

Mobile phone policy

Marish Academy Trust



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1. Introduction and aims

At Marish Academy Trust we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and 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

1A. 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](#).

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for 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.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, in classrooms or any areas of the school which are accessible to students. 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 staff room).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- 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 as a point of emergency contact.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.

Please see the school's data protection policy or ICT acceptable use policy for further information.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents 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 or pupils.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which 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.

3.4 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 aren't limited to:

- 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 which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents, unless authorised in exceptional circumstances. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

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 school 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 communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

3.6 Sanctions

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

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

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils (see also appendix 1)

Children may only bring a mobile phone onto school premises for the purpose of maintaining their safety if travelling to or from school on their own. This applies only to students in years 5 and 6, who have parents' written permission to travel home from school unaccompanied and carry a mobile phone. The mobile phone must be handed in to the office as soon as the student arrives at school, where it will be checked against the list of children with permission and stored securely. The school will not accept any responsibility for loss of or damage to a mobile phone brought to school against this policy.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [non-statutory mobile phone guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

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.

At Marish Academy Trust our policy and practice relating to pupil use of smart watches is to institute a complete ban on them in school. This is because:

- Pupils can use a smart watch to communicate via text at any point during the school day.
- Smart watches are easy to conceal or hide in plain sight.
- Smart watches are more fragile than mobile phones and it is challenging to store these safely if collected for safe keeping in school.

4.1 Sanctions

Any mobile phones discovered to have been brought into the school and not handed in will be confiscated immediately. Parents will be asked to collect the mobile phone from the head teacher. No child should bring a mobile phone on any school outing or journey and, if they are discovered with one, it will be confiscated.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

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

Parents, 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, unless it's a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

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

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

Parents 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 his/her personal mobile during the school day.

6. Loss, theft or damage

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.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked cabinet.

Lost phones should be returned to a member of the office staff. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

7. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

Appendix 1 Additional Guidance for pupils' use of mobile phones in school

Pupils are advised that mobile telephones and other electronic devices should not be brought to school and that the school is not liable for the theft, loss or damage of telephones or other similar property belonging to pupils. The exception to the rule is for children in years 5 and 6 who walk to and from school without adult supervision and bring a mobile phone for safety.

Where children bring a phone to school for safety, it is at their own risk. Children must hand their phone to the school office or to their class teacher on arrival. Mobile phones can be collected at the end of the day.

Parents must consent to their child bringing a mobile phone or electronic device to school. The form on page two must be completed by parents, staff and children.

The use of mobile telephones and electronic devices for any purpose within the school environment is prohibited.

Pupils are prohibited from using any mobile telephone or electronic device which is capable of taking, storing or sending still digital images and/or video clips in the school grounds. This includes any mobile telephone or electronic device which can be attached to an imaging device.

Pupils and parents are reminded that in cases of an emergency, the school office remains the appropriate point of contact

The recording, storing and/or transmission of digital images within the school grounds is strictly prohibited

Pupils are not permitted to carry phones or electronic devices on school outings or residential trips.

Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy. Phones will be confiscated (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

If they are confiscated a parent/carer will be required to collect the phone from school office during normal working hours. Members of the senior leadership team will be informed of the incident.

When a student has his/her telephone or other electronic device confiscated, the teacher will bring the equipment to the main office where a member of the administrative staff will log the relevant details:

- The name and class of the student using the equipment
- The time, place and purpose for which it was being used.

Where a parent/guardian is unable to call at the school to collect the equipment then other arrangements must be made, as the equipment will NOT be returned to the student. A parent/guardian may send a note to the class teacher/deputy head to nominate another appropriate adult to collect the equipment.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a pupil's phone if you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

Appendix 2: Form for parents agreeing for Mobile phone collection in school



Marish Academy Trust
Mobile Phone acceptable use for pupils template

Pupil Name (print) _____

Pupil's class: _____

Pupil Signature _____

Parent Name (print) _____

Parent signature _____

Staff member signature _____

Date _____