

Middleton Primary School



Mobile phone policy

**MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL
MOBILE PHONE POLICY**

ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS TO MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Written May 2024

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**MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL
MOBILE PHONE POLICY**

Contents

1. Introduction and aims	4
2. Roles and responsibilities	4
3. Use of mobile phones by staff	5
4. Use of mobile phones by pupils.....	7
5. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors	7
6. Loss, theft or damage	8
7. Monitoring and review.....	9
Appendix 1: Code of Conduct for pupils	10
Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school	11
Appendix 3: Mobile phone information slip for visitors.....	12

MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

1. Introduction and aims

At Middleton Primary School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, 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, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers 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

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.

Ensuring the online safety of the members of our school community requires a whole school approach.

This policy has therefore been written in consultation with the following stakeholders:

- Head teacher;
- Safeguarding Link Governor;
- Governing Body;
- Staff;
- Parents/carers;
- Pupils

MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

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, while children are present 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 instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

Requests to have access to a mobile phone during times when children are present must be agreed by the headteacher. If deemed unnecessary, school staff should use the school office number 01908 604851 as a point of emergency contact.

On school trips, the school mobile phone is for communication between school and venue. Teachers and support staff may take their personal mobile phones, but these must be kept out of sight unless for essential use for the trip or essential messages to/from school or venue or parents. Personal mobile phones should only be used to contact parents when the school mobile phone is unavailable and then when doing so, staff should prefix the phone number with 141 to withhold their number showing.

It is recommended that the school mobile phone is only be used for calls / messaging. School iPads should be used for all photographs on trips and a school mobile taken for communication purposes only.

3.2 Smart watches

Many smart watches have the same capabilities as mobile phones and allow communication via text and through social media. Teachers, support staff, volunteers and pupils who possess a smart watch must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. If your smartwatch is capable of generating a 4G/5G signal or has a camera, then it is not permitted to be worn whilst on the school premises.
2. If you have a fitness tracker that does not generate a 4G/5G signal or doesn't have a camera but connects to a phone via Bluetooth, you must ensure that the Bluetooth on your phone or on your watch is disconnected before you enter the building.

All students and other volunteers in school will undergo an induction during which safeguarding, including use of camera technology and mobile phones, will be made clear. Members of the public or staff at events, for example, are also not permitted to use mobile phones to photograph Middleton children unless authorization has been provided by the headteacher.

MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL MOBILE PHONE POLICY

3.3 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).

3.4 Safeguarding

Staff should adhere to the Social Networking for School Staff Policy and the guidance laid out in the staff handbook (pages 12 and 13) to direct their actions when using mobile phones.

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.

3.5 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/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

3.6 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.

3.7 Sanctions

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

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

MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

We recognize that mobile phones and other internet-enabled 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, mobile devices are capable of more than simply helping a child get in touch with parents at the end of the day. Therefore, it is incumbent upon parents to understand the capabilities of the phone/device and the potential use and misuse of those capabilities. Middleton Primary School discourages children from bringing mobile phones to school if at all possible and other internet-enabled devices are not permitted, due to the potential negative issues that may arise, for example:

- mobile devices may be lost, stolen or damaged
- mobile devices can prove a distraction to teaching and learning in school
- they may provide a means of bullying or intimidating others;
- risks associated with sharing images and with posting digital images on the internet

If it is necessary for a child to bring a mobile phone or other internet-enabled devices to school, for example those children who walk to/from school on their own, these will be securely kept by the class teacher in a locked cupboard for the duration of the school day. Children need to give their device to their class teacher when entering the school site and collect it after leaving the site at the end of the day. This arrangement is also in place for after school clubs. Children who bring a mobile phone or smart watch to school must sign an agreement alongside parents that they understand the rules of use of mobile/camera technology in school. If these rules are breached, this may result in further disciplinary action being taken.

4.1 Sanctions

Appropriate sanctions will be actioned for any pupil in breach of rules for mobile/camera usage, or if inappropriate usage is suspected by staff, including confiscation of the device. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#). If confiscated, the mobile phone will be held in the school office and returned at the end of the school day. Inappropriate content or inappropriate includes, but is not limited to:

- bullying or harassment.
- 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.

The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate

5. 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 a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child

MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL MOBILE PHONE POLICY

- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting photos/recording of other children 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 are permitted to take photographs at events such as sports day or performances with the headteacher's agreement. They are reminded that these should not under any circumstances be published on social media of any kind. At any other time when visiting the school site, under no circumstances, must parents use their phone (for calls, messages, photographs or internet) whilst in the school building. This extends to smart watches and cameras/recording equipment.

Our playground is also a mobile phone/camera technology free zone and we request that all visitors to the site when dropping off/collecting children adhere to this rule for safeguarding reasons.

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 3 above.

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 his/her personal mobile during the school day.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, and are stored securely in the classroom for the duration of the school day. Pupils must ensure their phones are turned off. 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. Parents and children will sign a home-school agreement explaining that the school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones as above. See Appendix 1. Confiscated phones will be stored in the classroom locker. Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner

**MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL
MOBILE PHONE POLICY**

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/carers 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

Middleton Primary School

July 2024

MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Appendix 1: Code of Conduct for pupils

Code of Conduct

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

1. You cannot use your mobile phone anywhere on the school site - this is anywhere within the school gates.
2. You must hand your mobile phone over to your teacher as soon as you arrive at school, so that they can store your phone in a safe location.
3. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
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 passwords or access codes with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone, in or out of school. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
9. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
10. 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.

**MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL
MOBILE PHONE POLICY**

Appendix 2: 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 _____ to bring their mobile phone to school because they:

List the appropriate reasons here. We've listed some common reasons below (you can delete as required):

- Travel to and from school alone
- Are a young carer
- Attend before or after-school where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers

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.

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if pupils don't abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Appendix 3: Mobile phone information slip for visitors

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 to do so
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils 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.

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