



## **MOBILE PHONE AND SMART WATCH POLICY**

## **Introduction and Aims**

At Finham Primary School, the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone and Smart Watch Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones and smart watches are effective communication tools.

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones and smart watches on site. This includes staff, volunteers, governors, 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 Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Guidance for photographing and recording children during events and activities
- Code of Conduct Policy

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.

## **Personal Mobiles and Smart Watches**

Staff/Volunteers/ Peripatetic teachers/Visitors 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 on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer or cupboard) during class time. Smart watches can be worn during school day but the camera, messaging and call services must be disabled.

- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground).
- Use of phones (including receiving/sending texts and emails on smart watches and mobile phones) should be limited to noncontact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions of their phone/smart watch.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Head teacher aware of this and arrangements will be made with the school office so that the emergency call can be received.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones/smart watches, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras, school phones and ipads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Head teacher.

### **Mobile Phones for work related purposes**

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

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional.
- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips unless using the school mobile phone – all relevant communications should be made via the school office.
- Where parents are accompanying trips they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone/smart watch to take photographs of children.

### **Personal Mobiles and Smart Watches**

We recognise that mobile phones/smart watches 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 unless they are in Year 6 and have been given permission (and completed a signed consent form). These phones will be handed in to the school office at the beginning of the day and given out at the end of the day (the phone is left at the owner's own risk).
- Smart watches should **not** be brought to school, they may be valuable and could be lost or stolen. Despite the obvious distraction that these devices can pose, smart watches are internet and camera enabled and therefore present the same concerns as mobile phones in terms of safeguarding. Where a pupil is found to be in unauthorised possession of a mobile phone/smart watch, the phone/watch will be

confiscated by the Headteacher, locked away in the school safe and returned only to the parent/carer.

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.'

### **Volunteers, Visitors, School Stakeholder Committee Members, Peripatetic Teachers and Contractors**

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone and smart watch 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/smart watched. It is recognised that a smart watch may be visible on an adult's wrist, but they must be in silent mode and not used during the working day other than to read the time.

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 will ask that parents' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment and only used in areas such as the staffroom.

We also allow parents to photograph or video their own child at school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones/tablets if there are no parental objections or safeguarding issues, – but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.

This mobile phone and smart watch 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.

Date of Next Review: September 2025



Rachel Crow, Chair of Governor. Date September 2024



Sarah Bracken, Headteacher. Date September 2024