

Holy Trinity Primary School



Mobile Phone Usage Policy

March 2025

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At Holy Trinity Primary School, the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The Board of Governors has a legal duty, under Article 17 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, to safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils at the school when the pupils are on school premises or in the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This Mobile Phone/Digital Devices Policy is designed to comply with the statutory guidelines set by the Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI) and the Education Authority (EA), including Circular 2024/14 (“Guidance for Schools on Pupils’ Personal Use of the use of Mobile phones and other similar Devices During the School Day”)

Aim of Policy

The aim of this policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies while promoting safe and appropriate practice through clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. We recognise that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones which cause 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.

Restricting the use of mobile phones/tablet devices during the school day has been increasingly shown to positively impact academic engagement and achievement, with research indicating correlations to reduced bullying, decreased social media usage, increased healthy play, reduced distractions, and improved academic attainment.

The policy is aligned with our E Safety, Safeguarding and Anti-Bullying Policies and includes provisions for digital safety education, clear consequences for misuse, staff training, and parental involvement.

Mobile Phone Usage:

1. Mobile Phone Usage for Pupils:

- Mobile phones are prohibited in school unless permission is granted by the Principal or Vice Principal.
- In exceptional circumstances, pupils may bring their mobile phone to school, with prior consent. These phones should be switched off, brought to the office where they will be securely stored in the office until the end of the day.
- Mobile phones brought to school without prior permission will be confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian at the end of the day.
- Mobile phones may not be brought on school trips. Any found will be confiscated.
- Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, the principal has the power to intervene to regulate the behaviour of pupils whether they are on or off the school site (refer to Anti-Bullying Policy).

Smart Watches: Smart watches that are internet and camera-enabled, have the capacity to record and store voice notes, or communicate through Bluetooth, mobile data, or Wi-Fi, pose significant safeguarding concerns.

- Smart watches with internet, camera, voice recording, or communication capabilities are not allowed to be used in a way that breaches school rules.
- If a pupil is found using a smart watch inappropriately, the device will be confiscated, and parents/guardians will be notified. Repeated breaches will result in a ban on wearing such devices to school.

Mobile phone usage- Staff and Volunteers:

- Mobile phones should be switched off or put on silent during class times.
- Emergency calls only should be made or answered during teaching time.
- Adults should not use their mobile phones to access social media during the school day.
- Adults are not permitted to use their phone to take photographs of children.

- Adults should not share their mobile phone number with parents or pupils.
- Adults should exercise caution when sharing personal information on social media.
- Staff and volunteers must adhere to the mobile phone policy, ensuring their devices are used appropriately and do not interfere with their professional responsibilities.

Mobile phone usage Parents/Guardians:

- Parents/guardians are asked to ensure their child does not bring a mobile phone or tablet device to school.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to use their mobile phones courteously and appropriately while on school grounds.
- All calls related to a child should be through the school office or Seesaw.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for collecting mobile phones which have been confiscated.
- Parents/guardians are not permitted to take photos or videos of school events without permission.
- Parents/guardians must not share images of children other than their own without permission.

Safeguarding and Reporting:

- Any concerns regarding the misuse of mobile phones or digital devices should be reported promptly to the principal.
- The school will take appropriate action to address any incidents of misuse, in line with the Safeguarding and Anti-Bullying Policies.

Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure it remains current with technological advancements and statutory guidelines.

[Link to DENI Guidelines](#)

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Circular%202024-14%20-%20Use%20of%20Personal%20Mobile%20Phones.pdf>