



# Potten End Church of England Primary School

**Mobile Phone & Mobile Device Usage Policy  
Potten End Church of England Primary School**

## **Policy Review**

This policy was agreed by the Governing Board on April 2026.....

It is due for review on...April 2027.....

Signature ..... Date .....

Head Teacher

Signature ..... Date .....

Chair of Governors



# Potten End Church of England Primary School

*Rooted in faith, we nurture, grow and flourish*

## 1. Introduction and aims

At Potten End CE Primary School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, 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
- Set clear guidelines for the use of other mobile devices, including trackers and AirTags.
- 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/devices 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 devices including trackers.

## 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



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member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 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.

## **4. Use of mobile phones by staff**

### **4.1 Personal mobile phones**

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, whilst children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01442 865022 as a point of emergency contact.

### **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).

Further information can be found in the acceptable use of IT policy and 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



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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 which 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 aren't limited to:

- To use multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

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 which 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 by pupils**

Pupils should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

At Potten End CE School, our approach is as follows;

- Children in Years 5 and 6 who are walking to school without their parents have permission to bring a phone to school so that they can contact their parents in an emergency to or from school.
- The phone must be clearly labelled with the child's name, switched off and given in to the class teacher on arrival at school.
- Phones are returned to children before leaving school to put safely into their school bag.
- The phone should be a simple model that does not connect to the internet.
- The phone must be concealed whilst leaving the school premises and



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children are reminded that it is not safe to be looking at their phones whilst walking to and from school.

- Parents are advised that Potten End CE Primary School accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into the school.
- Where a child is found with a mobile in school, the phone will be taken from the child and placed in the office. Parents will be contacted to collect the phone.
- If a child is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either a child or a teacher, this will be regarded as a serious offence and the Headteacher will decide on appropriate disciplinary action.
- In certain circumstances, the child may be referred to the Police. If images of other children or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the child until the images have been removed by an appropriate person.

Although rare at primary school age, 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 (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Up skirting
- 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

### **5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils**

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features. Smart Watches with camera facilities and independent access to the internet must be switched off and handed to the class teacher and will not be allowed to be used during the school day.

Smart Watches without independent connectivity and cameras may be worn providing they are being used as normal watches and for no other function



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beyond telling the time.

Under no circumstances should a mobile phone or Smart Watch be used by children to record still or video images, or to record audio whilst on the school premises or travelling to and from school.

## 5.2 Use of AirTags or location trackers

What are location trackers?

AirTags are small, remote tracking devices which are often used to keep track of the location of luggage and personal items such as keys and wallets. Some other devices, such as watches and smartphones, may also offer this functionality. Although often not designed for this purpose, tracking devices are sometimes used by parents and carers to track their child's location.

The school understand that location trackers such as AirTags can provide reassurance to parents and carers, however, the school has concerns about their use, particularly on school trips:

- **Interference with medical devices:** trackers can cause interference with medical devices such as pacemakers and ICDs (implantable cardioverter defibrillators). A child wearing a tracker in close physical proximity to someone using such a device could impact the function of the medical device.
- **Unauthorised tracking:** where a pupil is tracked without their knowledge, or by a person who has no legal access to them. Trackers can also indicate the location of anyone travelling with the pupil who has not consented to be tracked in this way.
- **Additional functions:** alarms, two-way communication, remote listening capability and other functions that some trackers provide can be disruptive and raise data protection and legal concerns.
- **Increasing anxiety:** unavoidable changes to routes or plans (e.g. during a school trip), or device loss/malfunction, can lead to disruptions in expected location data. This may cause anxiety for parents/carers, as well as for pupils and staff who are aware of the potential worry this will generate. For these reasons the school does not allow location tracking devices in school, on school trips or at off-site events.

The exception is for Year 5/6 children, who with their parents' consent are able to walk to school unaccompanied. We permit the use of an AirTag / location tracker instead of a mobile phone for these children. If Year 5/6 children use a tracker it will be treated in the same way as mobile phones are in the school. It needs to be clearly labelled with the child's name and handed in to the class teacher on arrival. It can be collected at the end of the day.



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## **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. Volunteers are provided with an induction pack that contains
- information about mobile phone usage.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers (unless in an emergency)
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which 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**

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use.

Pupils must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to



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them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

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.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the headteacher's office in a locked away. Lost phones should be returned to the 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 of pupils' education, behavior 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