



BJS Federation of Schools

Handheld Devices including Mobile Phone Policy

Policy Adopted by Executive Headteacher in: Spring 2025

Signed _____
Ms A. Parker, Executive Headteacher

Signed _____
Mrs F. Morris, Chair of Full Governing Board

Handheld Devices including Mobile Phones Policy

Principles

There has been a move towards the promotion of positive relationships and behaviour in a digital context. This shift recognises the important role of schools in preparing children to become 'digital citizens'. It takes into account the fact that children have extensive access to the internet through mobile devices within and outside of school.

Aims

This policy sets out what is 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' use of mobile phone and handheld devices by the whole school community while they are at BJS Federation or undertaking school activities away from 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 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 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. Staff 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. Staff may seek specific permissions to use their phone at other than their break times.
- Mobile phones and personally-owned devices will not be used in any way during lessons or formal school time. They should be switched off or silent at all times.
- Mobile phones will not be used during lessons or formal school time unless as part of an approved and directed curriculum-based activity with consent from the Executive Headteacher or Head of School.

Children' use of personal devices

- Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones to any school in The BJS Federation.
- The BJS Federation accepts that there may be particular circumstances in which a parent/carer wishes their child (in years 5 and 6 only) to have a mobile phone for their own safety. In this situation, parents/carers will need permission from the Executive Headteacher/Head of School and children will hand their mobile phone to the office. This can be collected from the school office at the end of the school day, before leaving to go home.
- If a child breaches the BJS Federation policy, then the phone or device will be confiscated and will be held in a secure place in the school office. Mobile phones and devices will be released to parents or carers in accordance with the school policy.
- If a child needs to contact his or her parents or carers, they will be allowed to use a school phone. Parents are advised not to contact their child via their mobile phone during the school day, but to contact the school office.

Staff use of personal devices

- Staff are not permitted to use their own mobile phones or devices to contact children or their families within or outside the setting in a professional capacity.
- Staff will be issued a school phone where contact with children, parents or carers is required.
- Mobile Phones and personally-owned devices will be switched off or switched to 'silent' mode.
- Staff should not use personally-owned devices, such as mobile phones or cameras, to take photos or videos of children and will only use work-provided equipment for this purpose.
- If a staff member breaches the school policy, disciplinary action may be taken.
- Where staff members are required to use a mobile phone for school duties, for instance, in case of emergency during off-site activities or for contacting children or parents, then a school mobile phone will be provided and used. In an emergency where a staff member doesn't have access to a school-owned device, they should use their own device and hide (by inputting 141) their own mobile number for confidentiality purposes.

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.