

# John Bunyan Primary School & Nursery



## Mobile phone policy

**Approved by:** Headteacher/ SLT

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### 1. Introduction and aims

John Bunyan Primary School and Nursery is committed to ensuring the safety of children in its care and we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents 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 and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection, behaviour and data protection

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

We are aware that casual or inappropriate use of mobile phones in the school could pose a risk to children and adults. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. It is also recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

When mobiles phones are misused, it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile phones is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and visitors.

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Please note that for the purposes of this policy, the term 'mobile phone' also covers any electronic device with the capacity to be used as a form of communication, either through the device itself or any applications stored on the device, including smart watches.

## 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 Senior Leadership Team is responsible for monitoring the policy every three years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

## 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 working. This protects staff from being distracted from their work and from allegations of inappropriate use. Phones must be safely stored out of sight of children and should be on silent so they cannot be heard by children. 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).

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 and agreement must be obtained from their line manager to ensure adequate cover has been put in place.

Staff must give the school telephone number to their next of kin in case it is necessary for the staff member to be contacted, in an emergency, during school working hours.

### 3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.

For more detailed guidance on data protection please see the data protection policy or ICT acceptable use policy.

### 3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents 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 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 under any circumstances. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

### 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 aren't limited to:

- › Emergency evacuations
- › Supervising off-site trips (see section 6 for 'The Use of Mobile Phones on School 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 which could identify a pupil
- › Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, then staff are advised to use the prefix 141 before dialling the recipients' number to ensure their own number is protected.

### **3.5 Work phones**

- There are currently four mobile phones registered for school use. These mobile phones may be used on the school premises using the following guidance:

#### **The Caretaker's Mobile Phone**

- This mobile phone is for use solely by the school's caretaker and must not be used by any other member of staff or persons not employed by the school.
- It is the caretaker's responsibility to ensure that this phone is kept safely on his/her person at all times and is only used for school business.
- This phone is for making or receiving calls regarding school business and must not be used for personal calls.
- This phone must not be used for taking photographs or videoing at any time.
- The caretaker will make every possible effort to ensure that this phone is not used when pupils are present, however it must be recognised that this may not always be possible.

#### **The Office Mobile Phone**

- This phone is for emergency use in the office should the main telephone line be out of action.
- It is the responsibility of the office staff to ensure that this phone is kept fully charged and in credit.
- This phone may be used on school trips by the party leader – see guidance below re 'The Use of Mobile Phones on School Trips'
- It is the responsibility of the party leader to notify the office in advance that the phone will be required.
- Personal calls are not permitted to be made on this phone, other than in agreed exceptional circumstances. Contact or calls can be made via the office mobile in the event of an emergency.
- If any member of staff is required to drive in a working capacity, and has responsibility for the office mobile phone, the phone must be switched off whilst driving.

#### **SLT Mobile Phones**

- These mobile phones are for use solely by the Senior Leadership Team and must not be used by any other member of staff or persons not employed by the school.

- It is the SLT's responsibility to ensure that these phones are kept safely on their person at all times and are only used for school business.
- These phones are for making or receiving calls regarding school business and must not be used for personal calls.
- The SLT will make every possible effort to ensure that these phones are not used when pupils are present, however it must be recognised that this may not always be possible.

### 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

The school recognises that children who walk to and from school without an accompanying adult may carry a mobile phone for safety. In these cases, children may bring a mobile phone onto the school premises but must deposit it with the school safes at the start of the day and collect it from the safe at the end of the day.

Parents should be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to pupils having a mobile phone in terms of personal safety there are also some associated risks such as potential for theft, bullying and inappropriate contact, including grooming by unsuitable persons. We would also like to alert parents/carers to the risks that using a mobile phone has while walking to and from school. Children who are concentrating on using their phone can have reduced general safety awareness which may result in road accidents and/or injury if a child is not paying attention to their surroundings.

Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones into any other areas of the school.

Any mobile phones discovered to have been brought into the school and not secured in the safe will be confiscated immediately. Parents will be asked to collect the mobile phone from the school office.

Children are not allowed to carry mobile phones on any school trips.

### 4.1 Sanctions

If a member of the staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone brought into school by a pupil has unsuitable material stored on it, the pupil will be required to hand over the phone immediately to a member of staff and parents will be asked to collect it from a member of the SLT. In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile phone may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the phone will be handed over to the school's DSL or Headteacher for further investigation and the parent/carer asked to collect it from them.

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

## 5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, 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.

The school will display a notice advising visitors and parents/carers that mobile phones are not to be used in all necessary areas. This includes all uses including phone calls, texting and photographing. If a visitor or parent/carer is seen using their mobile phone, they will be asked politely to turn it off/desist from using it/remove it from children's view.

It is recognised that many parents/carers use their mobile phone as a camera/video device to record their child at special performances in school e.g., class assemblies, concerts, etc. On these occasions the use of a phone will be permitted for photographing/videoing only; a member of staff will always remind parents/carers before a performance that images should only be taken if they are of their own child and that the use of these images is for their own personal use and must not be uploaded for any internet use including Facebook or any other social networking sites or used in any form of publication unless they are solely of their own child.

