



Cockton Hill Junior School
Mobile Phone and Portable Devices Policy 2022-2023

Introduction and Aims

At Cockton Hill Junior School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of this policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools.

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones and portable devices that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the working day, and which are most susceptible to misuse- including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. However as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices including smart watches.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones and smart watches on site. This includes staff, volunteers, governors, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

Code of conduct

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

Our aim is therefore that all:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- know how to minimise risk.
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use.
- are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours.
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

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 and smart watch devices within the setting, which is agreed to by all users:

Staff

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and stored in their individual staff locker during contact time with children.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. Classroom and school office spaces).

- Use of phones (receiving/sending texts and emails) and smart watches should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. staff room, empty classrooms.
- It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions of their phone.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Head Teacher aware of this and can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones or smart watches, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images.
- Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and iPad.
- Staff are permitted to wear a watch that counts their steps and is digital. Watches that send and receive messages, calls or notification must have this feature disabled in line with our online safety policy. Watches with cameras are not permitted.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices or smart watches that causes them concern to the Head Teacher.

Mobile Phones for work related purposes

We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities. However staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use on these occasions must be appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).
- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office.
- Where parents are accompanying trip's they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone or smart watch device to take photographs of children.

Pupils

We recognise that mobile phones and smart watch devices 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 not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips
- If in the rare event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school:
 - the parent must contact the school to make them aware of this
 - the phone must be handed in, switched off, to the office first thing in the morning and collected from them by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk).
- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- Pupils are permitted to wear a watch that counts their steps and is digital. Watches that send and receive messages, calls or notification must have this feature disabled in line with our online safety policy. Watches with cameras are not permitted. Any pupils, where any learning is disrupted or they put themselves or others at risk with their use of their watch, will have the watch removed and collected by an adult.

Where mobile phones or smart watch devices are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the Head teacher 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'. Concerns around this must be referred to school staff.

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers, Visitors, Parents, Carers, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone and portable devices policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises. On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones and devices.

Parents

Parents are requested not to use their mobile phones while in school. Phones should be on silent and out of sight.

We do however allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports days using their mobile phones – **but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.**

Monitoring

This is a whole school policy of which staff, children and parents have ownership and therefore working together as a whole is essential for it to work effectively.

This policy was ratified by the Full Governing Body in the autumn term 2022.