

Copthorne C.E. Junior School

Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Policy

Approved March 2026

To be reviewed March 2028

At Copthorne CE Junior School, the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone Acceptable Use 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 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.

Scope

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

This policy should also be read in relation to other policies and documentation.

Our aim is therefore that all practitioners:

- 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 within the setting, which is agreed to by all users:

Staff

- Staff are not permitted to carry their mobile phones on them or make/receive calls/texts during contact time with pupils. Emergency calls will be taken by the school office.
- Staff should have their personal phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer or handbag) during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where pupils are present (eg. classroom, playground). Use of phones (inc. reading received/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no pupils are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- If 'smart' watches or similar devices are worn, that they are used in line with mobile phone use within this policy.
- 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 Headteacher 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, for example: to take recordings of pupils, or sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher or Designated Member of Staff

Mobile Phones for Work Related Purposes

We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities. Copthorne CE Junior School provides a school mobile phones for use on educational visits. However, there are times when personal mobile devices will need to be used and staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of pupils).
- 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 trips they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip, use their phone to take photographs of pupils or post information regarding the trip on their own social media sites.
- At times, a mobile phone may be required for multi-factor authentication purposes for work related access, such as CPOMs, emails.

Pupils

We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many pupils 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 outside of school at certain times such as crossing the road and can also put the pupil at risk of the phone being taken forcibly. Mobile phones can provide a vehicle for bullying or intimidating others. Therefore:

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips
- If in the event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school then the phone must be switched off, handed in and kept in the office first thing in the morning and collected at home time (the device is left at the owner's own risk).
- Mobile phones brought to school and found in the possession of a pupil will be confiscated and returned, to the parent, at the end of the day.
- Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the headteacher 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'.
- Pupils are not permitted to wear any form of "smart watch" or similar devices. If worn to school, these must be switched off, handed in and kept in the office first thing in the morning and collected at home time (the device is left at the owner's own risk).

Governors, Volunteers, Visitors and Contractors

All governors, volunteers, visitors and contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone 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.

Parents

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' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment and mobile phones are put away and not used during contact with pupils.

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

Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

Whilst schools are expected to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day to reduce distraction and disruption, they must comply with their other legal duties such as the duty to make reasonable adjustments where necessary.

In some circumstances, supporting a pupil or adult working in the school with their medical condition can involve the use of a mobile phone. For example, pupils with diabetes might use continuous glucose monitoring with a sensor linked to their mobile phone to monitor blood sugar levels. Where mobile phone use allows pupils to manage their medical condition effectively, it would not be reasonable for a school to prevent this.

Dissemination

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