



BLUE COAT C E (AIDED) INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS' FEDERATION

Use of Electronic Devices including Mobile Phones and Smart Watches Policy

Believing, celebrating, succeeding

“I will bless you with a future filled with hope – a future of success, not of suffering” Jeremiah 29:11

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School Leadership

- **Ms. A. Edwards** – Chair of Governors
- **Mr. A. Orlik** – Executive Head Teacher
- **Mrs. L. Adlington-McArthur** – Deputy Executive Head Teacher
- **Mr. D. Matthews** – Deputy Executive Head Teacher
- **Miss H. Johnston** – Assistant Head, Blue Coat Infant School
- **Mrs. R. Moore** – Assistant Head, Blue Coat Junior School

1. Introduction and aims

At Blue Coat C.E. Federation, we acknowledge that electronic devices, mobile phones—including smartphones and smartwatches—are an integral part of modern life for our pupils, parents, staff, and the wider school community. This policy is designed to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of electronic devices for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection, safeguarding and behaviour.

In addition, this policy addresses key challenges associated with mobile phone/device use in school, including:

- Promote a safe, respectful, and focused school culture
- Risks to child protection and safeguarding
- Data protection and privacy concerns
- Potential disruption to teaching and learning
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage to devices
- Ensuring appropriate and purposeful use of technology in the classroom (Prevent cyberbullying and misuse of technology)

2. Roles and responsibilities

2a) 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.

Mr. A Orlik as Executive Head Teacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation. This responsibility may be delegated to Mrs. Adlington-McArthur as Head for Safeguarding.

2b) Governors

As Safeguarding Governor, Sue Sargent, will be responsible for monitoring and enforcing this policy.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3a. 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. The use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time and confined to areas of the school where pupils are not present, such as the staff room.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to use their phone during contact time. These must be approved a member of ELT.

In circumstances such as these staff will have arranged with Senior Leaders how these calls can be received appropriately without compromising safeguarding standards. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, as a point of emergency contact, school staff may use the school office number:

- 01922 720921 (BCJ)
- 01922 720740 (BCI)

3b. Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones/devices to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.

Further information can be found in our data protection policy and ICT acceptable use policy.

3c. Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

To prevent unwanted contact, staff must avoid publicising their personal contact information on any social media platform or website. Maintaining privacy helps uphold the integrity of professional relationships within the school community.

Staff must not use personal mobile phones/devices to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or any content that could identify a pupil. If photos or recordings are required for a lesson, school trip, or activity, they must be taken using school-issued equipment only.

3d. Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In certain situations, staff may need to use personal mobile phones for work-related purposes. These include, but are not limited to:

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

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use phones professionally and in accordance with the staff code of conduct
- Avoid taking photos, videos, or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from contacting parents directly; all communication must go through the school office where possible (If this is not possible, withhold your personal information)

4a. Use of mobile phones by pupils

In line with the Federation's Mobile Phone policy a pupil may ONLY bring a mobile phone to school if they will be walking to and/or from school without an adult. There is potential for mobile phones to be misused in schools and they can become an instrument of bullying and harassment for other pupils. The rules around mobile phones, as set out below, are in place to protect and safeguard every member of the Blue Coat community.

At Blue Coat pupils are only allowed to leave the school premises unaccompanied after the completion of a consent form (available from the school office). **Consent Requirements:**

- Pupils must have a **completed consent form** to leave school unaccompanied (available from the school office).
- Parents must also complete a **mobile phone permission form** (Appendix 1) if their child carries a phone.

Eligibility: Only pupils who walk home alone (with written permission) may request to bring a phone. Devices must not be used to record, photograph, or communicate during school hours.

Usage Restrictions:

- Phones must be **switched off** at all times on school grounds—including playgrounds and corridors.
- Phones **must not** be taken into toilets.

Morning Procedure:

- Phones must be handed to the nominated adult at the start of the day.
- They will be signed in, placed in a named wallet, and stored securely in the school office.

Liability: The school is **not responsible** for any loss or damage to mobile phones.

Breaches:

- **First Offence:** Phone confiscated and returned at the end of the day with a warning letter.
- **Second Offence:** Phone confiscated; parent/carer must collect it from the office. If the child was due to walk home, alternative arrangements must be made.

Blue Coat Federation follows the Department for Education Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance when carrying out searches for unauthorised mobile phones, electronic devices and smart watches. Any device that has not been signed in to the school office will be considered as unauthorised.

Exceptional Circumstances: Any other reasons for needing a phone must be discussed with the Executive Leadership Team in advance.

Please remember that most mobile phones, tablets, Ipads, computers and games consoles provide easy access to the internet. Whilst this can open up fantastic opportunities it is also a very risky place. We strongly recommend that you enable parental controls on your child's device, regularly monitor all activity and talk to your child about how to stay safe online (Appendix 4: Practical tips for Parents and Carers to reinforce online safety).

