

Mobile Phones in School Policy for Pupils, Visitors and Staff



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The Inspirational Learning Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Mobile phones in school policy for pupils, visitors and staff

1. Introduction and aims

At The Inspirational Learning Academies Trust (Newstead Primary Academy, Norton le Moors Primary Academy, Whitfield Valley Primary Academy), we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents 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 and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to safeguarding

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Safeguarding risks
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

1.1 Things that have happened in UK schools and why we need to ensure all our pupils and adults are safe.

- Use of mobile devices for up-skirting and obtaining imagery of genitals
- Adults taking pictures of children for theirs and others' sexual gratification
- Pornography and violent content accessed by children's own internet connectivity whilst in school
- Gang culture, knives, extremism, Drill and Grime music accessed by children's own internet connectivity
- Inappropriate and violent games accessed and played
- Pornographic and violent interpretations of known children's cartoons etc. accessed inadvertently
- Inappropriate and 'dangerous' material stored on personal devices by family members, then accessed without internet connectivity in school
- Pupils contacting family members/ birth family against parental permission

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- Pupils taking pictures and videos of staff, creating memes and using VI to distort images, meaning and publishing online, leading to suspension and disciplinary action
- Using images taken of other pupils for bullying and humiliation on social media
- Sharing of personal data on social media inappropriately

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2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Staff

- All staff (including teachers, support staff, and contractors) are responsible for enforcing this policy.
 - All staff are being protected by the procedures in this policy.
 - Staff must also secure their personal phones. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.
 - Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school will be made aware of this policy through the information given at Induction.
- Staff need to notify the Headteacher if they have identified a breach of this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

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 use their mobile devices while children are present/during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones for personal reasons is restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present such as the staff room and offices. In circumstances where immediate contact is needed, then staff should let family/ their child's school know to call Reception as personal phones will be switched off during lessons. Members of the Senior Leadership Team only may be required to use their mobile phones during contact times.

The Headteacher will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number as a point of emergency contact.

3.2 Data Protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information. The Inspirational Learning Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Staff can use school iPads/ cameras to take pictures – not personal devices. Personal devices may be used to take images when on Educational Visits, however these must be deleted with 24 hours after the end of the visit or within 72hours after returning from a residential visit.

CPOMs should never download content onto their personal devices.

Staff must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

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3.2 Safeguarding

- Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.
- Staff must not contact children on the child's personal devices, only ever contacting them through their parent/carer should this be required/necessary to do so.
- Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils.
- Our schools' use of classroom apps or programmes that require can be accessed via staff's personal devices can be done outside the classroom/ contact with children. Information/ images/data cannot be downloaded to a personal device.

3.3 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 evacuation
- Supervising off-site trips In these circumstances, staff will:
Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, no caller ID must be made on the setting.

3.4 Sanctions

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

4. Use of mobile phones and smart watches by pupils

Pupils are allowed to bring a mobile to school, though they must hand it in upon arrival in to their classroom. They must show their classroom staff that it is switched off, then place it in their own personally labelled wallet. All wallets are then stored in a box, which is safely stored in an adult only space.

Personal phones/ tablets that are internet enabled and have cameras are not allowed on school visits (including residential) during the day nor at afternoon clubs (specific medical personal circumstances will be considered on a risk-assessed basis).

A smart watch is a wearable device and watch, usually with a touchscreen display, that can be worn on the wrist. Users can interact with the watch through swipes, taps, gestures or voice commands.

Modern smartwatches such as the Apple Watch enable users to make calls, send and view messages, check the time, listen to music and much more. Smart watches can connect to other devices through the use of technologies like Wi-Fi and Bluetooth. Due to their connectivity and the applications available on smart watches, we treat them like mobile phones and these should also be handed in by students upon arrival.

4.1 Sanctions

Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. School staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the

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DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows schools to search a pupil's phone if we have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury. If they are confiscated, parents/carers will be contacted to collect the phone/device.

Persistent refusal to hand in mobile phone/smart device may result in lunchtime Study Club or internal exclusion outside of their normal classroom (e.g. with a Senior Leader/ alternative classroom).

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting
- 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

Parents 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, their device will be turned off and stored safely away from children.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled. Pupils must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in a school office in a secure location until collected. Lost phones should be returned to Reception. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

7. Monitoring and review

When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behavior and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations.

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