

Mobile Phone & Electronic Devices Policy



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1. Rationale

Gastrells Primary School recognise that mobile phones (including smart phones) and other electronic devices such as tablet computers and smart watches are an important part of everyday life in modern Britain. However, such devices can disrupt learning and create other issues such as cyber bullying.

This policy aims to:

- Make clear our position on mobile phones and other electronic devices in our school.
- Acknowledge the guidance 'Mobile Phones in Schools', Department for Education (2024) Revised February 2026
- Provide guidance to staff to be positive role models for our children with regards to the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices
- Support the school's Safeguarding policy

2. Roles & Responsibilities

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy. Volunteers, or anyone else engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they have a concern that this policy is not being enforced or complied with.

3. The Use of Mobile Phones by Staff

Gastrells Primary School acknowledge that staff and other adults that come into contact with our pupils are role models for expected behaviour. Therefore, it is important to outline the main conduct expectations of staff with regards to mobile phones:

3.1 Personal Mobile Phones

Staff may need to use their personal mobile phone for work activity, such as accessing emails or using authentication applications.

Staff are encouraged to act responsibly when using their personal mobile phones by:

- Not making or receiving personal phone calls in areas where pupils are present
- Not taking photographs of children on personal mobile phones
- Advising the Headteacher if there are circumstances during the academic day where they may need to make or accept calls (e.g. their child or another dependent is unwell).

Staff who use their personal mobile phone, or other electronic device such as a tablet computer, for work email must use biometric security protection or a passcode of at least 6 digits long to unlock the device.

Should the device be lost or stolen, they must inform the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity so that steps can be taken to ensure sensitive data from emails remains secure.

3.2 Safeguarding

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using the School equipment.

3.3 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process pupil data, or any other school information, including entering such data in to generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools.

3.4 Using personal mobile phones for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential trips

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, or anything which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office or a designated 'work phone'

3.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes. Only authorised staff are permitted to use work phones and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communication using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional, in line with our Staff Code of Conduct.

4. Use of Mobile Phones by Pupils

Our school is 'Phone Free'. This means that pupils phones should not be seen, heard or used during the school day. Pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones or other electronic devices (such as tablets and smart watches) with them to school. However, the school recognises that pupils and their families may rely on mobile phones as a safety measure where children travel to and from their school independently. Where this is the case, in line with the school process for permitting children to travel to and from school independently, pupils may bring a mobile phone with them providing the following conditions are met:

- It is a day where the child is travelling independently.
- The mobile phone is switched off and handed over to the class teacher on arrival to school.
- The mobile phone is stored in a secure place, such as a locked drawer or cupboard or a locked 'cash tin'.
- The mobile phone is only returned to the child at the end of the school day.

4.1 Pupils in Breach of this Policy

Pupil mobile phones and other electronic devices (such as tablets and smart watches) are prohibited items in our school. Where pupils are in breach of the policy the following process should be followed:

- (If appropriate) a reminder of the conduct expectations and an opportunity to comply with the policy.
- Confiscation of the device and parents/carers advised. The device is then stored in a secure location away from the classroom such as the Headteachers office (in locked storage).
- The device is only returned to the parent or carer of the child.
- Sanctions, where necessary, may be issued in line with the school's Behaviour policy.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. This conduct is taken extremely seriously and other agencies such as the police will be involved where necessary. This conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or text directed at someone on the basis of their ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

Staff should refer to the DFE guidance Searching, Screening and Confiscation (2022) for further advice if required.

4.2 Communicating with parents/carers

It is expected that the Headteacher will communicate with families at routinely to advise them of our expectations and routines with regards to mobile phones.

Where a pupil joins mid-year, parents should be advised of the school's approach to mobile phones as part of the induction process.

Where there has been a breach of this policy by a pupil, the school must advise parents/carers at the earliest opportunity before the end of the school day.

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

Parents/carers, volunteers and visitors (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it applies to staff if they are in the school during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils (or anything that could identify a pupil), unless it is their own child
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents/carers must use the school office as the point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Gastrells Primary School will not accept responsibility for mobile phones or other electronic devices (such as tablets and smart watches) that are lost, damaged or stolen on the school premises or while using transport, during school visits or trips or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

7. Adjustments to this policy

The Headteacher may adjust this policy on a case-by-case basis where they deem this to be appropriate. Circumstances could include, but are not limited to, where a mobile phone is used for medical purposes (e.g. the tracking of blood sugar levels for a diabetic child).

The Headteacher must record on CPOMS the adjustments being made. They should also record a reason why these adjustments are in place, as well as the steps being taken to prevent the device causing disruption to learning or a safeguarding concern.

Linked Policies:

Safeguarding

Behaviour