

Acceptable Use of Mobile Phone Policy

ISP Battle School



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1. Introduction

At ISP School, Battle we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our children, adults and parents, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for children, adults, parents and any other adult that accesses our school
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour
- Ensure that there is clear understanding of and adherence to this policy by all staff and visitors
- Secure an environment in which children (and their families) are protected from the risk of images being recorded and used/stored for inappropriate purposes
- Make sure that children receive the undivided attention of adults at all time

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

This policy outlines the acceptable use of mobile phones at ISP Battle School in the context of safeguarding, underpinned by our statement of vision and values which permeates everything we do and say. At ISP Battle we recognise the vulnerability of our children and the potential for exploitation and abuse through the inappropriate use of mobile phones. We take steps to ensure that our safeguarding procedures are all-encompassing and robust.

2. Key principles which underpin this policy

- The safeguarding of children is of paramount importance
- All children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm
- Every staff member is accountable for the safeguarding of our children
- Every child has a right to be valued as an individual and treated with dignity and respect

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All school adults are responsible for enforcing this policy.

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 Head Teacher is responsible for monitoring the policy annually, reviewing it and holding adults and children accountable for its implementation.

3.2 Governors

The governing body ratify this policy when updates occur.

4. Use of mobile phones by adults

4.1 At ISP Battle we recognise that mobile phones play an important part in the lives of a significant majority of adults and, when used as they are intended, can bring substantial benefits. We also acknowledge that there is a risk that they can be used for the taking, storing and using of images inappropriately in a way that denies children's right to dignity, privacy and respect and satiates a desire to exploit. They also have the potential to distract adults from their work with children.

All adults are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, during the school day. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to before and/or after school before the children arrive.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for an adult to have use of their mobile phone however this must be agreed by the Head Teacher and used in a safe part of the school away from children: The Meeting Room. For instance:

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

The Head Teacher will decide on a case by case basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school adults can use the school main number (01424 238640) as a point of emergency contact.

Personal mobile phones must not be used to take photos of children under any circumstances.

Personal mobile phones must not be used to communicate with parents/carers/professionals under any circumstance. All adults are provided with work mobile phones for this purpose.

Under no circumstances should adults engage in mobile phone communication (calls, text, WhatsApp etc) directly with children unless this has been specifically agreed by the Head. All adults in this circumstance would use their work mobiles.

When off-site, designated members of the group will have a work mobile phone available for emergency contact with our school, with each other or with the emergency services. In this context phones will not be used to make or receive personal calls.

4.2 Data Protection

Adults must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other school information.

4.3 Safeguarding

Adults must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents/carers or children, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

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

Adults must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of children, their work, or anything else that could identify a child. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

All messages via work mobile phones must be recorded on the phone log.

4.4 Work mobiles

All adults are provided with a work mobile phone by the organisation for work purposes.

Adults 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 staff code of conduct.

4.5 Sanctions

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

5. Use of mobile phones by children

Children are able to bring their mobile phones into school as voted for on our democracy day with the children.

Children are able to use their mobile phones when travelling to and from school as long as they show safe online behaviours when using them.

Children agreed to hand in their mobile phone on arrival to school. Children agreed they would hand their devices to a Progress Engagement Guide (PEG) on arrival to school and the School Administrator would lock these away until the end of the school day.

Currently, children do not use their mobile phones in the school day unless they are going on an educational visit with a journey time of more than 30 minutes. Children devised their own mobile phone agreement for these journeys, children sign these each time they are going on an educational visit (see appendix 1). Children are aware that they are unable to take photographs/videos of other children. The contract is revisited to ensure adults and children remain in agreement with the content.

5.1 Sanctions

If children are in breach of this policy the following sanctions would occur:

- Mobile phones could be confiscated. We are allowed to do this under section 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- If a mobile phone was confiscated, this could be returned to the child at the end of the school day dependent on the severity of the incident, otherwise parent/carer will be invited to attend a meeting with the child at the end of the school day.

Adults have the power to search children's phones as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation> .

Electronic devices

72. Electronic devices, including mobile phones, can contain files or data which relate to an offence, or which 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 relating to suspected criminal behaviour.

73. As with all prohibited items, staff should first consider the appropriate safeguarding response if they find images, data or files on an electronic device that they reasonably suspect are likely to put a person at risk.

74. Staff may examine any data or files on an electronic device they have confiscated as a result of a search, as defined in paragraph 57, if there is good reason to do so.

75. If the member of staff conducting the search suspects they may find an indecent image of a child (sometimes known as nude or semi-nude images), the member of staff should never intentionally view the image, and must never copy, print, share, store or save such images. When an incident might involve an indecent image of a child and/or video, the member of staff should confiscate the device, avoid looking at the device and refer the incident to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as the most appropriate person to advise on the school's response. Handling such reports or concerns can be especially complicated and schools should follow the principles as set out in Keeping children safe in education. The UK Council for Internet Safety also provides the following guidance to support school staff and designated safeguarding leads: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will 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, volunteers and visitors

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

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of children, unless it is a photo of their own child without other children present
- Using photographs for personal use, not posting on social media

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Children's phones will be labelled and stored securely when not in use.

Children must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Adults must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by adults to do this 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 children are travelling to and from school. This information will be shared as a disclaimer in home-school agreements.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the administrator's lockable cupboard. We understand that if we confiscate a phone from a child we become responsible for the phone, and can be held responsible for loss, theft or damage.

8. Monitoring and Review

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

- Feedback from children
- Feedback from adults
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or relevant organisations
- Governors will read, offer ideas and ratify this policy.

9. Acceptable use agreement for children

You must follow this protocol if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, your phone must be handed to a PEG on arrival
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other children.

4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school adults or other children without their consent.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating children or adults via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or turn over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store these appropriately, or turn them over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

