





Dingle Community Primary School

**Mobile & Smart Technology Policy
(Previously Empty Pockets Policy)**

Date adopted:	3 rd November 2016
Date reviewed:	15 th October 2019
	3 rd November 2022
	25 th November 2025
Next review due:	Autumn 2028
Reviewed by:	Full Governing Board
Signed:	 (Headteacher)
Signed:	 (Chair of Governing Board)
Date:	25 th November 2025

1. Introduction and aims

At **Dingle Community Primary School** we recognise that mobile phones and similar smart technology devices, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors 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 phones 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

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar smart technology devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently 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 **Headteacher** is responsible for monitoring the policy every **three** years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly, and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones and smart technology devices.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (e.g. classroom, playground).
- Use of phones (including receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staffroom, empty classrooms).
- Staff should security protect access to functions of their phone.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. an acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Headteacher aware of this and can have their phone in the main office, in case of having to receive an emergency call- the office team will alert the staff member immediately.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example to take recordings of children, or sharing images.
- In line with 'Keeping Children safe in Education', Bluetooth connectivity must be turned off at all times when in school.
- Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found in the school's data protection policy.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers 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/carers or pupils.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that 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.

4.4 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 are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips (Access to Evolve)
- Supervising residential visits (access to Evolve)

In these circumstances, staff will:

- 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 else that could identify a pupil

- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4.5 Sanctions

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

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones and smart technology by pupils

We recognise that mobile phones and smart technology 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. Therefore:

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones at school (unless there are extenuating circumstances and authorisation has been given by the Headteacher) or on educational visits.
- If in the rare event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school:
 - the parent must complete a request form, available from the school office;
 - the phone must be handed in, switched off, to the class teacher on arrival at school and collected from them by the child at the end of the school day;
 - the phone is left at the owner's own risk.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by staff and pupils

Smartwatches are not permitted to be worn by staff or pupils on the school site at any time.

This restriction applies regardless of whether Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, mobile data, or other connectivity functions are disabled.

Any smartwatch brought into school—intentionally or inadvertently—must be stored securely and must not be worn during school hours.

The school accepts no responsibility for smartwatches that are brought onto the premises

5.2 Sanctions

Children should not have any personal mobile or smart technology devices in school, unless in extenuating circumstances agreed by the Headteacher, however if they have brought them into school, this section applies.

- Electronic devices, including mobile phones, can contain files or data which relate to an offence, or which may cause harm to another person. This includes, but is not limited to, indecent images of children, pornography, abusive messages, images or videos, or evidence relating to suspected criminal behaviour.
- Where there are any concerns regarding pupils' use of mobile or smart technology or policy breaches, they will be dealt with in accordance with our existing policies, including anti-bullying, child protection, e-safety and behaviour.
- Staff may confiscate a pupils' personal mobile or smart technology device if they believe it is being used to contravene our school policies, for example our child protection or behaviour policy.
- Personal mobile or smart technology devices that have been confiscated will be held in a secure place- (the school office) and released to parents/carers at the end of the day.
- Where a concern involves potentially indecent images/videos of children, including images/videos generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI), on a pupil's personal mobile or smart technology device, staff will respond in line with our child protection policy; they will confiscate devices, avoid looking at any content and refer the incident to the DSL (or deputy) urgently.
- If there is suspicion that data or files on a pupil's personal mobile or smart technology device may be illegal, or may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the device will be confiscated and handed over to the police for further investigation.

- If deemed to be necessary and appropriate, searches of personal mobile or smart technology devices may be carried out in accordance with our behaviour policy and the DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' guidance.
- Staff will respond in line with our child protection policy and follow the most appropriate safeguarding response if they find images, data or files on a pupil's electronic device that they reasonably suspect are likely to put a person at risk.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will always be informed of any searching incidents where authorised members of staff have reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of prohibited items, as identified in our behaviour policy.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be involved without delay if staff believe a search of a pupil's personal mobile or smart technology device has revealed a safeguarding risk.
- In exceptional circumstances and in accordance with our behaviour policy and the DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' guidance, the headteacher or authorised members of staff may examine or erase data or files if there is a good reason to do so:

In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to examine images, data or files, the Headteacher/DSL or an authorised member of staff will need to reasonably suspect that the images, data or files on the device has been, or could be used, to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.

In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to erase any images, data or files from the device, the member of staff should consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence. In those instances, the data or files should not be deleted, and the device must be handed to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

If the data or files are not suspected to be evidence in relation to an offence, the headteacher or an authorised member of staff may delete the images, data or files if the continued existence of the data or file is likely to continue to cause harm to any person and the pupil and/or the parent refuses to delete the data or files themselves.

- If the Headteacher or a member of staff finds any data or files that they suspect might constitute a specified offence, they will be delivered to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable.

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents/carers, 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 at a public event (such as a school fair), 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/carers, 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/carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

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

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

Parents/carers 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 their personal mobile during the school day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones 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.

We make parents/carers aware of this by:

- Including a disclaimer in on permission forms for bringing a phone to school
- Providing a copy of this policy on our school website

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office a locked cabinet.

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

8. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of the School Business Manager in a timely manner.

The Governing Board will review and accept this policy every three years.

9. Appendix 1: Mobile Phone Exceptional Circumstance Request

DINGLE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL **MOBILE PHONE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE REQUEST**



I request that my child _____ in Class _____ be permitted to bring a mobile phone with them to school.

This request is made due to the following exceptional circumstances:

Should this request be granted I agree that my child will comply with the following:

- The mobile phone will not be used on the school premises at any time including before or after school.
- The mobile phone will be handed in to a member of staff in their classroom at the beginning of the school day for storage in a locked container.
- The mobile phone will not be returned until the end of the school day, after the bell has rung.

I accept that the mobile phone is brought to school at my own risk and the school and its staff will accept no liability for loss or damage under any circumstances whatsoever.

Signed:

Date:

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DINGLE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL ~ **MOBILE PHONE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE REQUEST**



The request that, -----, may be permitted to bring a mobile phone with them to school due to exceptional circumstances has been considered.

<u>Request has been approved.</u>	
<u>Request has been refused.</u>	

Signed:

Date: