



Bishop Aldhelm's C.E. Primary School

Loved by God; United in Learning

Headteacher: Scott Tait

Deputy Headteacher: Lizzie Sharpe

*Love, Unity,
Courage
and Inspiration*



Mobile Phone Use Policy



September 2020-September 2022



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Mobile Phone Use Policy

Date of Policy: September 2020

Date to be reviewed: September 2022

1. Foreword To All School Policies

The separate document 'Foreword To All School Policies' should be considered as part of every school policy as it places our policies and our work in their full context.

2. Introduction

This policy provides clear guidance on the use of mobile phones in school by staff, volunteers, visitors and pupils

Bishop Aldhelm's has a clear policy on allowing pupils to bring mobile phones into school and this policy makes explicit reference to smart phones (phones which have inbuilt cameras and access to the internet).

This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children in Schools
- Searching, screening and confiscation: Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies – January 2018

3. Smart Phones

Smart phones are now the norm and a built in digital camera enables users to take high resolution pictures. These can be sent instantly to other mobile phone users or email addresses. They can also be posted on the internet through the use of apps (applications).

There is a potential for smart phones to be misused in schools. They can become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils or/and teachers.

Pupils are not allowed Smart Phones on the school site.

4. Staff use of mobile phones

Staff use of mobile phones during their working day should be:

- outside of their contracted hours
- discreet and appropriate eg: not in the presence of pupils

Mobile phones should be switched off and left in a safe place during lesson times. The school cannot take responsibility for items that are lost or stolen.

Staff should **never** contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, they should use the school telephone in the office.

Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.

With regard to camera phones, a member of staff should never use their phone to photograph a pupil(s) or allow themselves to be photographed by pupils.

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff and the school. Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy is likely to result in the enforcement of the Whistleblowing policy and associated procedures.

5. Parents, Visitors, Volunteers in school use of mobile phones

Adults either in school or accompanying children on school trips should not use their cameras or mobile phone cameras to take pictures of pupils unless it is at a public event such as Sports days, performances and of their own children.

Adults, visitors or volunteers in school should only use their mobile phone within the confines of the school office or staff room. Personal cameras and mobile phone cameras should not be used to take pictures of children.

If parents who accompany children on a school trip are asked by the teacher to take photos as a record of the educational visit, they will be issued with a school camera. Parents accompanying children on school trips should not use their mobile cameras to take pictures of children.

Parents are encouraged to greet their children with a smile and not a mobile phone on collection at the end of a school day.

6. Pupils use of mobile phones

While we fully acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision, Bishop Aldhelm's discourages pupils bringing mobile phones to school due to the potential issues raised above.

NO CHILD IS ALLOWED A SMART PHONE IN SCHOOL; ONLY A PHONE WHICH CAN ONLY MAKE PHONE CALLS AND TEXT MESSAGES.

When a child needs to bring a phone into school, a permission slip (Appendix 1) must be signed by the parent and the phone must be left in the school office at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day. Phones should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone. Parents are advised that Bishop Aldhelm's accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into school or school grounds.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone, the phone will be confiscated from the pupil, handed to a member of the office team who will record the name of the pupil and attach it to the phone. The mobile phone will be stored by the school office. The pupil may collect the phone at the end of the school day. A letter will be sent home to parents requesting that a permission slip be returned the next day. If this practice continues more than three times, then the school will confiscate the phone until an appropriate adult collects the phone from a member of the Headship team.

If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to our Behaviour policy.

If images of other pupils or teacher have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a senior teacher. (Please see more guidance on sexting in our child protection policy).

Should a pupil be found to be using their phone inappropriately, both in and out of school, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a phone into school.

We ask that parents should talk to their children about the appropriate use of text messages and age appropriate app as they can often be used to intimidate cause peer on peer abuse (e.g. bullying).

Should parents need to contact pupils or vice versa during the school day, this should be done via the usual school procedure of contacting the school office via phone or email.

7. Screening and confiscation of mobile phones

Searching for phones

With the pupil's consent

The DfE guidance on searching and confiscation, linked to above, says on page 6 that schools can search pupils with their consent for any item. Spoken consent is sufficient.

Without the pupil's consent

Page 7 of the guidance says that school staff can search pupils for "any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for", with or without the pupil's consent.

Confiscation of phones

Page 11 of the DfE guidance says that schools' general power to discipline, as set out in section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary penalty, "where reasonable to do so".

It explains that:

Staff can confiscate, retain and/or destroy any item found as a result of a 'with consent' search, as long as it is reasonable to do so. Where, during a 'without consent' search, a member of staff finds an item which is banned under the school rules, they should take into account all relevant circumstances and use their professional judgement to decide whether to return it to its owner, retain it or dispose of it.

Staff have a defence to any complaint or other action brought against them. The law protects members of staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss of, or damage to, any item they have confiscated, provided they acted lawfully.

An adviser from Forbes solicitors explained that the Education and Inspections Act 2006 applies only to maintained schools. However, its stipulations about the confiscation and retention of banned items in schools use provisions set out in the Education Act 1996 that also apply to academies.

Determining what is 'reasonable'

When determining what is 'reasonable', section 91(6) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 says staff must take into account:

- Whether the imposition of the penalty constitutes a proportionate punishment in the circumstances of the case

- Any special circumstances relevant to its imposition on the pupil which are known to the person imposing it (or of which they ought reasonably to be aware), including in particular the pupil's age, any special educational needs or disabilities and any religious requirements

Examining content on phones

Pages 12-13 of the DfE advice explain that a staff member who finds an electronic device on a pupil after a search may examine and/or erase any data or files on the device, as long as they think there is a 'good reason' to do so.

When deciding whether there is a good reason to examine or erase data or files, the staff member must reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device in question has been, or could be, used to:

- Cause harm
- Disrupt teaching, or
- Break the school rules

If inappropriate material is found on the device it is up to the staff member to decide whether they should:

- Delete that material
- Retain it as evidence (of a criminal offence or a breach of school discipline) or
- Report it to the police

The advice adds that all school staff should be aware that "behaviours linked to sexting" can put pupils in danger. Sexting and the school's approach to it should therefore be included in the school's child protection policy.

8. Monitoring and review of this policy

The policy will be reviewed bi- annually by the Headship team and Governing Body.



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Mobile Phone Parental Consent Form

Dear Parent/Carer

In accordance with our mobile phone policy, if your child is bringing in a mobile phone to school on a regular basis, please could you sign the form below to give your permission for your child to do this and remind them of our school policy.

- No smart phones allowed.
- Your child needs to bring their phone to the school office first thing in the morning before they go their classroom.
- The school bears no responsibility for the loss or damage to a mobile phone
- Your child's phone should be appropriately marked so that they can recognise it
- Should your child be found using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring their phone into school.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Scott Tait

Head teacher

.....
MOBILE PHONE PARENTAL CONSENT

I/we give permission for our child (name)
in Class to bring their mobile phone into school.

We have read the policy and understand its implications

Signed

Date.....

PLEASE RETURN PERMISSION SLIP TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE. THANK YOU