



BJS Federation of Schools

Handheld Devices including Mobile Phone Policy

Policy Adopted by Executive Headteacher:

Signed:

Ms A. Parker Executive Headteacher

Handheld Devices including Mobile Phones Policy

Principles

This policy is grounded in the recognition of the growing risks associated with primary-aged children using smartphones. While digital technology can offer learning opportunities, smartphones can expose young children to inappropriate content, online bullying, unhealthy screen time habits, and potential safeguarding concerns. The policy reflects our responsibility to protect pupils from these risks. It also acknowledges that many children have unsupervised access to smartphones outside of school, making it essential for schools to play a proactive role in educating pupils and families about the dangers and boundaries of smartphone use at a young age.

Aims

This policy covers two groups, staff in the school and children. It outlines what is considered 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' use of mobile phones and handheld devices by the entire school community, both at BJS Federation schools and during activities outside of school. This applies to all individuals who have access to personal and/or work-related handheld devices within the broadest context of the setting. It includes children and young people, parents and carers, practitioners, managers, volunteers, children, governors, visitors, contractors and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

It is to be recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many handheld devices that will give the most cause for concern, and which should be considered the most susceptible to potential misuse. Examples of misuse include the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

It must be understood that should handheld devices be misused, there will be a negative impact on an individual's safety, dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not to be considered exclusive to children, so the needs and vulnerabilities of all must be respected and protected.

Mobile phones pose a safety risk for primary-aged children as they are highly desirable items that can make pupils a target for theft or street robbery. Additionally, the use of phones while walking can cause dangerous distractions, leading to reduced awareness of traffic and surroundings, which increases the risk of accidents on the journey to and from school.

Mobile phones and handheld devices can also cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and are often considered intrusive when used in the company of others.

Monitoring

- Mobile phones brought into BJS Federation premises are entirely at the families, staff member or visitors' own risk. The BJS Federation accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of any phone or handheld device brought into our premises.
- Staff members may use their phones during school break times and all visitors are requested to keep their phones on silent or switched off.
- The recording, taking and sharing of images, video and audio on any mobile phone is to be avoided, except where it has been explicitly agreed otherwise by the Executive Headteacher or Head of School. Such authorised use is to be monitored and recorded. All mobile phone use is open to scrutiny and the Executive Headteacher/Head of School can withdraw or restrict authorisation for use at any time if it is deemed necessary.
- The BJS Federation reserves the right to search the content of any mobile or handheld devices on the school premises where there is a reasonable suspicion that it may contain undesirable material, including those which promote pornography, violence or bullying. Pupil mobiles or hand held devices may be searched at any time as part of routine monitoring.
- Where parents/carers and children need to contact each other during the school day, they should do so only through the school's telephone.

- Personal mobile phones will not be used during lessons or formal school time unless approved and consent granted by the Executive Headteacher or Head of School for emergency reasons. They should be switched off or silent at all times.
- Exceptions for medical reasons will be assessed on a case by case basis with documentation, and must be approved by the Executive Headteacher/Head of School in consultation with relevant medical professions.

Children' use of personal devices

- **Smartphones are strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, devices such as the Apple iPhone, Samsung Galaxy, Google Pixel, Motorola Razr, and OnePlus models. We ask for parents' full cooperation in supporting and enforcing this policy.**
- Mobile phones are not permitted for children at any school within The BJS Federation.
- The Federation recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, a parent/carer may wish their child, **in Year 5 or Year 6 only**, to carry a mobile phone when travelling to and from school. In such cases:
 - Only basic, non-smartphones are permitted.
 - These devices must have limited functionality, be of low monetary value, and lack internet, camera, and app access.
 - Devices must be clearly labelled with the child's name and handed in to the school office upon arrival each day.
- Parents/carers must seek prior permission from the Executive Headteacher or Head of School before a mobile phone can be brought to school. Approved phones must be handed in to the school office and can be collected at the end of the school day.
- Breaches of this policy will result in the mobile phone or device being confiscated and stored securely in the school office. Devices will only be returned directly to a parent or carer, in line with the school's procedures.
- Parents are kindly asked not to contact their child directly via a mobile phone during school hours, but instead to contact the school office.
- Only children in **Years 5 and 6** are permitted to bring internet-enabled tracker devices (e.g. Apple AirTags, Amazon Smart Tags) to school, if parents wish to monitor their child's journey to and from school in real time. These devices should be securely placed inside the child's school bag.

This policy is a working document and will be reviewed every two years. Senior Leaders will report to the Executive Headteacher, Head of School, Chair of Governors and staff on standards and achievements and make recommendations for future priorities.