



Northcote Primary School

Mobile Phone Policy

Introduction

In Northcote Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. This policy on the use of mobile phones and mobile devices in school has been drawn up in the best interests of pupil safety and staff professionalism.

Throughout this policy phone/ mobile includes all mobile tablets and devices.

Related policies

- ❖ Child Protection policy
- ❖ Social Media policy
- ❖ Staff Code of Conduct
- ❖ Educational Visits

Pupils:

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones in school or on trips
- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and must be collected by the parent.

Staff:

- Staff must have their phones on 'silent' or switched off during class time.
- Use of phones must be limited to non-contact time when no children are present. If there are extreme circumstances the member of staff will have made the Head Teacher aware of this and can have their phone in the case of an emergency.
- Staff phones will never be used to contact pupils or parents or take photographs of children or to store their personal data.
- A school mobile will be carried to sporting fixtures away from school or on an educational visit for contacting parents in the event of an emergency.
- In the event of an unplanned school closure the school send each family a text message informing them of the change of circumstances. *It is therefore imperative that parents supply school with at least one up-to-date mobile number.*
- Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy is likely to result in the enforcement of or Whistleblowing policy and associated procedures.

PARENTS & OTHER VISITORS:

- We request that parents do not use mobile phones in the school building or grounds.
- Mobile phones must never be used to take photographs in the school building or grounds.
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We very much appreciate our parents' support in implementing this policy in order to keep your children/ our pupils safe.

The school will consider any of the following **unacceptable use** a mobile phone or mobile device and a serious breach of the school's behaviour policy resulting in **sanctions** being taken:

- photographing or filming staff or other pupils without their knowledge or permission
- photographing or filming in toilets, swimming pools, changing rooms and similar areas
- bullying, harassing or intimidating staff or pupils by the use of text, email or multimedia messaging, sending inappropriate messages or posts to social networking or blogging sites
- refusing to switch a phone off or hand over the phone at the request of a member of staff*
- using the mobile phone outside school hours to intimidate or upset staff and pupils will be considered a breach of these guidelines in the same way as unacceptable use which takes place in school time

*Where it is deemed necessary to examine the contents of a mobile phone this will be done by a designated member of staff, usually the Head teacher. The action will be properly recorded including the time, who was present and what was found.

Pupils and parents should be made aware that serious misuse may lead to the confiscation of the mobile phone, communication with parents and the imposition of other sanctions, up to and including exclusion from school. In some instances an offence may have to be reported to the Police.

Should an incident occur then school will also need to ensure that support is provided for the victim.

SANCTIONS

Pupils and parents are notified that appropriate action will be taken against those who are in breach of the acceptable use guidelines following the schools behaviour policy. In addition:

- pupils and their parents should be very clear that the school is within its rights to confiscate the phone where the guidelines have been breached.
- if a phone is confiscated school will make it clear for how long this will be and the procedure to be followed for its return.
- pupils should be aware that the police will be informed if there is a serious misuse of the mobile phone where criminal activity is suspected
- if a pupil commits an act which causes serious harassment, alarm or distress to another pupil or member of staff the ultimate sanction may be permanent exclusion. School will consider the impact on the victim of the act in deciding the sanction and parents will be involved.

CONFISCATION PROCEDURE

If it becomes necessary to confiscate a mobile phone then :

- the pupil or their parent will be informed that the phone can be collected at the end of school day from the school office/ designated person.
- the confiscation will be recorded in the school behaviour log for monitoring purposes
- schools will ensure that confiscated equipment is stored in such a way that it is returned to the correct person
- in the case of repeated misuse the phone will only be returned to a parent/carer who will be required to visit the school by appointment to collect the phone. This may be at the end of a week, a half term or longer
- where a pupil persistently breaches the guidelines, following a clear warning, the Head Teacher may impose an outright ban from bringing a mobile phone to school. This may be a fixed period or permanent ban.

Where the phone has been used for an unacceptable purpose

- the Headteacher or a designated staff member will have the right to view files stored in confiscated equipment and will seek the cooperation of parents in deleting any files which are in clear breach of these guidelines unless these are being preserve as evidence.
- if required, evidence of the offence will be preserved, preferably by confiscation of the device and keeping it secure or by taking photographs of the screen
- advice can be sought from the Local Authority and/or the police
- school should consider whether an incident should be reported to the school safeguarding officer
- the designated staff member will monitor repeat offences to see if there is any pattern in the perpetrator or the victim which needs further investigation.

SUPPORT FOR THE VICTIM

Where an incident has involved the victimisation, harassment, alarm or distress of another pupil or member of staff, the school will provide support for the victim. This should be discussed with the victim's family or where the incident involves a member of staff, appropriate support should be obtained. This might be the designated staff welfare person or the victim's union.

To support the rehabilitation of a victim the following support may be offered in consultation with the victim and their family or support person. The school may:

- follow up with the victim and family and agree a suitable way forward to facilitate an effective closure for the victim to the incident.
- Implement the institution's 'restorative practice' procedures. Where the perpetrator agrees, participation in this process will be included as part of their reintegration programme following the incident.

- where 'restorative practice' does not take place then other avenues to support the victim should be tried e.g. Cybermentors, Childline
- school will also ensure that the perpetrator, and any others involved, are educated about the impact of their actions on the victim
- school will ensure a fully documented case history of the incident is recorded
- where material has been posted online about a victim, school will provide support in getting the material removed either through discussion with the poster of the material or contact with the service provider. Help for this can be provided through the LA.

This statement of guidelines will be subject to regular review and updating in order to ensure that the personal safety of pupils and school staff is protected and that the learning environment is not disturbed by current or emerging technology.

Member of staff responsible :	R Morgan
Date Policy written:	January 2022
Date to be reviewed:	January 2024

Date approved by Governors:
Signature of Chair of Governors: