



Queen Berengaria School

Dream, Believe, Achieve - Together

Mobile Phone and Smart Watch Policy

Approved by:

DCS

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Last reviewed on:

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1. Introduction and aims

At Queen Berengaria 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 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

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

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

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day.

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, in the presence of children or 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 staffroom).

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 00357 24744970 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).

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.

Staff must not use their personal 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.

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 aren't limited to:

- To use 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 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 by contacting the headteacher

Any exceptions will be decided by the headteacher on a case by case basis

4.5 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.

4.6 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

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that pupils should not use mobile phones throughout the school day.

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

At Queen Berengaria School, pupils are not allowed to bring in a mobile phone unless a request and permission form has been completed by the parent and school with an agreement to follow the code of conduct (see appendix a and b)

For children who have been granted permission, their mobile phones will be collected by staff on arrival and returned at the end of the school day.

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, listen to music and take photos. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

Children should not be wearing smart watches in school. In the exceptions where permission has been granted, the smart watch should only display time with other functions disabled.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should the headteacher.

Exceptions may be made for individual pupils to carry their devices during the day with special circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Young carers who need to be contactable
- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's [code of conduct/acceptable use agreement] for mobile phone use (see appendix a).

If you allow the use of mobile phones by sixth-form pupils, adapt and insert:

5.3 Sanctions

If a pupil is found to be using a mobile phone or smart watch with consent to have one in school, or in a manner that breaches the Code of Conduct, this will be removed from the pupil and kept with the teacher. Parents will be contacted.

The device will be returned to the child at the end of the day, but should not be switched on until after they have left the school premises or until after they have disembarked the school bus.

Should any pupil, breach the policy on three occasions, the device will be kept and school and require a parent to collect and discuss.

In each case, the sanction given will be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, disability)
- The pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education

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, unless it's at 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/carers, 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/carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which 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 the phones are appropriately labelled and handed in to be stored securely when not in use.

Labelling should include name and class.

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, 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, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

This is clearly explained on the permissions forms for bring a phone to school in addition to this policy.

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

8. 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/carers and pupils

- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, Defence Children Services 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.

APPENDIX a: Code of conduct and acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Agreement for Pupils

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

1. You must hand your phone to your teacher when you arrive at school.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone anywhere on the school grounds. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
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. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. Don't use inappropriate or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share inappropriate content.
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.

APPENDIX b: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

PUPIL DETAILS

Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow *[pupil name]* to bring their mobile phone to school because they:

List the appropriate reasons here. We've listed some common reasons below:

- *Travel to and from school alone (Year 5 and 6 pupils only)*
- *Are a young carer*
- *Need the phone to support their medical needs*

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its code of conduct and acceptable use agreement.

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.

Devices should be clearly labelled with the pupil name and year group.

The school reserves the right revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY

Authorised by:	
Date:	

Headteacher signature: _____

APPENDIX c: 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. If you must use your phone, you may go to the school office or staffroom.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils unless consent has been given by a member of staff and it is your own child)
- 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.

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