



Heritage Coast Federation

Mobile Phone Policy



Reviewed by	Approved by	Date of Approval	Version Approved	Next Review Date
Alison Dykes/Katrina Dixon				
Helen Thompson	Governors	23/3/22	2	March 2025
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Introduction

At the Heritage Coast Federation, the safeguarding and well-being of our pupils is paramount. 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. The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to allow users to benefit from communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice and establishing clear and robust mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools - which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones and tablets that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of e.g. Images of pupils/staff to other mobile phone users or email addresses or social media which could result in bullying or harassment. It is also recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others. When mobiles phones are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

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

Roles and responsibilities

Mobile phones, alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance; however there are also associated risks. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe.

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile or work-related phones on site and during off-site visits including residential trips and sporting fixtures. This includes staff, governors, volunteers, committee members, children, parents, carers, visitors and contractors.

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 three years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Personal mobile phones

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting, which is agreed to by all users.

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) should not make or receive calls, or send texts during contact time. 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). Use of mobile phones should be discreet and appropriate.

Mobile phones should be password protected and should be turned to silent or switched off during contact with children.

Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras, I-pads and the class mobile phone.

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-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil/parent, they should use the school telephones wherever possible. Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate. If this happened this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head Teacher following safeguarding procedures and the Federation's Code of Conduct.

Staff are able to use the class mobile phone when participating in off-site visits, sporting fixtures and residential trips. With regard to camera phones or other electronic devices that have the capability of taking still or moving images, a member of staff should not use their own personal device to photograph a pupil(s) or allow themselves to be photographed by pupils. This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff and the school. Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy and the school Code of Conduct is likely to result in the enforcement of the Whistleblowing policy and associated procedures.

Under no circumstances should staff take photographs of children's injuries on any device.

Data protection

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

Safeguarding

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

Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work as we recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication during offsite activities. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations

- Contacting the member of staff who holds the class phone
- Other events which have been authorised by the Headteacher

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Contact the school office in the event of an emergency
- 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 other than through the class Dojo app. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office or through the class mobile phone.

Staff may use their phone to send/ receive emails, access the school calendar or messages via the Class Dojo App, as long as they have a secure password in place. The CPOMs two factor authenticator may also be used via a personal mobile as this does not contain any information related to pupils. There may be times when other secure education apps may be used with consent from the Headteacher.

Class Dojo will be used to share information regarding school snow closures, sickness, cancelled events, share resources etc as a quick way to give information to all staff who may not see their school emails during the day. Staff who are no longer employed at The Heritage Coast Federation will be removed from the app. Staff can access this during the school day on a laptop or on the class mobile phone.

Where parents/volunteers are accompanying trips they must not use their mobile phone in the presence of children. Parents/carers and volunteers are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip and they must not use their phone to take photographs of children.

Work phones

The Federation 6 class mobile phones which will be used by staff for work purposes. These are kept in classrooms and are accessible to all members of staff.

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. **Class mobile phones must use the withheld number option when making a call.**
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

Class mobile phones will have access to Arbor, Class Dojo, Facebook, Pic Collage, Mail 365, CPOMS authenticator, Microsoft and Google Drive. All photos of children are to be shared via dojo, email or the google drive only.

Staff Communication

All daily communication with staff will take place through Class Dojo instead of text messages or WhatsApp groups. Emails will continue to be sent regarding less urgent matters. Teaching staff are advised to have Class Dojo open on their laptops during the school day. This change is intended to support the safeguarding and wellbeing of both staff and pupils by ensuring that all communication remains professional, secure, and within a monitored platform. Using Class Dojo also helps maintain appropriate boundaries and reduces the pressure on staff to be available outside of working hours.

Sanctions

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

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information

Use of mobile phones by pupils

We also recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others. Therefore:

- Pupils are allowed to bring mobile phones into school if they are walking to or from school without parents (years 5/6).
- Pupils are not permitted to use their phones whilst on the school site
- The phone must be handed in to the class teacher at the start of the day and must be switched off / put on silent. Phones should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone.
- Parents are advised that the Heritage Coast Federation accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into school or on to the school grounds. The phone is left at the owner's own risk.
- Pupils are not permitted to take mobile phones on school trips/visits

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 (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- 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

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the head teacher or DSL does have the power to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site.' Parents will be informed of inappropriate use and pupils will be reminded of the school policy and practice.

Parents, Visitors and Volunteers Policy

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as essential means of communication at all times. We therefore ask that parents/carers usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment.

Parents, visitors, volunteers and Governors are not permitted to use their mobile phones in the presence of pupils anywhere within the school building. Visiting adults are not permitted to use their mobile phones or any other electronic device to photograph pupils or make video recordings anywhere on the school site or when accompanying pupils on off-site visits or at sporting fixtures. Parents are permitted to take photos and videos at Class Assemblies, plays and sports days but they are reminded that they are the data controller for such imagery and this should only be recorded for their own personal use and should not be shared on any form of social media.

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 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.

Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, and are stored securely with the class teacher

Pupils must secure their 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, as well as any work phone provided to them. 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, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

Dissemination

The mobile phone policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents via the school website.

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: Mobile phone information for visitors

This information can be shared with visitors via the sign in app when they arrive school.

Use of mobile phones 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. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staff room.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or 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.