Kimbolton School
Cambridgeshire

MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER SMART DEVICES POLICY

Policy Owner: Senior Deputy Head
SLT Policy
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1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

It is widely recognised that many children have access to personal communication devices including mobile phones, smart phones and smart watches. Children using these devices are likely to have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile networks such as 3G, 4G, 5G, Airdropping and 'Nearby Share' (see Appendix 1 for more details). For many these devices can provide security and reassurance; however they have also associated risks. Safeguarding of children within the School is paramount.

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobiles, smart phones and smart watches causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against potential misuse.

Kimbolton School supports the Government's expectation, set out in *Mobile Phones in Schools* (June 2026) that schools should be mobile-phone-free environments throughout the school day. The School's approach is designed to improve behaviour, reduce distraction, support learning, strengthen social interaction, and minimise safeguarding and online safety risks.
The terms 'phone' or 'mobile phone' in this guidance denotes mobile phones, smart phones, airpods, iPods, iPads, MP3 players, MP4 players and smart watches.

The guidance aims to:

- Set out clear guidance for the use of mobile phones for staff, pupils and volunteers.
- Set out clear guidance for visitors and contractors.
- Ensure robust safeguarding.
- Support schools' other policies relating to child protection and behaviour.

2. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) may wish to have their personal mobile phones at work for use in case of emergencies, however, there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to areas and times when there are no children present or likely to be present.

Staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal purposes in front of pupils during the school day except in exceptional circumstances.

Staff (including volunteers and supply staff) should make every effort only to use their mobile phones and smart devices for personal contact in designated areas such as a Staff Common Room or Staff Room in the QKB.

Staff should not contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone in or out of school time or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents, unless the children and their parents are family friends (self-reporting to the DSL in this case) or in the case of an emergency. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, a school telephone should be used whenever possible.

Staff should regularly monitor and update their privacy settings on social media sites.

Staff should never accept a 'friend request' or respond to any posts that may deliberately or inadvertently include them but inform their line manager or a Senior Leader of the contact.

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

If photos or videos are being taken as part of the school curriculum or for promotional purposes, then school equipment should ideally be used. Staff need to ensure that copies of such images are also deleted from cloud storage

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use a personal mobile phone for work purposes. Where possible this should always be agreed with a line manager or a Senior Leader in advance. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Parental contact in emergencies (mobile phones setting that allow for the number not to be identified should be used)
- To issue homework, rewards, sanctions, or use multi-factor authentication

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff and the school. Any breach of school policy may result in disciplinary action against that member of staff.

3. PUPILS

We recognise that the majority of pupils will bring mobile phones to school, and many may well wear a smart watch. Expectations around phone and smart watch usage are clearly communicated to all pupils and parents. This policy applies to whenever pupils are on site, including before and after school clubs/activities.
Pupils are taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly within their PSHE curriculum. The aim is to create intrinsic motivation to support the School's culture.

3.1 Prep pupils

- Pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones, devices or smart watches to school.
- The School accepts that for emergency purposes, parents may wish to provide pupils, who travel to and/or from school via the school coach system, with a mobile phone. Such devices are the responsibility of the pupil/parent and the expectation is that the device is kept in their bag and switched off for the duration of the school day, or handed into the School Office.

The School operates on a system of trust and devices are not to be used or accessed during the school day. If breached, specific arrangements will be made.

Please see Appendix 2 for the EYFS Policy for the use of electronic devices.

3.2 Senior School / Sixth Form pupils

- Mobile phones and smart devices must not be used by pupils during the school day, including lessons, movement between lessons, breaktimes, lunchtime and all timetabled activities, unless expressly authorised by a member of staff.
- Between lessons, mobile phone use is not permitted.
- Sixth Form students may use mobile phones only within designated Sixth Form areas, currently the Sixth Form Centre and Castle Courtyard. Sixth Form students must not use mobile phones in front of younger pupils and remain subject to all expectations within the Behaviour Policy. Misuse may result in sanctions and temporary or permanent withdrawal of this privilege.
- It is advisable to password-protect mobile phones when not in use.
- Smart watch capabilities are in line with smart phones (except for taking photos and video) and are therefore regarded as such within the policy.

