MARNER
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy

Policy Owner	Clare Hendrie (SBL)
Approval Body	Governing Body
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1. Purpose and Principles

Marner Primary School is committed to providing a calm, safe and purposeful environment in which children can learn, play, develop friendships and participate fully in school life without unnecessary digital distraction.

In accordance with Department for Education statutory guidance, Marner is a mobile phone-free school for pupils throughout the school day.

Our approach aims to:

- *protect teaching and learning from distraction;*
- *support positive behaviour, relationships and play;*
- *reduce opportunities for bullying, inappropriate communication, photography or recording;*
- *safeguard pupils and staff;*
- *promote healthy and responsible use of technology; and*
- *provide clear and consistent expectations for pupils, parents and staff.*

The Department for Education expects pupils not to have access to mobile phones throughout the school day. Marner therefore requires any phone brought to school to be handed to staff for secure storage.

2. Devices Covered by this Policy

For the purposes of this policy, the term mobile phone includes personal smart technology with similar communication or recording functions, including:

- *smartphones and mobile phones;*
- *smartwatches capable of sending or receiving calls, messages or notifications;*
- *devices capable of connecting to mobile networks; and*
- *personal devices capable of audio, photographic or video recording.*

A basic watch without communication or recording functions may be worn in accordance with normal school expectations.

School-owned devices used for teaching, accessibility, communication or medical purposes are not covered by the general prohibition.

3. Bringing a Mobile Phone to School

Primary-age children do not generally need a mobile phone during the school day.

However, we recognise that some older pupils may need a phone for safety when travelling independently to and from school or because of particular family circumstances.

Where a phone is brought to school:

1. it must be switched off on arrival;
2. it must be handed to the designated member of staff;
3. it will be placed in secure storage for the duration of the school day; and
4. it will be returned when the pupil leaves school at the end of the day.

Pupils must not keep mobile phones in pockets, coats or school bags during the school day.

Pupils arriving late must hand their phone to a member of staff before joining their class.

The same principle applies to pupils attending school-run Breakfast Club, clubs or other extended provision: pupils must not have access to their personal phone while they remain in the school's care.

4. Use During the School Day

Pupils must not access or use a personal mobile phone or smart communication device during the school day.

This includes during:

- *lessons and assemblies;*
- *breaktimes and lunchtimes;*
- *movement around the school;*
- *interventions and enrichment activities;*
- *clubs and school-run provision; and*
- *educational activities taking place on the school site.*

Pupils must not use a personal device to photograph, film or make audio recordings of pupils, staff or visitors.

5. Contact Between Home and School

Parents should **not call, text or message their child directly during the school day.**

If a parent needs to pass an urgent or important message to their child, they should contact the **school office**. Staff will ensure that appropriate messages are passed on.

If a child needs to contact a parent during the school day, school staff will facilitate this through an appropriate school communication route.

This ensures that the school retains appropriate safeguarding oversight and is able to support a child where information received from home may affect them emotionally or practically.

6. Exceptions and Reasonable Adjustments

Marner recognises that a mobile phone-free approach must allow for individual circumstances.

The school will make reasonable adjustments and appropriate individual arrangements where access to a mobile phone or similar technology is necessary because of:

- *disability;*
- *a medical condition;*
- *an individual healthcare plan;*
- *accessibility or communication needs;*
- *caring responsibilities; or*
- *other exceptional individual circumstances.*

For example, some pupils with diabetes may require access to a phone connected to continuous glucose-monitoring technology.

Where an exception is required, the school will agree with the pupil and parent:

- *the purpose for which the device may be used;*
- *when and where it may be accessed;*
- *how it will otherwise be stored; and*
- *which staff need to be aware of the arrangement.*

An exception for a specific purpose does not provide unrestricted access to a mobile phone.

Parents who believe their child requires an adjustment should discuss this with the school.

7. Breaches of the Policy

All staff will apply this policy consistently and proportionately.

Where a pupil retains or uses a phone contrary to this policy, the device will normally be confiscated and stored securely.

For a first or minor breach:

- *the pupil will be reminded of the school's expectations;*
- *the device will normally be returned at the end of the school day; and*
- *parents may be informed.*

For repeated breaches:

- *parents will be contacted;*
- *the school may require a parent or carer to collect the device;*
- *an appropriate sanction may be applied in accordance with the Behaviour Policy; and*
- *arrangements for the pupil bringing a phone to school may be reviewed.*

More serious misuse includes:

- *photographing or recording another person without permission;*
- *bullying, harassment or threatening behaviour;*
- *sharing inappropriate or harmful material;*
- *accessing inappropriate content;*
- *using a device in a toilet, changing area or other private space;*
- *using a phone to circumvent school procedures; or*
- *refusing to hand a device to a member of staff.*

Serious incidents will be managed in accordance with the school's Behaviour, Online Safety and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, safeguarding procedures take priority over behaviour sanctions.

8. Confiscation and Searching

School staff may confiscate a mobile phone or similar device where the school's rules have been breached.

Any confiscation will be reasonable and proportionate, taking account of the nature of the incident and the pupil's age, SEND, disability, medical needs and other individual circumstances.

The Headteacher, and staff authorised by the Headteacher, may search for mobile phones or similar devices where there are reasonable grounds and where this is permitted under the school's rules and statutory guidance.

Any search will be undertaken in accordance with the Department for Education's *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* guidance.

Staff will not routinely examine the contents of a pupil's phone.

Where there is concern that a device contains material relating to safeguarding, bullying, harmful sexual behaviour or a possible criminal offence, the matter will be referred to a senior leader and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with statutory guidance.

9. Online Safety and Education

Removing access to phones during the school day does not remove all of the risks associated with children's use of technology.

Through the curriculum, assemblies and age-appropriate online safety education, Marner teaches pupils about:

- *responsible and respectful communication;*
- *cyberbullying;*
- *privacy and personal information;*
- *photographs and recordings;*
- *harmful or inappropriate online content;*
- *the impact of digital distraction;*
- *healthy screen use; and*
- *seeking help from a trusted adult.*

Children will also be supported to understand the benefits of phone-free time for learning, friendships, conversation, physical activity and wellbeing.

10. Educational Visits

The school will determine appropriate mobile phone arrangements for educational visits as part of the planning and risk assessment for each visit.

For visits taking place during the normal school day, the usual expectation is that pupils will not have access to personal mobile phones.

For residential visits or activities outside the normal school day, parents will be informed in advance of any specific arrangements for phones and communication with home.

The presence of personal mobile phones must not interfere with the educational or social purpose of a visit.

11. Staff Use of Mobile Phones

Staff are expected to model responsible use of technology.

Personal mobile phones should not be used for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day and should normally be kept securely away while staff are working with children.

There may be legitimate occasions when staff need to use a phone for an authorised professional purpose, including:

- *multi-factor authentication;*
- *an approved school system or application;*
- *emergency communication; or*
- *communication during an educational visit.*

Such use must be professional and proportionate.

Personal devices must not be used to photograph, film or record pupils. School-approved devices and systems must be used for this purpose.

12. Visitors and Volunteers

Visitors, volunteers and contractors are expected to use mobile phones responsibly while on the school premises.

Personal devices must not be used to photograph, film or record pupils.

Where an individual is working directly with children, their phone should normally remain out of sight unless its use has been specifically authorised.

13. Working with Parents

Parents and carers are central to the successful implementation of this policy.

We ask parents to:

- *support and reinforce the school's expectations at home;*
- *ensure their child hands in any phone brought to school;*
- *contact the school office rather than their child's phone during the school day;*
- *discuss safe and respectful technology use with their child;*
- *consider the impact of screen time on sleep, exercise, relationships and wellbeing;*
- *tell the school if their child may require a reasonable adjustment; and*
- *engage constructively with the school if the policy is breached.*

The school will communicate its expectations through the school website and appropriate channels such as ClassDojo, newsletters, parent meetings, induction information and reminders during the school year.

Parents with questions or concerns are encouraged to contact the school.

14. Responsibilities

The Governing Body provides oversight and ensures the school's arrangements reflect statutory duties.

The Headteacher is responsible for determining and overseeing the implementation of this policy.

Staff are responsible for applying the policy consistently, modelling appropriate behaviour and reporting safeguarding concerns.

Pupils are expected to follow the school's rules, hand in any phone brought to school and use technology safely and respectfully.

Parents and carers are expected to support the school's approach and communicate with their child through the school during the school day.

15. Monitoring and Review

The school will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and review it annually, or sooner where Department for Education guidance or legislation changes.

Key Guidance

This policy has been developed with reference to:

- *Department for Education, Mobile Phones in Schools – statutory guidance, June 2026;*
- *Department for Education, Communicating Your Policy for Prohibiting the Use of Mobile Phones in Schools to Parents, June 2026;*
- *Department for Education, Behaviour in Schools;*
- *Department for Education, Searching, Screening and Confiscation;*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education;*
- *Department for Education guidance on Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School;*
- *the Equality Act 2010; and*
- *the Children and Families Act 2014.*

Appendix 1: Information for Parents

Mobile Phones at Marner

Marner is a mobile phone-free school.

We recognise that some older children may need a phone when travelling independently to or from school. Where a phone needs to be brought to school, it must be:

- **SWITCHED OFF → HANDED TO STAFF → STORED SECURELY → RETURNED AT HOME TIME**

Children must not keep a mobile phone in their pocket, coat or school bag during the school day.

If you need to contact your child

Please contact the school office. We will make sure that an appropriate message reaches your child.

Please do not call, text or message your child's personal phone during the school day.

If your child needs to contact you, a member of staff will help them to do so.

Why are we doing this?

Phone-free time helps children to:

- *concentrate on learning;*
- *talk and play with one another;*
- *build positive friendships;*
- *be physically active;*
- *avoid unnecessary online distraction; and*
- *remain safe during the school day.*

Our aim is not simply to restrict technology, but to help children learn how and when to use it responsibly.

Does every child have to follow the same arrangement?

We will always consider individual needs.

If your child requires access to a mobile device because of a **medical condition, disability, accessibility need or other exceptional circumstance**, please contact the school so that an appropriate individual arrangement can be agreed.

Thank you for helping us to maintain a calm, safe and focused environment for all children.