

## Mobile Phone Policy

Pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones to school unless they are in Year 5 or Year 6 and there is a clear need for them to do so (for example, where they travel independently to and from school).

### 1. Aim

At the Laurels, we recognise that mobile phones are a part of everyday life for many of our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour
- This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:
  - Risks to child protection
  - Data protection issues
  - Potential for lesson disruption
  - Risk of theft, loss, or damage
  - Appropriate use of technology in the classroom
- Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

Any misuse of a mobile phone that raises safeguarding concerns (including accessing or sharing inappropriate content, or contacting others inappropriately) will be managed in line with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

### 2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

#### 3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy. Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly, and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

#### 4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day.

#### **4.1 Personal mobile phones**

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to noncontact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

#### **4.2 Data protection**

More detailed guidance on Data protection can be found in our data protection policy

#### **4.3 Safeguarding**

Staff must not give their personal contact details to pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

#### **4.4 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 are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

#### **5. Use of mobile phones by pupils**

Pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones at any time during the school day. This includes before school on site, during lessons, breaktimes, transitions, lunchtimes and at the end of the school day whilst still on site.

Phones brought into school by pupils:

- Turned off before entering the school grounds
- Pupils keep mobile phones in a secure safe designated by the school in the Year 5 and 6 classrooms.
- The safe will be locked after all children have arrived and opened at the end of the day
- Phones must not be turned on again until they have left the school grounds

Exceptions may be made for pupils with specific medical or additional needs, agreed with the school.

### **5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils**

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

- Pupils are not permitted to bring smartwatches in to school
- Staff smartwatches are subject to the same restrictions as mobile phones, with the additional requirement that incoming messages must not be displayed in a way that could be read by others.

### **5.2 Sanctions**

If a pupil is in breach of this policy:

- Sanctions will be applied in line with the school's behaviour policy
- Mobile phones will be confiscated (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- If a mobile phone is confiscated, the child's parent or carer will be required to collect it from the office. Where permitted by current DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance and legislation, senior staff may examine data or files on a device where there is a safeguarding concern.

### **6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors**

- Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers must not take photographs, videos or audio recordings on the school site unless authorised by the school. The school may make specific arrangements for photography and filming at performances, assemblies and special events.
- Parents, carers, visitors and volunteers should not use mobile phones in classrooms, playgrounds or other pupil learning spaces unless authorised by the school.
- Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.
- Parents/carers 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 their personal mobile during the school day.

### **7. Loss, theft or damage**

- Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are easily identifiable and are stored securely in the designated safe during the school day.
- Pupils should secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.
- The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.
- Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked cabinet.
- Lost phones should be returned to the office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

### **8. Monitoring and review**

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will consider:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of a member of the senior leadership team in a timely manner.

## 9. Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school

### Acceptable use agreement

If you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. Your phone must remain switched off and stored in the designated classroom safe throughout the school day.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
4. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
5. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
6. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
  - a. Email
  - b. Text/messaging app
  - c. Social media
7. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.

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