



Mobile Devices Policy

Signed by headteacher: *A Hughes*

Signed by Chair of Governors: *David Bradley*

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Mobile Devices Policy

AI Generated Summary

Purpose: Our aim

Bitterne Manor Primary School is committed to providing a safe, calm and focused learning environment. This policy explains how personal electronic devices are managed in school to support pupils' wellbeing, learning and safety.

What devices are covered?

Personal electronic devices include mobile phones, smart watches, tablets, handheld games, laptops and any device that can access the internet, record images, sound or video, or communicate electronically.

Use of devices in school

- Pupils are not permitted to use personal electronic devices at any time during the school day, including break and lunch times.
- Devices must not be used anywhere on the school site during the school day.
- If a device is brought to school, it must be switched off and handed into the school office at the start of the day and collected at the end.

Why the school has this policy

This policy helps to:

- Reduce distractions and support learning
- Prevent cyberbullying and misuse of technology
- Protect pupils' privacy and personal data
- Support safeguarding and child protection responsibilities

Safety and safeguarding

The school follows national guidance and safeguarding legislation. Any misuse of a device that raises a concern about a pupil's safety will be dealt with in line with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Searching and confiscation

If staff believe a pupil has a device or is using it inappropriately, they may search for and confiscate the device in line with Department for Education guidance. Confiscated devices are stored securely.

Sanctions

Breaches of this policy may result in sanctions such as confiscation of the device or further disciplinary action, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Reasonable adjustments

Where a pupil has a specific need, reasonable adjustments may be made to allow limited use of a device for an agreed purpose.

Responsibility for devices

The school cannot accept responsibility for personal devices that are lost, damaged or stolen.

Review of the policy

This policy is reviewed annually. Any changes will be shared with parents and carers.

1. Introduction and aims

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Ownership and responsibility
4. Acceptable use
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Statement of intent

Mobile phones, tablets and other personal electronic devices have become widely available and accessible to pupils. This policy is designed to prohibit the use of mobile phones and similar smart technology throughout the school day, including break and lunch times.

Bitterne Manor Primary School accepts that personal mobile phones and tablets are often given to pupils by their parents to ensure their safety and personal security; however, such devices pose inherent risks and may jeopardise the learning environment.

As a school, we must strike a balance between personal safety and a suitable educational setting. We understand that parents may wish for their child to carry a mobile phone for their personal safety, whilst pupils may wish to bring additional devices to school for other reasons. This policy establishes how personal electronic devices should be used by pupils in school to ensure both personal safety and an appropriate learning environment.

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to the following items:

- Mobile phones
- Smart watches
- Personal digital assistants (PDAs)
- Handheld entertainment systems, e.g. video game consoles, iPods
- Portable internet devices, e.g. tablets, laptops
- Wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems, e.g. devices used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture and/or recording, sound recording, and information transmitting, receiving and/or storing

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory and good practice guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Mobile phones in schools'
- DfE 'Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents'
- DfE 'Behaviour in Schools'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school'
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

- SCC Retentions Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- The implementation of the policy and procedures.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and procedures.
- Ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Reviewing the policy annually.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- The day-to-day implementation and management of the policy.
- Informing parents and pupils of the Personal Electronic Devices Agreement.
- Communicating this policy to the relevant staff members and the wider school community.
- Communicating what devices can be brought to school and when they can and cannot be used.
- Deciding how best to achieve a mobile phone-free school environment.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Negotiating incidents of cyberbullying in conjunction with the headteacher, in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy.
- Applying this policy consistently and proportionately, including confiscating devices where appropriate.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns to the DSL, or deputy, where misuse indicates risk of harm.
- Avoiding use of their mobile phones in front of pupils for any non-work related issues.
- Teaching pupils about the risks associated with mobile phones, other devices and social media, both in school and more broadly.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Initiating and managing responses to incidents of upskirting with relevant staff members and in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Liaising with and reporting the relevant information to children's social care and/or the police, when it is necessary to do so.

Pupils are responsible for adhering to the provisions outlined in this policy.

3. Ownership and responsibility

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing property that is lost, stolen or damaged either on school premises or travelling to and from school, and at school events.

Staff will be protected against liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to personal devices that have been confiscated as an appropriate sanction, provided that they have acted lawfully.

Pupils may be responsible for replacing school property they lose, damage or steal, including electronic devices.

Pupils and staff should enable a personal PIN or passcode on all the devices they bring to school to protect their personal data, images and videos in the event that the device is lost, stolen or accessed by an unauthorised person.

4. Acceptable use

Personal devices must not be used at any point during the school day, including break and lunch times. Personal devices may only be used before arriving at school and after leaving the school premises when travelling to and from school. No use of personal devices is permitted on school grounds during the school day. Personal devices will be handed in to the school office at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day

5. Unacceptable use

Pupils will be encouraged to avoid bringing phones to school; however, if phones are brought to school they will be switched off and stored securely in a locked cupboard in the school office at the beginning of the school day, unless an agreed exception applies.

Unless express permission is granted by a member of staff or adaptations and reasonable adjustments apply, mobile devices will not be seen, heard, or accessed at any time during the school day.

