Butlers Court School

Mobile Phone Policy

Our Butlers Court family nurtures kind, resilient, ambitious and curious children. Our caring environment supports well-being and self-belief, encouraging everyone to flourish. Through a wide range of experiences and opportunities, every child has the chance to shine, developing a love of learning and prepared for the ever-changing world and a future of possibilities.

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1. Introduction and aims

At Butlers Court we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory mobile phone guidance and behaviour guidance. Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is Keeping Children Safe in Education.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently 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.

The Headteacher and SLT are responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly, and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

Staff should alert the headteacher for such special arrangements.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using a school ipad. If a member of staff does use their camera in particular circumstances, eg sports event, they must inform the headteacher and delete photos as soon as possible after the have uploaded them onto the school system.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Supervising off-site trips, sports events
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct and staff AUP.
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil. If a member of staff does use their camera in particular circumstances, eg sports event, they must inform the headteacher and delete photos as soon as possible after the have uploaded them onto the school system.
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4.5 Work phones

Some members of staff, such as site manager, are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet

- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct

4.6 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils in Years EYFS to Y5 may not bring mobile phones into school.

Only pupils in Year 6 may bring a phone in to school. These should be a simple 'brick phone'. Smartphones for children are banned at Butlers Court School.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

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 are not allowed to wear these at school.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances, such as a medical condition. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

5.3 Sanctions

Smartphones brought in by Year 6 children, and any mobile phone brought in by children in EYFS to Year 5 will be confiscated.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the safe in headteacher's office and should be collected by the child's parent.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will liaise with parents, and involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

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

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's at a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

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

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

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils

Parents/carers 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 their personal mobile during the school day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled and are handed to the Year 6 staff to be stored securely at the start of the day.

Pupils must secure their mobile 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.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the safe in headteacher's office and should be collected by the child's parent.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

Mr S Butler

Headteacher

Summer 2026

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Mobile Phones in School – Year 6 Only

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to remind you of our mobile phone policy, which came into effect from September 2026 in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance requiring schools to be mobile phone-free environments for children. Butlers Court School is now a mobile phone-free environment for children throughout the school day

We recognise, however, that some Year 6 pupils may need a phone for their journey to and from school where they walk independently. In these circumstances, and by prior agreement with the school only, Year 6 pupils may bring a basic mobile phone ('brick phone') to school.

Please note:

- It is only Year 6 pupils who may bring a phone to school
- Only basic 'brick phones' are permitted – these are phones with no internet access, cameras, apps, social media, or messaging services beyond basic calling and texting
- Smartphones are not permitted under any circumstances
- Smartwatches and other wearable smart devices (including Apple Watches, Fitbit smart devices and similar products) are not permitted unless specifically agreed for medical reasons

If your Year 6 child needs to bring a basic mobile phone to school, they must:

- Switch the phone off immediately upon entering the school grounds
- Hand the phone to their class teacher at the start of the school day
- Collect the phone at the end of the school day before leaving the premises
- Ensure the phone remains switched off and is not used anywhere on the school site

Any pupil who fails to follow these expectations may lose the privilege of bringing a mobile phone to school.

Any proven incidents of cyberbullying, inappropriate messaging, or misuse of technology will result in the immediate withdrawal of permission to bring a phone to school.

If a child brings a mobile phone to school without prior agreement, or brings a smartphone or smart device in breach of this policy, the device may be confiscated. Parents or carers will be required to collect the device from the office at the end of the week.

Whilst every reasonable precaution will be taken to safeguard devices handed in to staff, mobile phones are brought onto school premises entirely at the owner's risk.

If you would like your Year 6 child to bring a basic mobile phone to school because they walk to and from school independently, please complete and return the agreement slip below to Mrs Mistry-Sharma or Mrs Williams before your child brings the phone into school.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation. We are confident that this policy will help us maintain a calm, focused and positive environment for all our pupils.

Kind Regards,

Mr S. Butler, Mrs Mistry-Sharma and Mrs Williams

Butlers Court School

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO BRING A MOBILE PHONE TO SCHOOL

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____

I request permission for my child to bring a mobile phone to school for the following reason:

☐ I confirm that the phone is a basic mobile phone ('brick phone') only and is not a smartphone or smart device.

☐ I understand that smartphones, smartwatches and other smart technology are not permitted.

☐ I understand that my child must switch off their phone on arrival at school and hand it to their class teacher immediately.

☐ I understand that failure to follow the school's mobile phone policy may result in permission being withdrawn.

☐ I acknowledge that mobile phones are brought onto school premises at the owner's risk.

☐ I understand that any proven incidents of cyberbullying, inappropriate messaging, inappropriate content, or misuse of technology may result in my child losing permission to bring a phone to school. Any such decision will be made by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

☐ I understand that if a smartphone is brought into school, it may be confiscated and parents will need to collect it at the end of the week from the school office.

Name of Parent/Carer: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return this form to Mrs Mistry-Sharma or Mrs Williams before your child brings the phone into school.