The school recognises that children may inadvertently be included in photographs by another parent; the school, therefore, is obliged to warn parents of the legal and safeguarding risks of publishing such photographs on any platform. The placing of any photographs of children on social media is dangerous and parents may be in breach of the Data Protection Act if they upload photos of other children without the explicit consent of that child's parents.

Parents, 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 or volunteers supervising school trips please see Appendix 1 for guidance for volunteers on school trips.

Parents 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 school day.

## 6. The Use of Mobile Phones on School Trips

The school recognises that the use of mobile phones on school trips can be beneficial in ensuring safety for all members of the school party. However, it is important that the following guidance is adhered to in order to keep children safe and protect staff and volunteers from accusations of inappropriate use:

- The party leader should carry the office mobile phone for use in contacting other staff members or volunteers on the trip, contacting the school or contacting the emergency services. If the office mobile phone is unavailable (e.g., if another trip is on the same day) then the party leader should follow the advice below for staff use of personal mobile phones.
- Members of staff and volunteers may carry their own, personal mobile phones within the following guidelines:
  - o Personal phones should only be used to contact staff members or volunteers on the trip, the school or emergency services. If possible, these calls should be made away from pupils.
  - o Personal phones should not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of a day trip. This means that personal calls or texts should not be made or accepted. On residential trips this will apply while the member of staff or volunteer is on duty. Staff and volunteers should ensure

that next of kin are provided with the school number so that in an emergency the school is contacted and will make contact with the relevant person through the party leader.

- o If it becomes necessary for a member of staff or volunteer to make a personal call or text, then the party leader or another member of staff should be informed and take responsibility for the pupils in the group while the call or text is made away from sight and sound of any pupils.
- o Mobile phones must not be used under any circumstances to take photographs or videos of pupils. Volunteers are acting as staff members for the duration of the trip and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including their own child, using a mobile phone or any other mobile device, e.g., cameras or iPads, without the express permission of the party leader. Volunteers may be asked to take photographs of their group using a school device – this must be passed back to the party leader at the end of the trip.
- o The party leader may ask volunteers to provide them with their mobile phone number for the duration of the trip so that they can be contacted in case of emergency. The party leader undertakes to ensure that these numbers are not held on any mobile device or in any written form after the end of the trip. o It is advised that if the party leader is using his/her own mobile phone, then if they need to contact anyone during the trip, they do so by pre-dialling 141 (some mobile providers use a different prefix – staff are advised to check this with their provider) before the number so that their own number remains protected.

Appendix 1 provides guidance for volunteers on school trips.

## 7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, and must deposit it with the school safes at the start of the day and collect it from the safe at the end of the day.

It is recommended that pupils must secure their phones as much as possible, including using security marked and password or pin protected to prevent 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.

Whilst the school will take every reasonable care, it accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure mobile phones are properly insured.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the DSL or Headteacher's office in a locked cabinet.

Lost phones should be returned to the office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

## 8. 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 and pupils
- › Feedback from teachers
- › Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- › Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

## 9. Appendix 1

### **Use of mobile phones - guidance for volunteers on school trips**

Thank you for volunteering to help on our school trip. During the trip you are acting as a member of staff with regard to the safety and well-being of the children in your group and we therefore ask that you follow the guidelines below in accordance with the school's mobile phone policy.

- Personal phones should only be used to contact staff members or volunteers on the trip, the school or emergency services. If possible, these calls should be made away from pupils.
- Personal phones must not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of a day trip. On residential trips this will apply while the member of staff or volunteer is on duty. This means that personal calls or texts must not be made or accepted. Staff and volunteers should ensure that next of kin are provided with the school number so that in an emergency the school is contacted and will make contact with the relevant person through the party leader.
- If it becomes necessary for a member of staff or volunteer to make a personal call, then the party leader or another member of staff should be informed and take responsibility for the pupils in the group while the call or text is made away from sight and sound of any pupils.
- Mobile phones must not be used under any circumstances to take photographs or videos of pupils. Volunteers are acting as staff members for the duration of the trip and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including their own child, using a mobile phone or any other mobile device, e.g. cameras or iPads, without the express permission of the party leader. Volunteers may be asked to take photographs of their group using a school camera – this must be passed back to the party leader at the end of the trip.
- The party leader may ask volunteers to provide them with their mobile phone number for the duration of the trip so that they can be contacted in case of emergency. The party leader undertakes to ensure that these numbers or not held on any mobile device or in any written form after the end of the trip.
- It is advised that if the party leader is using his/her own mobile phone, then if they need to contact anyone during the trip, they do so by pre-dialing 141 (some mobile providers use a different prefix – staff are advised to check this with their provider) before the number so that their own number remains protected.

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines, please speak to the party leader.

Thank you for your support and co-operation to ensure the safety of all the pupils.

## 10. Appendix 2: Mobile phone information slip for visitors

### Use of mobile phones 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.
- › 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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- › 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
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