- The School follows the relevant examination boards' recommendations regarding smart watches, with this information being shared with pupils and parents prior to any examinations.

Pupils who use a mobile and other smart devices on school premises without permission, or in the main body of the school grounds, will be required to hand over their phone/device to a member of staff and a warning given (recorded in Engage as a negative House (behavioural) point). Confiscated phones and other smart devices will be taken by staff to the School Office, where the devices(s) will be logged on Engage, labelled and held securely. Pupils should collect their device(s) at the end of the school day.

Pupils who behave in this way a second time will receive a House/Departmental (lunchtime) detention, dependent upon whether the incident took place outside of or in lessons, and also have their phone and/or smart device confiscated for the rest of the school day. Repeated misconduct of this kind will also involve communication home to notify parents. School Detentions (on Friday after school) and stronger sanctions, detailed within the Behaviour Policy (Senior School), may also be given dependent upon the repetition of the misconduct and its nature (assessed on a case-by- case basis).

Mobile phones and other smart devices may also be confiscated if a member of staff has any suspicion that these devices contain unsuitable material, pupils have taken photographs on the site or used devices for any form of bullying. In such instances, the pupil may be banned from bringing a mobile or any other smart device into school.

Pupils remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses should they choose to bring a mobile phone or smart device into school.

Boarders may be permitted access to mobile phones outside the teaching day in accordance with boarding house rules. During the teaching day all pupils are subject to the School's mobile phone restrictions. Boarding arrangements will continue to support pupils in maintaining appropriate contact with parents and families.

3.3 Mobile phone exemptions and reasonable adjustments

The School recognises that some pupils may require access to a mobile phone or smart device as a reasonable adjustment, to support a disability, medical condition, safeguarding need, caring responsibility or other exceptional circumstance.

Requests will be considered on an individual basis and appropriate arrangements documented.

Any exemption will normally specify:

- the purpose of the device
- where it may be used
- when it may be used
- the arrangements for supervision and storage

4. TRIPS

The Trip Leader will determine arrangements for mobile phone use on educational visits. The default expectation is that mobile phone use will be restricted where it may detract from learning, wellbeing, safeguarding or the aims of the visit. Any permitted use will be communicated in advance

5. SPORTS FIXTURES

Pupils will be allowed to take their phones on Saturday sports fixtures, but they must be used appropriately.

Pupils remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses should they choose to bring a mobile phone or smart device into school when having a sports fixture.

6. PARENTS, VISITORS AND CONTRACTORS

Parents have an important role in supporting the School's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones when on the school site. When parents need to contact their child during the school day they should be directed in the first instance to the school office.

Parents, visitors and contractors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones at all on the school site/in any area where children/young people are present.

- Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others.
- Photos of children must not be taken without prior discussion with the Director of Marketing & Communications or a member of the Senior Leadership Team and in accordance with the UK *General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018* (please refer to the School's Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy). Any individual bringing a personal device into the School must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

7. INAPPROPRIATE OR ILLEGAL CONTENT

Where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may be unsuitable and may constitute evidence relating to a criminal offence, the allegations process will be followed (please refer to the School's 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy').

8. APPENDIX 1 – AIRDROP AND NEARBY SHARE

8.1 Airdrop

- Airdrop is a feature available on iPhones and Mac computers (iOS 7, iPadOS 13, OS X 10.10, or later required).
- It lets physically close Mac and iOS devices share files, photos, websites etc.
- There are no size limits on files.
- It uses Bluetooth and Wi-Fi to transmit the files.
- Airdrop automatically detects nearby supported devices within a maximum distance of 30 feet.
- When a receiver of content is selected, they will be notified and offered the option to accept or decline the incoming file.

8.2 Nearby Share

- Nearby Share is available on Android 6.0+ phones.
- Like Airdrop, it allows users to instantly share files, links and pictures with people around them.
- It also works through Bluetooth or Wi-Fi.
- When Nearby Share is turned on, a list of devices available within sharing proximity is visible.
- When a receiver of content is selected, they will be notified and offered the option to accept or decline the incoming file.

