Non-Statutory

Use of Mobile Phones, Personal and Imaging Devices, including Smartwatches

(for children, staff, governors and visitors)

Policy statement

At Oak Green School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, smart watches and other personal digital devices, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Whilst Oak Green School accept and recognise this, it will not tolerate any interruptions or intrusions brought about by having such items on the school site. Nor will it accept any responsibility for the damage or loss of mobile phones brought on to the school site by either staff or pupils.

We take steps to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of mobile phones, cameras and digital recording devices in the school.

We recognise that during the academic year there are a number of occasions when staff, children and parents will want to record images of pupils. Such occasions include assemblies, school trips and sporting events. We will try to do everything that we can reasonably do to meet our parents' and our own wishes to record events in the life of the school and of a child's time here, subject to the following limitations and safeguards:

- Parental consent must be respected.
- Children at risk must be protected, without being disadvantaged or excluded.
- Operational decisions on whether a child or group of children cannot be photographed rest with the Co-Headteacher or the Senior Leadership Team. Those decisions should be respected.
- It is parents' responsibility to take care in how they share or publish photographs of their children, whether taken at the school or elsewhere.
- To prevent significant harm arising to children and young people or serious harm to adults, including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.

For further information on the use of mobile phones in schools please refer to the DFE Guidance document 29 June 2026:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools

1. Introduction and aims

This Policy is aimed at ensuring that mobile phones are available for staff and children when needed but do not present a nuisance to learning. They should not present a threat to the personal safety or privacy of pupils or staff. Pupil mobile phones and smartwatches may only be brought onto school property, handed in and stored in accordance with the conditions set out later in the policy. A consent form must be signed by both parents and pupils stating that they understand the school's expectations.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile devices for pupils, staff, parents 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 devices 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

Please note throughout this policy that 'mobile devices' refers to phones, smart phones, smart watches, smart glasses and other personal recording digital devices.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for 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 Co-Headteachers are responsible for 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 make or receive calls, or send texts, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during time. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school, as agreed with the Co-Headteachers
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members, as agreed with the Co-Headteachers
- In the event of a critical incident on school premises
- For Safeguarding Leads in the event of system downtime or off site with an immediate safeguarding concern.

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

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number (01296 423895) as a point of emergency contact.

3.2 Smart Watches

Staff who wear a smart watch must ensure that whilst in a teaching/supervisory capacity watches should be set to flight mode and Bluetooth disconnected. If this is not possible the device should be left locked in a location away from the area for teaching and learning.

Staff should not take any calls on any worn devices whilst supervising children.

Staff to be aware of any visitors to the setting that may be using a Smart watch and notify them of the settings' policy with regard to the use of such devices in the presence of children.
Staff are able to check Smart watches as they would with mobile phones during their break times, away from children.

3.3 Smart Glasses

No staff member should have access to any personal recording devices this includes smart glasses.

Staff members will ensure that any visitors/contractors to the site are not carrying or wearing a device able to digitally record. Where this may be the case visitors/contractors to be asked to remove them whilst on the premises.

4. Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information. Please refer to the school's GDPR policy and Data Breach Policy.

5. Safeguarding

- Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or 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 or pupils.
- Staff must not use their mobile devices to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which 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.
- Only the DSL and DDSL's may, if there is no alternative, use their mobile device to access CPOMS and record an immediate safeguarding concern. At any other time school owned devices must be used.

6. 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 evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

(See Educational Visits policy)

In these circumstances, staff will:

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

6.1 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes. Oak Green School has an absence phone (SLT USE ONLY), and phones for the school Premises Manager and Network Manager who need to be contacted out of hours. The Safeguarding Family Support Manager has access to a DSL Tablet.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

6.2 Sanctions

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

7. Use of mobile phones/smartwatches by pupils

Mobile phones may only be brought onto school premises for legitimate reasons only i.e. children travelling to and from school by themselves.

- In order for a pupil to bring a mobile phone/smartwatch onto school premises a Mobile Device consent form must be signed by the parent and child and handed to the school.
- Each day, mobile phones and smartwatches must be brought to the Main School Entrance and placed in the secure boxes for each Class. The phone/smartwatch must be switched OFF (not left on silent).
- Pupils will not be able to come in via the Paterson Road entrance or the double gates on Oak Green Road. Once the phone/smartwatch has been handed in pupils will then be able to enter the school in the normal way through the playground.
- Mobile phones/smartwatches may be collected from the Main School Entrance at the end of the day and only switched back on when pupils leave the school site. Once phones/smartwatches have been collected children are not to return to the playground.
- If children are attending a club then the Y5/6 staff will hand your child's phone to the club leader to then pass it to them as they leave site.
- If mobile phones/smartwatches are lost/stolen/broken, the school takes no responsibility and is not liable for the return or replacement of the phone; this is the responsibility of the parent/child.
- Curriculum time will not be spent investigating matters pertaining to the loss or damage of phones/smartwatches or incidents relating to online issues out of school.

- The school will contact the community police officer and parents if pupils are discovered to be using their phones to send inappropriate messages to other pupils either by texting or chat groups.

7.1 Sanctions

Any child who refuses to hand in a phone/smartwatch or is found with a phone or smartwatch on site will be given a consequence in line with our behaviour policy. This could result in a phone/smartwatch ban. If we believe a child has a phone/smartwatch on then then we will use our powers of searching to locate it.

8. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors (see Appendix 1)

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event, or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils
- Parents, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil.

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.
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.

9. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones/smartwatches to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, and are handed in on arrival at the main school entrance.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones/smartwatches 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.

Lost phones should be returned to the office who will then attempt to contact the owner.

10. Imaging Devices, Cameras, and videos

The taking of photographs or videos on mobile devices is not permitted by children, staff or external professionals as this may present a Data Protection breach if these images are then uploaded onto social networking sites.

- Members of staff must not bring their own imaging devices including cameras, ipads or wearable recording devices into the setting.
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons, i.e. to record their learning and development, or for displays within the setting.
- Photographs or recordings of children are only taken on equipment belonging to the School and may only be downloaded onto the school's storage devices or printers.
- Photographs and recordings of children may only taken of children if there is written permission to do so (permissions can be found on the individual child's Registration Form).

When photographing or videoing children, the staff will:

- ensure that parents, guardians or carers of children have signed and returned the parental consent form;
- ensure all children are appropriately dressed;
- avoid naming children. If a name is required then the first name only (or initials) should be used; use photographs or videos that represent the diversity of the children participating;
- report any concerns relating to any inappropriate or intrusive photography to the Co-Headteachers;
- remember the duty of care and challenge any inappropriate behaviour or language;
- not use images that are likely to cause distress, upset or embarrassment; regularly review stored images and delete unwanted material, in accordance with the school's Data Retention Policy Policy and GDPR.
- ensure that photographs shown on displays available during open or parent's evening should depict children in an appropriate way and any children shown have parental consent.
- Where parents request permission to photograph or record their own children during the school session, permission will first be gained from all parents for their children to be included.
- Camera and video use is monitored by the Co-Headteachers.

10.1. Photography or recording at special events

Parents must give their consent before any images may be recorded of their child, either by parents, staff or students, using the relevant section of the Registration form. Parents are asked to give their consent when a child joins the school, but consent can be changed at a later date. The school undertakes to ask parents on a regular basis, usually once a year, if they wish to change their consent. Any parents wishing to change their consent at any other time should contact the office.

- If a parent has asked that a child not be photographed/videoed, all efforts must be made to ensure that the child is not photographed/videoed. If the child is inadvertently caught on camera, whether by the school, parent or third-party, the image shall be destroyed.
- Photographs taken by parents and family members purely for personal use are exempt from the Data Protection Act/UK GDPR. Photographs and other images taken by school staff may be covered by the Act, including images caught by CCTV. In these cases it is the school's responsibility to abide by the legislation.
- In some cases, child protection considerations may impact upon a decision to allow photography/videoing by parents, staff or students, and the following guidance should be read accordingly:

Whether or not a particular school event can be photographed will be the decision of the Co-Headteachers. Photography by parents and other visitors to the school will be allowed only when the Co-Headteacher's permission has been given. The Co-Headteachers/member of the Senior Leadership Team will inform parents of the status of such events beforehand.

At events for which parents of all children participating have given consent, photography/videoing may take place during the performance, if the Co-Headteacher feels that it will not disrupt the smooth running of the event, reduce audience enjoyment, or compromise health and safety, and if there are no additional safeguarding concerns. Otherwise, photography will take place at the beginning or the end of the event.

As already mentioned at large group events (for example, the Christmas performance and the Sports Day) photography may not be allowed during the event. For such events the school will endeavour to make other arrangements with regard to photography/videoing.

If a parent is unable to attend a particular event at which photography has been permitted, and wishes another individual to take a photograph of their child, they should inform the school in writing in advance, stating the name of the individual whom they wish to take the photograph.

If a parent wishes to take a photograph of their child with another child or children (for example with a friend or with a small group of children), this will be permitted with the consent of the parents concerned. Images of other children must not be loaded onto social networking sites or otherwise made publicly available.

If a parent is found to be in breach of the conditions of this policy they will be asked to delete the images or material from their device and may be asked to leave the event.

11.0 Tracking Devices

Oak Green School does not support the use of personal tracking devices for children in the school environment. Whilst parents/carers have responsibility for safeguarding their children, whilst on school premises and under the supervision of school staff, air tags which mark location, should not be attached to any child's clothing or accessories.

Parents/Carers wishing to use tracking devices for children's belongings whilst off site on an organised school trip may seek permission from the Assistant Headteacher for the phase.

12. Monitoring and review

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

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

13. Equal Opportunities

This policy applies to all and does not unlawfully discriminate because of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

14. Linked Policies

- Acceptable Use & Network Security Policy
- Acceptable Use for Pupils
- Online Safety including Filtering & Monitoring Policy
- Online Safety Acceptable Use KS 1 Pupil Contract
- Online Safety Acceptable Use KS2 Pupil Contract
- Social Media Networking Policy
- Appendix A Mobile Phone personal device Agreement for parents/carers