



Mobile Phone Policy

Introduction and Aims

At Balksbury Federation, the safety, welfare and wellbeing of our children is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to allow users of mobile phones within the federation to continue to benefit from the use of this device, but at the same time, establish clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. The federation will do this by balancing protection with the potential for misuse.

It is recognised that the use of mobile phones can cause distractions and disruption to the school day. However, as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to **all** mobile communication devices.

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on the federated site. This includes staff, volunteers, governors, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive. This policy should also be read in relation to all federation safeguarding and behaviour policies.

A Federated Community Working Together

The federation community will work together to promote high values and respect in order to create strong morals and a sense of commitment to appropriate mobile phone use. Therefore, the federated team will:

- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse of mobile phones
- Avoid placing themselves in compromising situation where situations could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations
- Understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use
- Be aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly

Children's Personal Mobiles and Smart Watches

For the purpose of this policy, the definition of a smart watch is:

A mobile device, designed to be worn on the wrist, with a touchscreen display and computerised function such as sending messages, making phone calls, taking photographs.

The federation recognises that mobile phones and smart watches are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping children to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide negative outcomes when communicating with others.

Therefore:

Children are not permitted to have mobile phones or smart watches at school or on an educational activity visit unless this has been agreed by the Leadership Team for medical purposes. For example, monitoring medical conditions via a medical app. In this instance, children are expected to follow the guidance in the mobile phone policy and sign the agreement, *'Balksbury Federation Mobile Phone in School for Medical Purposes'*.

If in the event a parent/carer wishes for his/her child to bring a mobile phone or smart watch to school to contact the parent after school then:

- The parent must notify the federation via admin office by returning the attached agreement form. Parents can also pick up a copy of this agreement from either office
- The phone or watch must be switched off during school hours and handed into the office first thing in the morning and collected at home time – please note that phones are left at the owner's own risk
- Mobile phones or smart watches brought into school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day
- All phones or smart watches should not be turned on at the end of the school day until children arrive at the school gate

Where mobile phones or smart watches are used in, or out, of school to intimidate other children within the federation or affect their safety or wellbeing then the federation will address these issues as part of children's day to day safety.

In line with Department for Education (DfE) guidance, the federation will confiscate mobile phones if they are considered to contain, or have access to material that is harmful to a child's wellbeing, or conflicts with the federation's Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy or Code of Conduct.

The federation's lead DSL, or Leadership Team will contact parents/carers immediately to inform and discuss. Where necessary the federation will contact PCSOs/Police.

The key aim for discussions with parents will be to: '**Understand, Prevent, Respond**', and work together, support and protect children from:

- Cyberbullying
- Online abuse
- Emotional abuse

Staff Mobile Phones and Smart Watches

The above aspects will create an agreement of trust and promote a productive mobile phone environment. It is the federation's expectations that:

- The federated team are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children; mobile phones or smart watches should not be used in any space where children are present. It is during this time that emergency contact should be made via the admin office
- The federated team should have their phones on silent, or switched off and out of sight. For example, in a drawer, cupboard or handbag during class time
- The use of mobile phones and smart watches should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present
- The federated team will protect access to functions on their phone with passcodes/face ID/finger print access
- Should there be exceptional circumstances, for example, a sick dependent, then staff should make the Headteacher aware of this so reasonable adjustments can be made
- The federated team are not permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones or smart watches, for example, to take recordings of children. **All** legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and iPads
- The federated team will report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher

Visitors to the Federation Including Parents, Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All visitors to the federation are expected to follow our mobile phone policy whilst on the premises.

On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations of mobile phones and smart watches through our Health and Safety information sheet.

For parents and governors in school, we request that mobile phones are not used. Phones should be on silent and out of sight. We do however allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports days using their mobile phones – **but insist that parents do not publish images on any social media networking site that includes any child/children other than their own.** For contractors, the federation recognises that they may need to use their phone for reporting and ordering. In this instance, the federation insists that this is not done in front of children.

Mobile Device Usage for Work Related Purposes

The federation recognises that mobile devices provide a useful means of communication on offsite educational activities. However, staff should ensure that:

1. In the first instance, the offsite leader uses the federation's mobile phone for all communication using the VoIP App
2. Federation two-way radios will be used in addition to the federation mobile phone on educational activity visits. This should be indicated on risk assessments and the channel number identified
3. Mobile use on educational activity visits should be appropriate and in line with the above, and will **never** include taking photographs of children
4. Mobile devices should not be used to make contact with parents during educational activity visits, including residential, and only follow point 1, or through the federated admin office
5. Where parents are accompanying an educational activity visit as a volunteer, they must be briefed prior to the visit in order to **not** make contact with other parents via calls, text, email or social networking, or, use their phone to take photographs of children

Dissemination

The federation's Mobile Phone Policy will be shared with the federated team and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be sent out to parents, and will be available via the school office and federated website.

Policy Review Summer 2025

Balksbury Federation Mobile Phone and Smart Watch in School Agreement

Name of Child: _____

Reason for needing a mobile phone in school:

Parent/Carer:

I confirm that I have explained the school rules regarding mobile phones to my child and confirm that they may take a mobile phone into school on that basis.

Parent/Carer signature: _____

Date: _____

Child: I will follow the school mobile phone rules.

Child signature: _____

Date: _____

The federation's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Miss Bodinham and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Miss Thompson, Miss Bolton and Mrs Farrell; if you have any concerns regarding online safety, please do not hesitate to contact one of the DSLs.

Please return this agreement to admin office before your child brings their phone to school.

*Thank you
The Balksbury Team*

Balksbury Federation Mobile Phone or Smart Watch in School for Medical Purposes Agreement

Name of Child: _____

Reason for needing a mobile phone in school:

Parent/Carer:

I confirm that I have explained the school rules regarding mobile phones, for the playground and in school, to my child and confirm that they may take a mobile phone into school on that basis. I understand that Balksbury Federation will not accept liability or loss of damage to the mobile phone.

Parent/Carer signature: _____

Date: _____

Child:

- I will follow the school mobile phone rules
- I will only use my mobile phone for managing my diabetes and not for any other purpose
- I will only share information on my mobile phone with adults and not with other children
- I will not allow other children to handle my phone

Child signature: _____

Date: _____

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