Dean Bank Primary and Nursery School

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Dean Bank Primary and Nursery School

Mobile Phones in School Policy and Guidance

Headteacher: Mr C Brown
Chair of Governors: Mr J Davison

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1. Introduction and aims

At Dean Bank Primary & Nursery School, we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff alike.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote and set an example for safe and responsible phone use.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, parents and staff.
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour e.g. Online Safety Policy

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as but not limited to:

- Risk to child protection.
- Data protection issues.
- Potential for lesson disruption.
- Risk of theft, loss of damage.
- Inappropriate use of technology in the classroom.
- Bullying and cyberbullying.

Dean Bank Primary & Nursery School recognises that mobile phones have their benefits and play a notable role in socialising with friends and engaging with the world. However, mobile phones risk unnecessary distraction, disruption and diversion.

One in five children have experienced bullying online and are often targeted via their mobile phones or similar devices. Moreover, whilst mobile phones can be used for socialising, screen time undeniably displaces and disrupts face-to-face interactions and other activities that have a positive impact on wellbeing.

It is our duty as educators to provide a distraction free and supportive environment that is conducive to learning. Prohibiting the use of mobile phones enables us to do so and to focus on the educational and pastoral needs of all students.

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's statutory mobile phone guidance June 2026. Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is Keeping Children Safe in Education. This statutory guidance should be considered alongside the behaviour in schools guidance which supports schools in establishing calm, safe and supportive environments conducive to teaching, and keeping children safe in education.

2. Roles and responsibilities

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.

Ensuring the online safety of our school community is of paramount importance. As such, this policy will be reviewed every year and updated when necessary.

Mr Brown is responsible for monitoring, reviewing and updating the policy.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

All staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else involved with or employed by the school) are not permitted to make/receive calls or send texts while pupils are present. The use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time and to areas of the school where children are not present (such as staff rooms or departmental offices).

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have their phone during contact hours. This includes, but is not limited to instances of:

- Expected contact by their child, or their child's school.
- Expected emergency contact for acutely ill dependants or family members.

Requests to have personal phones during contact hours for the above or similar reasons must be agreed in advance by Mr Brown at his discretion.

Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data or any other confidential school information.

Staff must secure their phones as much as possible using passwords and/or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure any work phone provided to them. Failure to do so may result in data breaches.

Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or children, including connecting with them through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publishing their contact details on any social media platform or website to avoid unwanted contact by parents or children.

Staff must not contact children on the child's personal devices and must only ever attempt contact through their parent/guardian and only when necessary.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything that could be used to identify a pupil. If it is necessary to take a photo or a recording as part of a school activity, this must be done using school equipment.

Using personal mobiles for work purposes

Circumstances may arise in which it is appropriate for staff to use their personal mobile phones for work. These circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances staff should:

- 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 that could be used to identify a pupil.
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If contact is necessary, it must be made via the school office.

Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

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

When using a work phone 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.

Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Dean Bank Primary & Nursery School recognises that parents/guardians may wish for their children to have access to a mobile phone for communication purposes. Mobile phones can help with safeguarding and protecting children as it allows immediate contact and in some cases location identification.

This is particularly important for children who travel to and from school by themselves, especially during the darker winter months. Dean Bank Primary & Nursery School supports this approach and has adopted the following policy in order to support parents/guardians whilst also ensuring a distraction free environment.

Pupils are therefore subject to the following mobile phone policy:

- Pupils are allowed to bring their mobile phones to school however they must be turned off and handed in to the school office upon arrival.
- Pupils are required to hand their mobile phones the school office at the beginning of the school day. At the end of the day they can return to and collect their phone.
- Pupils must not use their mobile phones or similar electronic devices, such as tablets or smart watches, anywhere in school throughout the school day except under extenuating circumstances (examples of which shall be listed below) or with express permission or the specific direction of a teacher.
- Pupils will not be permitted to use their mobile phones at any after school extra-curricular clubs.
- Any pupil who fails to hand in their phone or utilises a secondary mobile phone or similar device during the school day, will have their phone/device confiscated and returned at the end of the school day. Parents/guardians will be notified of the confiscation.

Sanctions

Any pupil who breaches the policy will be subjected to sanctions. Appropriate sanctions will be actioned for any pupil who breaches the rules or if inappropriate usage is suspected by staff.

Under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils.

Further action may be taken if a pupil repeatedly breaches the policy.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classed 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:

- Upskirting
- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts, or texts directed towards someone on the basis of their ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation or any protected characteristic as stated by the Equality Act 2010.

Exemptions

Dean Bank Primary & Nursery School recognises that some pupils may require access to their mobile phones during the school day for medical reasons or carer responsibilities, among other reasons. These exemptions will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and approval is at the discretion of Mr Brown, the Headteacher.

5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

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 entails:

- Not using phones in the presence of pupils or during contact hours.
- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils on school grounds, unless it is of their own child.
- Not posting any images or recordings to social media without consent.

Parents, volunteers and visitors will be informed of the rules pertaining to mobile phone usage when they sign in at reception or attend an event at school.

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy regarding a pupil's use of their mobile phone, as set out in section 4, during said school trips.

Parents/guardians must use the school office as the primary 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 child's personal device during the school day.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing their phones to school must ensure that their phones are appropriately and clearly labelled before handing them in to the main office.

Pupils must secure their phones as much as possible, using passwords and/or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions.

Pupils bring their mobile phones and similar devices to school at their own risk. The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones or similar devices that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits/trips or while a pupil is travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored securely in the school office and can be collected at the end of the day.

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

7. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on the education, behaviour and welfare of all pupils. This policy will be reviewed

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.

Appendix 1: Mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones in our school

Whilst on school grounds we ask that you comply with our mobile phone policy.

As such:

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on school grounds.
- Please do not use your phone where pupils are present.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff.
- Do not use your phone in lessons or when working with children.

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on school grounds.

A full copy of our policy is available from the school office or on our website.