phone to the school office.

Office staff will ensure that the phone is safely identified, recorded where appropriate and transferred to the school's secure storage arrangements.

7. Identification and Storage

Parents/carers are asked to ensure that any permitted mobile phone is clearly labelled with:

- the pupil's full name; and
- the pupil's class.

This is important because phones may need to be transferred between Breakfast Club, the school office, the main school storage arrangements and after-school club staff.

Where an unlabelled phone is handed in, staff may place it in a clearly labelled envelope, pouch or suitable temporary container.

Parents/carers will be reminded via ClassDojo to label the phone appropriately.

The school will take reasonable steps to store phones securely and to prevent pupils from accessing them during the school day.

Phones should not be left loose in classrooms, pupils' bags or other areas where pupils could access them.

8. During the School Day

Pupils must not access, use or possess a mobile phone or prohibited smart device during the school day.

This applies regardless of whether the device is:

- switched on or off;
- on silent;
- in flight mode;
- being used to play games;
- being used to take photographs;
- being used to communicate;
- being used to access the internet.

Phones must remain securely stored until the pupil is leaving school at the end of their day's provision.

9. Breaktimes and Lunchtimes

Mobile phones and prohibited smart devices must remain securely stored during break and lunchtime. Pupils will not be permitted to retrieve phones from bags or storage areas for use during these periods. The purpose of this approach is to support active play, social interaction and a positive school environment.

10. After-School Clubs and Other School Provision

The mobile-phone-free expectation continues for the entire period that a pupil is receiving school-provided provision. A pupil attending an after-school club must not have access to their phone during the club.

Where a pupil has brought a permitted phone to school, the phone will remain securely stored and will be handed to the adult responsible for the after-school club where necessary.

The phone will only be returned when the pupil is leaving the school site at the end of their day's provision.

The same principle applies to other school-run activities taking place before or after the normal school day.

11. Educational Visits, Residential and Discos

Pupils are not permitted to bring personal mobile phones or prohibited smart devices on school trips, educational visits, residential visits or school discos, regardless of whether they normally have permission to bring a phone to school.

School-provided devices may be used by staff for appropriate communication, safeguarding and photography purposes.

On trips and residential visits:

- school iPads may be used to take photographs;
- photographs may be shared with parents/carers through approved school systems such as ClassDojo;
- staff must follow the school's existing safeguarding and photography procedures;
- staff must not use personal mobile phones to photograph or record pupils.

12. Smartwatches and Other Smart Devices

Pupils must not bring or wear smart devices which are capable of:

- making or receiving telephone calls;
- sending or receiving messages;
- accessing the internet;
- taking photographs;
- recording audio or video;
- communicating with other people;
- providing similar interactive communication functions.

This includes smartwatches with these capabilities.

Simple digital watches and fitness/activity trackers which do not provide these functions are permitted.

Where there is uncertainty about whether a device falls within this policy, the Headteacher will make the final decision.

13. Exceptions and Individual Arrangements

The school recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where a pupil needs access to a mobile phone or connected device.

Exceptions may include circumstances relating to:

- medical needs;
- disability or accessibility;
- safeguarding;
- individual pupil circumstances;
- other exceptional reasons agreed by the Headteacher.

Any exception must be agreed in advance by the Headteacher.

Where an exception is agreed, the school will establish a clear individual arrangement setting out:

- why the exception is necessary;
- when the device may be accessed;
- who is responsible for managing it;
- how the device will be stored when access is not required.

Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that this policy does not disadvantage pupils who require them.

14. Breaches of the Policy

The school will respond consistently to breaches of this policy.

The same graduated response applies to all pupils, regardless of year group or whether the pupil had permission to bring the device.

First breach

The mobile phone or prohibited smart device will be removed from the pupil and stored securely.

The device will be returned to the pupil at the end of the school day.

The parent/carer will be informed via ClassDojo.

Second breach

The device will be removed and stored securely.

The parent/carer will be informed via ClassDojo.

The parent/carer will be required to collect the device from the school office.

Third breach

The device will be removed and stored securely.

The parent/carer will be informed and required to collect the device from the school office.

Where the pupil had permission to bring a mobile phone, that permission will be revoked.

