



# Personal Electrical Equipment Policy

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Signed – Headteacher	<i>Bhancha</i>

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## 1. Introduction and aims

At Park Way 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:

- o Promote safe and responsible phone use
- o Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- o 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:

- o Risks to child protection
- o Data protection issues
- o Potential for lesson disruption
- o Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- o 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, 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, while 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.

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):

- o 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 01622 753651 as a point of emergency contact.

Smartwatches should be placed in airport mode or the equivalent whilst in school and staff should not be checking emails or messages whilst teaching.

### 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:

- o To use multi-factor authentication
- o Emergency evacuations
- o Supervising off-site trips – a school phone will always be provided
- o Supervising residential visits – a school phone will always be provided

In these circumstances, staff will:

- o Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- o Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
- o Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

#### **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:

- o Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- o 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.

Children are not permitted to use mobile phones on the school site and must not bring them to school unless they travel to and from school unaccompanied.

Phones brought to school will be collected on entry to the building. These will be stored in a secure location. Misuse of phones by children with permission will result in that child no longer being permitted to bring a phone to school.

Any other phones brought to school will be confiscated and will need to be collected by a parent or carer.

## 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.

Children are not permitted to wear smartwatches to school. This includes "fitbits" and other similar devices that can connect to the internet. A basic step counter may be worn.

## 5.3 Sanctions

Sanctions for breach of this policy.

- o Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Confiscated phones will be stored in a locked cabinet in the school office and must be collected by an adult parent or carer.

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

In each case, the sanction given must 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](#)

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:

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

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

## 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:

- o Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's at a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- o Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- o 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:

- o Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- o 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 are handed in to be stored securely.

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 any 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.**

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:

- o Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- o Feedback from staff
- o Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- o 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: Acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

### Acceptable Use Agreement

You may only bring your mobile phone to school if you travel to and from school on your own.

You must obey the following rules:

1. You may only use your mobile phone to let your parent or carer know that you have arrived safely at school or to tell you that you are leaving to return home.
2. Phones must be switched off when stored (not just put on 'silent').
3. You cannot take any photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils.
4. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
5. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
6. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone either at school or outside of school.

This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:

- a. Email
- b. Text/messaging app
- c. Social media

## **11. Appendix 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors**

### **Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school**

- o Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- o Please do not use phones where pupils are present.
- o Do not take photos or recordings of pupils or staff
- o 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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