



# HILLSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Mobile Phone Policy for staff, visitors, volunteers and children.**

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## **1. Introduction and aims**

At Hillstone Primary School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our children, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

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 children, staff, parents 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

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

### **2.1 Staff**

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.

The headteacher, supported by all staff, is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and children accountable for its implementation.

### **2.2 Governors**

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Board every 2 years.

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

### **3.1 Personal mobile phones**

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while children are present. Mobile phones must not be on show during contact times.

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 the staff room).

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance, in emergency situations in school, to allow for the completion of the additional security verification of websites and cloud-based sites such as CPOMS or emails or during school trips. (See section 3.4 below)

Occasionally, staff may be waiting for an important message for example from health professionals or from family members. In this case school staff should use the school office number, 0121 675 3573, as a point of contact and not their own personal mobiles.

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

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary or agreed, school staff can use the school office number, 0121 675 3573, as a point of emergency contact.

### **Smart Watches**

A small number of children bring in Smart Watches, such as Apple Watches or Fit Bits. These must be put on silent during the school day. As their phones would be off, their watches will not be linked to their phones.

Adults with Smart watches should have them on silent. They can have them on vibrate if that function exists but should not be engaging with them during child contact time in the same way that they would not interact with their phone.

## **3.2 Data protection**

Many staff use their mobile phones to access information to support them with their main professional duties. This includes work emails and access codes to CPOMS (The School's online Safeguarding reporting system).

All staff must keep this information secure by for example, password protection. All staff must follow General Data Protection Regulations.

## **3.3 Safeguarding**

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents/carers or children, 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 children.

We recognise that some staff may be 'friends' with members of our school community before starting work at Hillstone Primary School or have become 'friends' as they live in the same community. If this is the case, staff must ensure that they continue to support the aims and values of the school and that all school information is treated with the upmost confidentiality.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of children, their work, or anything else which could identify a child. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment. However, the school recognises that very occasionally, in order to capture a learning point, that it may become necessary to use personal equipment, e.g. mobile phone. This should only be done with senior leadership approval. The image or recording should then be transferred to the school's system at the earliest convenience and deleted from the staff's personal equipment. No image or recording should be kept on personal equipment indefinitely.

## **3.4 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:

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

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner.
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of children, their work, or anything else which could identify a child (as aforementioned in 3.3).
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office or via a school mobile phone e.g. when there is a residential operating out of office hours.

Staff should ensure that the school has their most up to date contact details.

### **3.5 Work phones**

Some members of staff may be provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes. Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation by a member of the senior leadership team.

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 always appropriate and professional.

### **3.6 Sanctions**

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

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

At Hillstone where a mobile phone is needed for a health condition i.e. diabetes monitoring then this use is allowed for all students across school. Parents/carers must inform reception and class teacher so that this can be put into place for the students health needs.

At Hillstone only year 6 students are allowed to bring mobile phones to school. This is for the purpose of using them to and from school to speak with parents/carers. Year 6 students must hand their phones in to teachers when they arrive at school.

Any proven allegation of cyber bullying, inappropriate content or inappropriate messaging by a child will result in the child not being allowed to bring their phone into school. The duration of this ban will be set by Mr King or Mrs Chudleigh. If the child brings in a mobile phone into school without agreement, school will confiscate the phone.

This is a right the school has under Government legislation (sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006). Parents/carers will be asked to come into school to collect the phone.

Designated safeguarding leads at Hillstone have the power to search children's phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a child's phone if you 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 based on someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs, or sexual orientation.

## **5. 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 children, unless it's 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 children.

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 contact other parents/carers.
- Take photos or recordings of children, their work, or anything else which could identify a child.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for children using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

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.

## **6. Loss, theft, or damage**

All children who bring their phones to school must ensure that phones are handed in to the class teacher or teaching assistant when entering the building.

Children must secure their 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 them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches. All staff are offered a secure, lockable place to put their personal mobiles.

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 children are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored securely in the school office or other appropriate location with the understanding that schools that confiscate phones from children become responsible for the phone, and can be held responsible for loss, theft, or damage.

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 of children's education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will consider:

- Feedback from parents and children
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

## **8. Information for staff**

### **Use of mobile phones in our school**

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds.
- Please keep all Smart Watches such as Apple Watches and Fitbits on silent during the school day
- Please keep your mobile away out of sight of children
- Please do not use phones where children are present. If you must use your phone, you can use your phone in non-contact times and where children are not present such as the staff room.
- You are responsible for your phone – ensure that you have kept it secure.
- Do not take photos or recordings of children or staff.
- Do not use your phone when working with children.
- If you are waiting for an important phone call, please use the school's main number as the main contact (0121 675 3573) not your own mobile.

All staff are expected to follow the school's policies.

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

The headteacher or deputy headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements with regards to the need to use a phone in school e.g. to enable access to CPOMs where there is a requirement to complete additional security verification using the phone. A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available on our school website and from the school office.