



# Mobile Phone Policy

## Aim

Helsby Hillside is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the working day, and which are most susceptible to misuse - including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. However, as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices.

## Responsibility

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, governors, volunteers, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Volunteer Guidance
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Professional Relations Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct (see separate policy for more detail)

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity. Our aim is therefore that all practitioners:

- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse
- Know how to minimise risk
- Avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations
- Understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use
- Are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours
- Are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting, which is agreed to by all users.

## Staff Mobile Phone & Digital Image Use Guidance

### Use of Mobile Phones

- **Staff must not make or receive calls or texts during contact time with children.**
- **Personal phone use** (including sending/receiving texts or emails) must be **restricted to non-contact time and only when no children are present** — e.g. staff room, offices, empty classrooms, or outdoors.
- During class time, **phones must be switched off or set to silent** and kept **out of sight**, such as in the staff room or in a classroom locker.

### Exceptional Circumstances

- In exceptional cases where access to a personal phone during contact time may be necessary, staff must **seek permission from the Headteacher**. For instance:
  - For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
  - In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

If special arrangements are not appropriate then emergency contact should be made via the school office.

### Use of Phones for Curriculum Purposes

- Where the Headteacher has granted permission to use a phone to capture **curriculum-related photographs or videos**, staff must:
  - Upload/save all images/videos **directly onto the school system or approved media platform**.
  - **Delete all images/videos immediately** from the personal device once successfully transferred.
- **Images or videos of children must never be shared** between staff on informal platforms such as **WhatsApp**, text messages, or any other non-approved channel.

It is important to note that the Headteacher will have his phone on him at all times to ensure that he can be contacted and able to react quickly to any incident that occurs within the school.

### Personal Mobiles - Pupils

We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others.

It has therefore been agreed that:

- Pupils may be given permission to bring mobile phones into school if they are walking to or from school without parents (Years 5/6 only).
- The phone must be turned off and handed in to the class teacher upon entry to school in the morning- phones will be stored securely in school.
- The phone is left at the owner's own risk and school is not responsible for loss or damage.
- Phones must not be taken on school trips/visits (this includes smart watches with phone call making capabilities).

Breaches of the above conditions could lead to the school confiscating the device and withdrawing permission for the child to bring their phone into school. If a device is confiscated it will be held in the school office and will need to be collected by a parent or carer.

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, staff are able to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site.' The DfE guidance allows us 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.

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
- 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

**Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors**

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises. Reminders of school’s expectations of mobile phone use on school site are displayed on mini posters in the school office and around school (they are on outside doors for parents/carers to see).

**Parents/carers**

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as essential means of communication at all times. We therefore ask that parents/carers usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment.

We appreciate that parents will want to photograph or video school events such as shows or Sports Day using their mobile phones, but this is in the understanding that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own. It is not permissible for parents to take photographs or videos at any other time on school premises.

We would really appreciate it if parents and carers would refrain from using video calling whilst on site as this is a safeguarding issue potentially for other members of our school community.

*Staff will challenge other members of staff/governors/volunteers/visitors/parents/ contractors who use their mobile phone whilst children are present. This will then be reported to senior staff and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school policies.*

Reviewed and approved by	Adam Khan Headteacher	January 2026
Next Review Date	January 2029	