Mobile Phone Rules at School

- **Switch it off** — not just silent!
- **No phone used in school** — protect everyone's privacy.
- **No photos or recordings** of staff or pupils.
- **Keep contact info private** — yours and others'.
- **Passwords stay secret** — don't share them.
- **Follow School Rules** — Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Ready to Learn.
- **No bullying or harassment** — even outside school.
- **No rude or offensive language** — online or on your phone.
- **Respect staff instructions**

4b. Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools

Searching plays a critical role in ensuring that schools remain safe environments for all pupils and staff. It is a vital measure used to safeguard and promote welfare, while also maintaining high standards of behaviour that support learning and personal development.

Authorised staff members are permitted to carry out searches and may confiscate any electronic device from a pupil. Electronic devices, including mobile phones, can contain files or data that relate to an offence or 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 of suspected criminal behaviour.

Staff may examine any data or files on a confiscated electronic device if the search was conducted due to reasonable suspicion. A device may be searched if a member of staff reasonably suspects that it has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, cause personal injury, damage property, or contains pornographic images.

Parents should always be informed of any search for a prohibited item listed in paragraph 3, and the outcome of the search, as soon as practicable. The member of staff should inform parents of what, if anything, has been confiscated and the resulting action taken by the school, including any sanctions applied.

If a member of staff suspects that a device contains an indecent image of a child (e.g., nude or semi-nude images), they must:

- **Not knowingly view, copy, print, share, store, or save** the image
- **Confiscate the device immediately** without examining it
- **Refer the incident to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or deputy for appropriate action

4c. Consequences for Bringing a Device Against School Policy.

Staff have the legal authority to confiscate mobile phones or similar electronic devices as part of a disciplinary response. This power is supported by legislation that protects staff from liability for any loss or damage to confiscated items, provided their actions are lawful and proportionate.

The school may apply reflection time or other appropriate sanctions in line with the behaviour policy. These disciplinary measures should be fair and take into account the pupil's age, any special educational needs (SEND), and other relevant circumstances. The aim is to ensure consistency while recognising individual needs.

If a pupil brings a device or mobile phone to school against policy:

- The device may be confiscated
- The pupil may receive reflection time or other sanction in line with the school's behaviour policy
- Consideration will be given to the pupil's age, SEND status, and other relevant factors
- Parents will be informed of the breach and any resulting action taken

4d. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Only taking pictures of their own child when no other children are present (for example: at the end of a Celebration Assembly);
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents, 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 or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

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

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out above.

Parents 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 his/her personal mobile during the school day.

4e. Smart Watches and other devices

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.

Pupils may wear smartwatches **only if**:

- The device **does not contain a camera or microphone**.
- The device is **not used during lessons** for any purpose, including playing games, sending messages, or accessing the internet.
- The device is used **solely for timekeeping or health-related features** (e.g., step counting, heart rate monitoring).
- The device does **not disrupt learning or school activities**.

Smartwatches must **not** be used to:

- Record audio or video.
- Communicate with others during school hours (calls, texts, messaging apps).
- Access social media or play games.
- Circumvent school mobile phone restrictions.

4. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils 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.

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 securely.

The school is **not responsible** for any loss or damage to mobile phones, smart watches or any other personal devices.

5. Monitoring and review

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

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

Appendix 1: Mobile Phone Rules for children



MOBILE PHONE RULES AT SCHOOL

- 1 Turn it OFF — not just silent!**
- 2 No phone use on school grounds — protect everyone's privacy.** 
- 3 No photos or recordings of staff or students** 
- 4 Keep contact info private — yours and others'.** 
- 5 Passwords are personal — never share them** 
- 6 Follow School Rules — Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Ready to Learn** 
- 7 No bullying or harassment — even outside school** 
- 8 No rude or offensive language — online or on your phone** 
- 9 Respect staff instructions — always.**

Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow _____ to bring [his/her] mobile phone to school because [he/she]:

- Travels to and from school alone
- Other reason agreed by

ELT: _____

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its code of conduct.

The school reserves the right revoke permission if pupils don't abide by the policy.

Parent signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staff room (BCJ), the meeting room (BCI) or the main office (both schools).
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils

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

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available to download on the school website or alternative you may request a copy from the school offices.

Appendix 4: Practical tips for Parents and Carers to reinforce online safety

How to Set Up Parental Controls

- Use built-in tools like **Screen Time (iOS)** or **Digital Wellbeing (Android)** to manage app usage and set time limits.
- Enable **content filters** to block adult or harmful material.
- Restrict downloads and in-app purchases to avoid unwanted charges or unsafe apps.

Monitor Activity

- Regularly check browser history, app usage, and social media interactions.
- Consider using **family safety apps** like Qustodio, Bark, or Norton Family for deeper insights.

Talk Openly and Often

- Discuss what's appropriate to share online and why privacy matters.
- Teach them to recognise red flags like strangers asking personal questions or pressuring them to keep secrets.
- Encourage them to come to you if something feels wrong — without fear of punishment.

Teach Digital Responsibility

- Help them understand the permanence of online posts.
- Promote kindness and respect in digital communication.
- Explain the importance of strong passwords and not clicking suspicious links.