



PERSONAL MOBILE DEVICES POLICY

Adopted: Spring 25

Review: Spring 28

Policy Review and Monitoring

This policy is due to be reviewed at the time stated, unless circumstances determine that this policy needs to be reviewed at an earlier time.

Signed: Chair of Governors

Mr J Orchard

Headteacher

Mr K Stroud

PERSONAL MOBILE DEVICES POLICY

Introduction

Maes yr Haul Primary School recognises the ubiquitous presence of mobile phones and other personal communication devices can present significant challenges to how pupils behave and learn in school settings.

Increasingly, there is mounting evidence suggesting that the unchecked use of mobile phones and smart devices is having a detrimental impact on pupils' mental health and academic progress, while also draining the energy of school staff who may need to manage problems arising from their usage. These detrimental impacts have been highlighted by organisations such as PISA, UNESCO, and Estyn.

Smart-phones with built-in hi-resolution digital cameras are now the norm. These can be sent instantly to other mobile phone users or email addresses or via various mobile apps. They can also be posted on the internet or in chat rooms. There is a potential for camera mobile phones to be misused in schools. They can become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils or/and teachers.

In this policy, the term “mobile devices” includes all similar and/or connected communication devices including, but not limited to:

- Mobile phones, smart watches, tablets (e.g., iPads, android tablets), laptops with cellular connectivity, portable gaming consoles with internet connectivity (e.g. Nintendo Switch, PlayStation Vita), smart eyewear (e.g. Google Glass), fitness trackers with messaging capabilities, portable media players with internet access (e.g., iPod Touch), e-readers with internet connectivity (e.g., Kindle Fire), portable GPS devices with internet connectivity.

Aims

By limiting the use of mobile devices in school, the policy aims to help establish a calm, safe, and supportive learning environment conducive to teaching and keeping children safe. It complements the school's safeguarding, anti-bullying and behaviour policies.

It is intended that the policy will contribute to:

- Enhancing social interactions between pupils
- Tackling cyberbullying
- Promoting pupils' health and well-being
- Reducing distractions in lessons
- Reducing staff time spent on mobile-related matters
- Improving pupils' academic performance and resilience
- Preventing security/safeguarding concerns related to video recordings
- Supporting equality

Expectations

No pupils are permitted to use a mobile phone or other similar devices (see above) during the school day, or whilst on any school activities beyond the school day. This applies from their arrival into the school grounds at the start of the day, throughout the day, including all breaktimes, until they leave the grounds at the end of the day. It also applies to any off-site school visits including residential trips, or any other school events outside of the usual school day.

If a child is not travelling to school unsupervised, there is no reason for them to have a mobile device with them (and hence in school) at all and we strongly discourage them from bringing one for the reasons stated above. However, we fully acknowledge that some parents may wish their child to have a mobile device with them if they travel to and from school without adult supervision. For this reason, the school accepts that older pupils (generally pupils in Years 5 and 6 only) *may* have a mobile device *in their possession* whilst in school but this must be switched off and stored in the pupil's coat or bag at all times.

The school accepts no responsibility or liability for mobile devices that are lost, damaged, or stolen on school premises, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

Exceptions

The school *may*, by explicit request, make appropriate exceptions for pupils who require mobile devices for accessibility purposes in accordance with equality guidelines or for medical-related conditions. The usage of these devices will be limited to meeting the specific requirements of their condition. Only the headteacher can provide consent for this, upon a written request from the parents / carers.

Breaches & sanctions

If a pupil is found to be using, or is known to have used, a personal mobile device during the school day, the device will be confiscated and parents/carers informed. For safeguarding reasons, the device will only be returned to parents (not pupils) at the end of the school day.

Refusal to hand over a device to staff members will result in a follow-up sanction consistent with the school's Behaviour and Relationship Policy.

Reference Documents and Useful Links:

Rights, respect, equality: Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools, Welsh Government, 2019

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/rights-respect-equality-statutory-guidance-for-governing-bodies-of-maintained-schools.pdf>

Wales Safeguarding Procedures

http://www.myguideapps.com/projects/wales_safeguarding_procedures/default/

Safeguarding Children, Welsh Government

<https://www.gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe>

School behaviour and discipline, Welsh Government

<https://www.gov.wales/school-behaviour-and-discipline>

School Bullying, Welsh Government

<https://www.gov.wales/school-bullying>

Technology in Education: On Whose Terms?, UNESCO, 2023

<https://www.unesco.org/qem-report/en/technology>

We Don't Tell Our Teachers, Estyn, 2022

<https://estyn.gov.wales/improvement-resources/we-dont-tell-our-teachers-but-schools-need-to-know-a-report-for-learners/>

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