Staff members will be required to model expectations surrounding the use of personal devices when they are in front of pupils throughout the school day, and only use their personal devices where required for work or safeguarding purposes.

Files will not be sent between mobile devices, and Bluetooth and Wi-Fi functions will be disabled while on school premises.

If pupils fall ill during school hours, they will not use their mobile device to contact parents; they will use the agreed procedures (i.e. through the school office).

Under no circumstances will personal electronic devices be taken into examinations. Devices will be kept in a locked cupboard in the school office, or handed to a member of staff for safekeeping during the examination. Under no circumstances will mobile devices be used in changing areas or the toilets.

Personal electronic devices will not be plugged into outlets on the school premises without the express permission of the headteacher, and they will have an up-to-date portable appliance test (PAT).

Staff will not give out their personal contact details to pupils. If correspondence is needed between staff members and pupils for homework or exams, staff should provide their school contact details or use Google Classroom.

5.1 Filming, Photography and Social Media

- Pupils must not take photographs, record video or audio, or film on personal electronic devices while on school premises or during the school day.
- Pupils must not photograph or record other pupils, staff or visitors without explicit permission from a member of staff.

- Images, videos or audio recordings taken on school premises must not be shared online or via social media, messaging services or other digital platforms
- Pupils must not post images, videos or comments online that identify the school, including those showing school uniform or the school logo, where this could bring the school into disrepute or compromise safeguarding.
- Any misuse of images or recordings involving pupils or staff will be dealt with in line with the Behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

5.2 Upskirting

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, the act known as “upskirting” is an offence. Any incidents will not be tolerated by the school. Despite the name, anyone (including both pupils and teachers) of any gender, can be a victim of upskirting.

A “specified purpose” is namely:

- Obtaining sexual gratification (either for themselves or for the person they are enabling to view the victim’s genitals, buttocks or underwear)
- To humiliate, distress or alarm the victim

Any incidents of upskirting will be reported to the DSL and handled in accordance with the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

6. Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

The school will comply with its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments with regard to this policy where necessary. Adaptations may be made in exceptional circumstances and in response to a pupil’s specific needs.

Where a pupil has an agreed adaptation or reasonable adjustment that requires access to a mobile device, this will be permitted only for the specific purpose and within the limits set out in the agreed plan.

7. Cyberbullying

Incidents of cyberbullying will be dealt with and reported in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy.

As part of the school’s ongoing commitment to the prevention of cyberbullying, regular teaching and discussion about online safety will take place as part of PSHE lessons.

8. Searching pupils

School pupils have a right for their private life to be respected under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). This right is not absolute, and the school can interfere with this right as long as it is justified, proportionate, and aligns with the powers to search in the Education Act 1996.

The headteacher, and other members of the leadership team, have the power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item. Mobile phones and similar devices will be deemed as prohibited items that may be searched for in line with the Behaviour Policy.

In all cases the authorised member of staff will always:

- Seek the co-operation of the pupil before conducting a search.
- Ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted.
- Give the pupil the opportunity to ask any questions so that their agreement is informed.
- Have due regard to the DfE's 'Searching, screening and confiscation' guidance.

Staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers. Staff conducting a search must not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing - outer clothing means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear and includes hats, shoes, boots or scarves. Possessions means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control - this includes desks, lockers and bags.

A staff member may ask a pupil to show them what they are doing on their mobile phone or tablet if they reasonably believe that the pupil is using the device to cause harm. If it is judged reasonable, the staff member may inspect the files or data on a pupil's electronic device and delete them if necessary.

Staff members will ensure they have a good reason to examine and delete data on a pupil's electronic device. When determining a good reason to examine data, staff members will ensure they reasonably suspect that the data has been, or could be, used to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.

When determining a good reason to delete data, staff members will consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence and if so, choose not to delete the data. The data may be deleted if it is found likely to cause harm to any person, and the pupil and/or parent refuses to delete the data themselves.

If a search uncovers a device that is being used to cause harm, or which contains prohibited material such as pornography, a staff member can confiscate the device. If a staff member finds child pornography, it must be given to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. Where staff find stolen items like mobile devices, they must be given to the police as soon as reasonably practicable.

Pupils are required to comply with any request to check their electronic device.

Pupils are required to comply with any request to disable the screen lock function of their electronic device and show any staff member what they are doing. Any pupil who refuses to comply with these requests will be disciplined in line with the Behaviour Policy.

9. Sanctions

The school will apply sanctions for breaches of this policy in a consistent and proportionate manner, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Where this policy is clearly breached, for example where a device is used, seen, or heard ringing, staff will feel confident to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty. Confiscated devices may be retained for a proportionate length of time, as determined by the Headteacher and in consideration of the circumstances, including the pupil's age, SEND, and any agreed exceptions or reasonable adjustments.

Additional sanctions may include lost playtime or lunchtime or other disciplinary measures in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Where a breach gives cause to suspect a pupil may be suffering, or may be at risk of harm, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the DSL.

Confiscated personal electronic devices will be locked away securely in the headteacher's office. Bullying via personal electronic devices will be dealt with in line with the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the headteacher.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to members of staff, parents and pupils by the headteacher.

The scheduled review date for this policy is February 2027.