

Mobile Phone Policy

Athelstan Primary School

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1. Introduction and aims

At Athelstan Primary School, we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to safeguarding and positive behaviour

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
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently 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 headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly, and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, during contact time when children are present. 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 staffroom). Please refer to the Acceptable Use Policy for guidance on the use of smartphones by staff.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- 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.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 0114 269 2301 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard). Please refer to the school's ICT Acceptable Use Policy as well as data protection policies for more information <https://www.athelstanprimaryschool.co.uk/gdpr>

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers 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/carers or pupils. Please refer to the Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

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

4.4 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 are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site 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 that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4.5 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

- Pupils in Y5 and Y6 may bring their mobile phones to school, should their parents give permission for them to do so. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should complete the relevant Google Form.
- Pupils will hand their mobile phones to their class teacher on arrival to the classroom
- These will be locked away by the class teacher until the end of the day
- Pupils attending Breakfast Club must hand their phones to the adult in charge; these will be handed over to the relevant class teacher at the end of Breakfast Club.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

The school does not permit pupils to bring smartwatches into school.

5.2 Sanctions

If a pupil is found to have their mobile phone, this will be confiscated by the headteacher and returned to the pupil at the end of the school day.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. This guidance allows staff to search a phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

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

Parents/carers, 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.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils
- Not using phones on school premises when children are present

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they attend an event at school.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- Use their phone whilst pupils are present
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

Parents/carers 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 their personal mobile during the school day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that they are stored securely when not in use.

Pupils must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

The permission form details this disclaimer to parents/carers.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a secure location. The school is responsible for the phone during this time.

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

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of the headteacher in a timely manner.

9. Appendix 1: Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Policy for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school

Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone on school grounds.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You must hand your mobile phone to your class teacher on arrival to the classroom. This can be collected at the end of the day but you must not turn it on until you have left the school grounds.
4. If you are attending Breakfast Club, you must hand your mobile phone over to the adult taking the register. This may be collected from the office at the end of the day.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
9. Don't use inappropriate language while on the phone.
10. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone.

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

Google Form questions as below:

- Child's Name
- Child's Class
- Parent's Name
- I give permission for my child to bring their mobile phone to school.
- I understand that my child must abide by the Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones
- I understand that the school reserves the right to revoke permission if my child does not abide by the policy.

11. Appendix 3: mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices 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 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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