

CROSSHALL JUNIOR SCHOOL

MOBILE DEVICE POLICY



PUBLISHED: SPRING 2024
REVIEW DATE: SPRING 2028

Clarification of the Use of 'Device'

Throughout this policy, the term 'mobile device' is used. This is used to encompass mobile technologies such as; mobile phones, tablets, smart watches, and digital cameras. This list is not exhaustive, and technology rapidly develops.

The Purpose and Importance of the Mobile Device Policy

The aim of the Mobile Device Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice for pupils, staff, volunteers, visitors, and contractors through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines. This in turn supports the school's Safeguarding and behaviour policies.

When mobile devices are misused, it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality.

Ensuring the Safe and Appropriate Use of Mobile Devices by Staff

Crosshall Junior recognises that staff may need to have access to mobile devices on site during the working day.

However, there are concerns mainly based around these issues:

- staff being distracted from their work with children;
- the use of mobile devices around children;
- the inappropriate use of mobile devices.

Crosshall Junior allows staff to bring in mobile devices for their own personal use. However, they must:

- be switched to silent;
- not be used at any time other than before and after school and when the individual has a break or as permitted by the Head Teacher;
- only be used when children are not present.

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus, creating a strong moral, sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

It is therefore important to ensure that all staff:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse;
- are vigilant and alert to potential warning signs;
- know how to minimise risk;
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations;
- understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use;
- are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours;
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

It is fully recognised that studies consistently indicate that imposing rigid regulations and/or 'bans' on the actions of others can be counterproductive, leading to a culture of suspicion, uncertainty, and secrecy. The imposition of rigorous, inflexible rules is therefore avoided, unless the potential risks of not enforcing them far out-weigh the benefits. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile devices within the setting environment, which is agreed to by all staff.

If staff fail to follow this guidance, disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with the staff contracts.

A designated safe and secure area for practitioners to store their personal belongings during the working day is available but limited. Practitioners have the option to store their mobile devices in this area, should they choose. This however is not a mandatory requirement.

Practitioners leave their belongings in safe storage at their own risk. It is therefore recommended that devices are security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damages is accepted. As well as safeguarding children and avoiding any unnecessary disruptions during the day, this procedure also aims to protect staff against any unfounded allegations.

The Head Teacher's permission/advice must be sought before a mobile device is used in a context or situation other than outlined.

The School/Work Mobile Phone & Devices

The use of a designated work mobile phone / device is promoted as it is:

- an essential part of the emergency toolkit which is taken on off-site trips;
- an effective communication aid, enabling text, email messages and calls to be made and received;
- a back-up facility should problems be experienced with the landline – or where contact needs to be made outside of work hours.

Staff must ensure that there is no inappropriate or illegal content on these devices.

When children undertake a school trip or journey, use of the school's mobile device by adult leaders should be limited to contact with the school office, the school's social media accounts, named staff (on the Risk Assessment) or venues being visited, except in emergencies and then only approved by the trip leader.

The school mobile phone does have a camera, although no images may be taken by the user or other non-staff members without the permission of the Head Teacher. If images are to be taken as part of an event, mobile devices such as school-owned tablets may be used.

If any practitioner is required to drive in a working capacity, and has responsibility for the school mobile, the phone must not be used at all whilst driving.

Ensuring the Safe and Appropriate Use of Mobile Devices by Children

Pupils must not bring a mobile device to school or use one within the school grounds. Mobile phones are not permitted during the school day, on residential trips or school journeys. Exceptions to this are outlined below:

A mobile device may be permitted onsite in exceptional circumstances that have been agreed with the school. In such circumstances, the child's device must be kept locked up in the school office until the child goes home. It is recommended that devices are security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damages is accepted.

In the case of Year Six pupils, where a wearable device can be put into 'School Mode', thus suspending the device's ability to call, text, receive notifications, access the internet, take photos/videos and similar, an application for the device to be with a child during the school day may be made. An application for this can be found at the end of this policy and will require evidence that parents control this function and not the child. This exception is provided with a view of secondary school practices. Each case will be judged on its own merit. There will be a

zero-tolerance approach and any contravention of the expectation will mean that permission will be immediately, and permanently, withdrawn. This exception will generally only be considered for watch-type mobile devices.

