

John Perry Primary School



Mobile phone and Smart Watch Usage Policy

Last reviewed on: March 2023
Next review due by: March 2025

Introduction and Aims

At John Perry Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile phone and Smart Watch 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 phone/smart watch are effective communication tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phone/smart watch 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 phone/smart watches on site. This includes staff, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

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

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Digital Images Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Code of conduct

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

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 phone/smart watches within the setting, which is agreed to by all users.

Personal Mobiles - Staff

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag or pocket) during class time.
- Mobile phone/smart watches should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground).
- Use of phones (inc. receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to noncontact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- 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 Head Teacher 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 phone/smart watches, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and ipads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Head Teacher.

Please note that the above, and any other mention of 'mobile phone/smart watch' also relates to Smart Watches or other Smart devices.

Mobile phone/smart watches for work related purposes

We recognise that mobile phone/smart watches provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities. However staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).
- Mobile phone/smart watches 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 or use their phone to take photographs of children.

Personal Mobiles - Pupils

We recognise that mobile phone/smart watches 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 we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others, particularly with the increased use of social media. This means that the risks of young people having phones in school can sometimes outweigh the benefits.

Therefore:

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phone/smart watches at school or on trips.
- Mobile phone/smart watches brought to school without permission will be confiscated.
- The school will phone home to inform parents/carers and phones will **only be returned to a parent/carer.**

Where mobile phone/smart watches are used out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the Head Teacher 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 (refer to Anti-Bullying Policy).

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone/smart watch 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 phone/smart watches.

Parents/Carers

While we would prefer parents/carers not to use their mobile phone/smart watches while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents/carers see their phones as essential means of communication at all times.

We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile phone/smart watches, whilst on the school site, is courteous and appropriate to the school environment. We also allow parents/carers to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phone/smart watches – **but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.** Please refer to the school's Digital Image Policy.

Dissemination

The mobile Phone and Smart Watch Usage Policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents via the school office and website.