The school may also apply further sanctions in accordance with the Behaviour Policy where appropriate.

Serious or repeated misuse may be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy.

15. Staff Use of Personal Mobile Phones

Staff are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.

Personal mobile phones:

- must not be used to photograph or record pupils;
- must not be used to store photographs or recordings of pupils;
- should not be carried on the person during normal pupil contact;
- should be stored securely in a staff bag or locked cupboard;
- must not be used in classrooms or other areas where pupils are present except where specifically permitted for an appropriate work-related purpose.

Staff must never use a personal mobile phone to photograph or record pupils.

School Equipment

School-provided iPads and other school equipment must be used for school photography and recording.

Oakwood staff use school iPads as class cameras and when participating in educational visits and residential.

Photographs may be uploaded to approved school systems, including ClassDojo, in accordance with the school's safeguarding and data-protection procedures.

Two-Factor Authentication

The school recognises that staff may occasionally need to access a personal mobile phone for two-factor authentication or similar security functions for school systems, including systems such as CPOMS and Outlook.

Where this is necessary, staff should access their phone discreetly and appropriately, away from pupils wherever reasonably possible, and return it to secure storage immediately afterwards.

Emergencies

Where a member of staff has a genuine emergency or exceptional personal circumstance requiring them to be contactable, this should be discussed with the Headteacher or another senior leader.

Where appropriate, the school office should be used as the main point of contact during the school day.

16. Mobile Phones on Educational Visits – Staff

School-provided communication devices should be used wherever available.

Staff may use personal mobile phones for legitimate work-related purposes where this is necessary and appropriate, including:

- two-factor authentication;
- accessing approved work systems;
- emergency communication where no suitable school device is available.

Staff must not use personal phones to photograph or record pupils.

Where photographs are required, school-provided iPads or other approved school equipment must be used.

17. Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are asked to model appropriate and respectful use of mobile phones while on school premises.

Parents/carers should:

- avoid using phones in situations where doing so may distract from supervising their child;
- follow any instructions given by the school regarding mobile-phone use at events;
- not use phones to photograph or record pupils where the school has not given permission;
- not share photographs or recordings containing other children on social media or other public platforms without appropriate consent.

School Events

The school may permit parents/carers to photograph or record their own children at particular events, such as performances or sports days.

Permission will be determined by the school for each event.

Parents/carers must follow the instructions given by the school at the time.

18. Visitors, Volunteers, Governors and Contractors

Visitors, volunteers, governors and contractors are expected to use mobile phones appropriately while on school premises.

Personal mobile phones must not be used to photograph or record pupils unless this forms part of an explicitly authorised professional activity and the appropriate school equipment and procedures are being followed.

Visitors may be asked to comply with additional mobile-phone restrictions where required for safeguarding or the nature of the activity taking place.

19. Responsibilities

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- ensuring the policy is implemented consistently;
- approving individual exceptions;
- overseeing significant or repeated breaches;
- ensuring staff understand their responsibilities;
- reviewing the effectiveness of the policy.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- modelling appropriate device use;
- applying the pupil policy consistently;
- ensuring pupils do not have access to prohibited devices;
- following the school's safeguarding and searching procedures;
- reporting concerns or repeated breaches.

Pupils

Pupils are responsible for:

- following the school's mobile-phone rules;
- handing in permitted devices as required;
- not attempting to access stored devices;
- respecting the privacy and safety of others.

Parents and Carers

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- ensuring that pupils understand the school's expectations;
- obtaining written permission where required;
- ensuring permitted phones are clearly labelled;
- following the school's arrangements for collection of confiscated devices.

20. Communication and Education

The school's expectations regarding mobile phones and smart devices will be communicated to pupils, staff and parents/carers.

Pupils will be reminded of the policy and its rationale regularly.

The school will promote the benefits of a mobile-phone-free environment, including:

- improved concentration;
- better face-to-face interaction;
- active play;
- reduced distraction;
- improved wellbeing;
- reduced opportunities for inappropriate online behaviour during the school day.

Mobile-phone safety and responsible digital behaviour will also be addressed through the school's wider curriculum and online-safety provision.