8.3 Safeguarding risks posed by both Airdrop and Nearby Share

- Being exposed to age-inappropriate sexualised and/or violent content.
- Photo sharing as a form of cyberbullying, with the person featured in the image being the target.
- The sharing of self-generated sexual imagery, with or without the permission of the original image/video creator.
- Images of teachers or other staff members shared as part of teacher targeted bullying, including 'upskirting' images (the practice of taking an illegal photo of someone's genitals or genital area, without consent).

Staff and pupils should be aware that generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools may be used to create manipulated, synthetic or deepfake images, audio or video. The creation, possession or sharing of such material involving pupils or staff may constitute bullying, harassment, safeguarding concerns or criminal behaviour and will be managed in accordance with the School's safeguarding and behaviour procedures.

If a member of staff or a pupil reports receiving inappropriate content then the School will follow its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and associated procedures.

9. APPENDIX 2 – EYFS POLICY FOR THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The details of this policy are applicable to the EYFS setting. The broader expectations are applicable to Kimbolton Preparatory School.

To ensure the safety and welfare of the children in our care this policy outlines the protocols for the

use of personal electronic devices including mobile phones, ipads, watches and cameras in the EYFS setting at Kimbolton Preparatory School and is particularly pertinent to the Lower Prep building, which houses the EYFS setting.

Procedures set out in this policy apply when EYFS pupils use teaching areas across the school including: the Hunter Hall, music room, ICT room, the gym, the dining room, the swimming pool and all outdoor spaces though are not limited to these areas. In short, the policy applies wherever EYFS pupils are present.

Personal mobile phones, cameras and video recording equipment (including smart watches with a camera option) cannot be used when in the presence of children on school premises including the Dining Hall and swimming pool.

In Aragon House, a dedicated mobile phone is provided for emergency situations if the office telephone is inaccessible. This telephone does not support image taking. This could be used to call an ambulance or contact the school nurse if the adult cannot leave the building.

Personal mobile phones must not be used to record images of pupils. Dedicated school phones are permissible.

All mobile phones must be stored away out of reach and sight of the children within the setting (the LP building or areas used by EYFS pupils) during contact time with children. (This includes staff, visitors, parents, volunteers and students). They should not be visible in classrooms or teaching areas at any time.

No parent is permitted to use their mobile phone or use its camera facility whilst inside school buildings, in the swimming pool or around the grounds when children are present. This begins from the Reception gate where parents enter and exit each day. 'No mobile phone' signs are placed at entrance doors and gates to the LP building to remind all parents and visitors.

Mobile phones must not be used in any teaching area (including Dining Hall) within the setting or within the bathroom area.

In the case of a personal emergency staff should use the school telephone. It is the responsibility of all staff to make families aware of the school telephone numbers.

Personal calls may be made in non-contact time but not within the teaching areas.

Personal mobiles, cameras or video recorders must not be used to record classroom activities. School equipment only should be used in order to respect the privacy and confidentiality of each child.

Photographs and recordings can only be transferred to and stored on a school computer/iPad or laptop before printing. This includes photographs and recordings used for Tapestry too.

All telephone contact with Parents/Carers should be made on the school telephone.

During group outings staff will use their own phones in an emergency or for contact purposes, but not for personal use during the school outing.

In the case of school productions and sports day, parents/carers are permitted to take

photographs/video footage of their own child in accordance with school protocols but we strongly advise against the publication of any such photographs on social networking sites. Many school events will be videoed/photographed by school staff or by an authorised person / company where applicable.

Programmes publish a statement to this effect for all parents to read and remind them of our safeguarding
procedures in order to protect other children's privacy and confidentiality rights.

Staff are all aware of photography restrictions for individual children and ensure parents specific requests are adhered to.

It is the responsibility of all staff to adhere to and support the effective implementation of this policy. **It is the responsibility of all staff to adhere to this policy.** Regular reminders are shared at INSET training days at the start of each term.