Ensuring the Safe and Appropriate Use of Mobile Devices for Volunteers, Governors, Visitors and Parents / Carer

In the interests of equality, and to further promote safety, the guidance applies to any individual who has a mobile device on site, including governors, parents, visitors, as detailed below.

Upon their initial visit, individuals are given information regarding the use of mobile devices in school. This forms part of the individual's Safeguarding Briefing.

If they wish to make or take an emergency contact, they may use the schools' phones or internet. Volunteers, governors, or visitors are not permitted to take photographs or recordings of the children on their personal mobile devices. Should a volunteer, governor or visitor wish to record pupils, they must receive written permission from the Head Teacher.

Parents and carers are not permitted to use a mobile device for recording/photographs in any situation other than in assemblies/performances or school events. Prior to these events, a member of staff will give a reminder about expectations for the creation, storage, and publicity of these images/videos.

Emergency Contact

It is recognised that mobile devices provide direct contact to others, and at times provide a necessary reassurance due to their ease of access, particularly at stressful times.

Staff/Governors, therefore, in agreed exceptional circumstances are permitted to keep the volume of their mobile device switched on. This is to enhance their own well-being and peace of mind, to reduce stress and worry and to enable them to concentrate more effectively on their work. Such use will be for an agreed limited period only, until any concerns or issues leading to the exceptional circumstance request have been resolved. If taking a call or receiving a message under these exceptional circumstances, this will be undertaken away from pupils.

It is ensured that the landline telephone remains connected and operational, except in circumstances beyond the school's control. This means that it is always available for emergency/urgent contact. The reliance on an answer phone is avoided and only used in exceptional circumstances. If used, the answer phone is always checked promptly on office opening or return.

Related Policies

'Acceptable Use Policy – Children'

'Computer Use Policy'

'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy'

'School Behaviour Policy'

'Social Media Policy'

'Social Media Trips Principles'

'Staff, Governors & Volunteers Code of Conduct'

Child Wearable Mobile Device Permissions

This form is designed to be used in conjunction with the school's Mobile Device Policy. In particular, the below paragraphs:

Pupils must not bring a mobile device to school or use one within the school grounds. Mobile phones are not permitted during the school day, on residential trips or school journeys. Exceptions to this are outlined below:

A mobile device may be permitted onsite in exceptional circumstances that have been agreed with the school. In such circumstances, the child's device must be kept locked up in the school office until the child goes home. It is recommended that devices are security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damages is accepted.

In the case of Year Six pupils, where a wearable device can be put into 'School Mode', thus suspending the device's ability to call, text, receive notifications, access the internet, take photos/videos and similar, an application for the device to be with a child during the school day may be made. An application for this can be found at the end of this policy and will require evidence that parents control this function and not the child. This exception is provided with a view of secondary school practices. Each case will be judged on its own merit. There will be a zero-tolerance approach and any contravention of the expectation will mean that permission will be immediately, and permanently, withdrawn. This exception will generally only be considered for watch-type mobile devices.

If a parent and pupil can agree to what is set out above, the below must be completed. All applications will be considered independently of each other. Even with the below permission, and any agreement being reached, the school reserves the right, with to withdraw permission for a child to have a mobile device on their person during the school day.

Child Wearable Mobile Device Permissions

| | | | |
|----------------------|--|---------------|--|
| Child's Name: | | Class: | |
|----------------------|--|---------------|--|

We agree that, if the above-named pupil is permitted to have a wearable mobile device on their person during the school day, we will comply with the expectations that have been set out. We understand that if they are not, the school will withdraw this permission.

We attach evidence that the device has been put into 'School Mode'.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--------------|--|
| Signed Pupil: | | Date: | |
| Parent's Name: | | | |
| Signed Parent: | | Date: | |

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|----|
| Permission Granted? | Yes | No |
| Signed: | Head Teacher/Acting Head | |
| Date: | | |

A copy of this permission will be provided for the family and additionally stored in both the School Office and by the child's Class Teacher.