



**HIGHLEES  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
*Bringing out the Best*



# Mobile Devices Policy (including social media platforms)

for

## Highlees Primary School

Review Date: July 2023

Next Review Date: September 2026

Reviewed by: Melissa Albert (Principal)

## Introduction

It is important to safeguard and protect pupils, staff and volunteers at Highlees Primary School by setting out clear guidelines on the use of mobile phones.

While mobile phones and personal communication devices (smart watches etc) are commonplace in today's society, it is recognised that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately.

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

Most mobile phones now offer Internet and email access, alongside messaging, camera, video and sound recording. Mobile phones alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance; however there are also associated risks. Safeguarding of children within the school is paramount.

## **Staff Policy**

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

- outside of their contracted hours
- discreet and appropriate eg: in their own work space such as a classroom but not in the presence of pupils
- mobile phones should be switched off and left in a safe place during lesson times or during any contact with pupils.
- notifications sent through to smart watches should be turned off during the school day.

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.

The exception to this policy will be by members of the Senior Leadership Team who, as they work across the sites and need to be contactable at all times, who will therefore have their phones with them but these will also be on silent.

Staff should never send to colleagues or pupils texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate. Concerns regarding staff members or other adults such as visitors, supply, coaches or volunteers should be reported directly to the Executive Principal/Principal. Concerns regarding pupils should be reported directly to a DSL in line with the TEFAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

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.

## Online conduct and social media

Communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs. Staff and volunteers should not share any personal information with pupils. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child/young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. If a pupil seeks to establish social contact, or if this

occurs coincidentally, the adult should exercise his or her professional judgement in making a response and should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Staff and volunteers must not give their personal contact details such as home/mobile phone number; home or personal email address or social networking details to pupils.

It is recommended that staff ensure that all possible privacy settings are activated to prevent pupils from making contact on personal profiles and to prevent students from accessing photo albums or other personal information which may appear on social networking sites.

Staff must not have any pupils or any ex-pupils under the age of 18 as friends on their social networking sites. Staff are advised not to have any online friendships with any young people under the age of 18, unless they are family members or close family friends.

Staff are advised not to have online friendships with parents or carers of pupils, or members of the governing body/trustees. Where such online friendships exist, staff must ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.

Staff are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media and must bear in mind that what is published might be read by colleagues, pupils, the general public, future employers and friends and family for a long time.

Staff must ensure that their online profiles are consistent with the professional image expected and should not post material which damages the reputation of the school or which causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people.

Those who post material which may be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct which may be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedure. Even where it is made clear that the writer's views on such topics do not represent those of the Federation, such comments are inappropriate.

## **Parents, Visitors, Volunteers and Contractors Policy**

Photos of children must not be taken without prior discussion with school staff and in accordance *with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018*. Adults either in school or accompanying children on school trips should not use their own cameras or phone cameras to take pictures of pupils – a school phone or ipad is available.

Adults, visitors or volunteers in school should only use their mobile phone within the confines of the school office or staff room. 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/phone or ipad. Parents accompanying children on school trips should not use their mobile cameras to take pictures of children.

Contractors are asked not to use their mobile phones inside school – any calls to be made from their vehicles in the car park. Should they need to take photos of any equipment for diagnostic/problem solving purposes, this will be undertaken with the Site Manager present.

## **Pupil Policy**

While we fully acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone or smart watch to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision (only for children in years 5 and 6), however we discourage pupils from bringing their phones or smart watches to school when possible, due to the potential issues of how quickly a photo can be posted online and sent to

others. They can become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils or/and teachers.

If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone or smart watch 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 teachers have been taken, the images are removed by the pupil in the presence of a senior member of staff. (Please see more guidance in our child protection policy). Smart watches are also strongly discouraged and if a pupil is found to be taking images with it, the watch is confiscated and the photos deleted, as with a mobile phone.

When a child needs to bring a phone into school, a permission slip (**Appendix 1**) must be signed by the parent. 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 the school accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones or smart watches which are brought into school or school grounds.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff having a mobile phone or smart watch in their possession during school hours, the device will be stored in the school office and may be collected at the end of the school day. A device consent form will be sent home to parents requesting that it is signed and returned the next day. If this practice continues more than three times, then the school will confiscate the device until an appropriate adult collects it from school.

Should a pupil be found to be using their device inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring it into school.

We ask that parents should talk to their children about the appropriate use of text messages as they can often be used to bully pupils.

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.

## Highlees Primary

### Mobile Phone/Smart Watch Parental Consent Form

Dear Parent/Carer

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

The phone must be handed in to the school office first thing in the morning before going to class and then collected at the end of the day.

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.



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### MOBILE PHONE/SMART WATCH PARENTAL CONSENT

I give permission for my child (name) .....

in Year ..... to bring their mobile phone/smart watch into school.

I understand the device will be kept securely and returned to your child at the end of the school day.

I have read the above statements and understand the implications.

Signed .....

Print Name.....

Relationship to Child.....

Date.....

PLEASE RETURN PERMISSION SLIP TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE. THANK YOU.