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| Name of Policy | Mobile Phone Policy |
| Responsible Body | Highfield Middle School |
| Responsible Person | Headteacher/DSL |
| Review Committee | Local Governing Body |
| Last review date | Oct 2026 |
| Next review date | Sept 2027 |

# 1. Rationale

Mobile phones are now a feature of modern society and an increasing number of our staff and pupils own one. It is recognised that parents/carers may choose to let their child keep a mobile phone with them when coming to school for safety reasons to maintain contact after the end of a school day. It is also recognised that mobile phones and smart devices today can present some safety and behavioural issues for our staff and children.

DfE statutory guidance states that schools should develop a mobile phone policy that prohibits the use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example, the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video) throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime. All reference to phones in this policy also refers to smartwatches and other smart technology.

Issues in school related to mobile phones include:

- Distraction from learning
- The high value of many phones
- The integration of cameras into phones leading to potential child protection and data protection issues

- Access to unfiltered internet content within a school context
- Phone-to-phone interconnectivity (e.g., internet access, Bluetooth) that provides the potential for the sharing of inappropriate content or illegal file sharing
- The 'always on, always contactable' nature of mobile phones that could provide potential for cyberbullying or the sharing of an individual's location

The school wishes to have a balanced response that:

- Recognises parents'/carers' wishes to allow their child to own a mobile phone and have it available at the start and end of a school day.
- Respects our children's good behaviour and develops their self-control.
- Ensures children and staff are protected from the potential negative issues described above.

## 2. Pupil Guidelines

To achieve this aim, pupils will adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Arrival: Phones must always be switched off (not on silent mode) upon entering school grounds.**
- **Hand-in Policy: Phones must be 'handed in' during morning form time. Pupils must not leave phones in their lockers, bags, or pockets. They will be stored securely for the day and returned at the end of the day as pupils exit the premises.**
- Storage & Usage: Phones should remain switched off until pupils leave the school grounds. They should not be taken out for any reason without a staff member's permission.
- School Transport: Pupils must not use their mobile phone for any purpose whilst travelling on school transport.
- On-Site Prohibitions: Pupils must not use phones for any purpose (e.g., phoning, texting, surfing the internet, taking photos, checking the time, or taking videos) whilst on our school site.
- We recommend that smartwatches are left at home and not brought to school to be handed in
- If a child needs to keep their phone with them for medical purposes (such as a blood sugar monitor) then they are exempt from the measures above, but must only use their device for the medical purposes agreed.

### Confiscation & Inappropriate Use

If a child breaches these rules, the phone will be confiscated and given to the main office. Parents/carers will be contacted and asked to collect the phone from reception. Phones will not be returned directly to the child. Pupils must not use a mobile phone in or out of school in an inappropriate manner that involves any member of our school community. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Sharing inappropriate content with other children.
- Showing inappropriate content to other children.
- Forwarding or authoring offensive or slanderous messages.
- Threatening or bullying through text or internet (e.g., WhatsApp or other communication apps).

If the school is made aware of inappropriate usage, we will work with the parents/carers of the children concerned to take appropriate action in line with our Behaviour, Relationships and Rewards Policy. In investigating allegations, we will ask the pupil to show us their phone in the first instance. We will contact the child's parent/carer if the phone has been used inappropriately. If inappropriate content is found, the phone will be confiscated and will not be returned until the investigation is complete and/or the parent collects the phone.

## 3. Expectations for Parents & Carers

Parents/carers are requested:

- To have their phone on 'silent' whenever on school premises
- To adhere to the guidelines of our Photographic and Video Images Policy if using their phone for photography (any photo taken must be for their own personal use and not shared with anyone else or posted on any social media platform).
- To switch off mobile phones when in arranged meetings with school staff.
- Not to phone their child directly during the day. Instead, contact the school office if an urgent message needs to be conveyed.

## 4. Staff Guidelines

Staff use of personal mobile phones during the working school day should be discreet and appropriate (e.g., not in the presence of pupils).

- Lesson Times: Mobile phones should be set to silent and kept in a safe place out of sight of children during lesson times (not used as clocks, timers, etc.).
- Contacting Pupils/Parents: Staff should never contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If telephone contact is necessary, a school phone must be used where possible (or, in an emergency, use the 141 facility or built-in safety feature to block the number before dialling).
- Messaging: Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils any texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.
- Photography & Media: Photos should be taken using a school device. If a school device is not available and a member of staff uses their mobile phone to take a photo, it should be downloaded to the school network and deleted from their phone within 24 hours. Mobile phones may be used for taking photographs in exceptional circumstances only and with prior permission from the Headteacher.

*This guidance safeguards members of staff, the school, and the Local Authority.*

## 5. Volunteers & Visitors

- Volunteers and visitors should only use their mobile phones in the school staffroom.
- Any visitors to our school site will be challenged by staff if observed using their phone outside of the designated policy guidelines.

## 6. Emergencies

- If a pupil needs to contact their parents/carers during school time, they should attend the school office and request to use a school phone.
- If parents need to contact their children urgently, they should call the school office, and a message will be relayed promptly.

## 7. School Trips

Permission to take mobile phones on school trips is at the discretion of the Headteacher. If pupils are permitted to take phones on a specific trip, they must adhere strictly to the specific rules laid out for that visit.

## 8. Responsibility for Devices

The school accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage, or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. Any phone brought to school by a child is the responsibility of the child and their parent/carer. Staff are expected to take full responsibility for their own personal mobile phones.