



Mobile Phone, Devices and Smart Watches Policy

Updated Spring 2022

Policy reviewed by governing Body: January 2022

This policy provides clear guidance on the use of mobile phones in school by both staff and pupils

Introduction

Ysgol Capelulo has a clear policy on allowing pupils to bring mobile phones, devices and smart phones into school and this policy makes explicit reference to camera mobile phones, devices and smart phones.

Where mobile phones are referenced it is used to include other devices such as iPads/tablets or wearable technology such as smart watches.

Camera Mobile Phones and Wearable Technology such as Smart Phones

Camera mobile phones are becoming increasingly popular and a built in digital camera enables users to take high resolution pictures. These can be sent instantly to other mobile phone users or email addresses. They can also be posted on the internet or in chat rooms.

There is a potential for camera mobile phones to be misused in schools. They can become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils or/and teachers.

The use of Smart Watches is not appropriate in school due to risks of loss and damage and of misuse in the same way as mobile phones or tablets.

Staff policy

Staff use of mobile phones during their working day should be:

- outside of their contracted hours
- discreet and appropriate ie: not in the presence of pupils

Mobile phones, devices or wearable technology such as Smart Phones should be switched off and left in a safe, locked place during lesson times. The school cannot take responsibility for items that are lost or stolen.

Staff should never contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, they should use the school telephone in the office.

Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.

With regard to camera phones, a member of staff should **never use their phone** to photograph a pupil(s) or allow themselves to be photographed by pupils.

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff, the school and the Local Authority. Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy is likely to result in the enforcement of the Whistleblowing policy and associated procedures.

Emergency contact

It is recognised that mobile phones provide direct contact to others, and at times provide a necessary reassurance due to their ease of access, particularly at stressful times.

Practitioners, therefore, in agreed exceptional circumstances (in agreement with the Senior Management Team) are permitted to keep the volume of their phone switched on. This is to enhance their own well-being and piece of mind, to reduce stress and worry and to enable them to concentrate more effectively on their work.

Such use will be for an agreed limited period only, until any concerns or issues leading to the exceptional circumstance request have been resolved.

It is ensured at all times that the landline telephone remains connected and operational, except in circumstances beyond control. This means that it is available for emergency/urgent contact at all times.

The reliance on an answer phone is avoided and only used in exceptional circumstances. If used, the answer phone is always checked promptly on opening or return.

Parent, Visitors or Volunteers In School Policy

Adults either in school or accompanying children on school trips should not use their cameras or mobile phone cameras to take pictures of pupils unless it is at a public event such as Sports Day, Christmas performances or Summer fair (etc) and of their own children.

Adults, visitors or volunteers in school should only use their mobile phone within the confines of the school office or staff room. Personal cameras and mobile phone cameras should not be used to take pictures of children or information about children. If parents who accompany children on a school trip are asked by the teacher to take photos as a record of the educational visit, they will be issued with a school ipad. Parents accompanying children on school trips should not use their mobile cameras, tablets or wearable devices to take pictures of children.

Pupil Policy

While we fully acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone or Smart Watch or other types of wearable technology to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision, **Ysgol Capelulo discourages pupils bringing mobile phones to school due to the potential issues raised above**. The same applies to iPads or other tablets.

When a child needs to bring a phone into school, a permission slip (*Appendix 1*) must be signed by the parent and the phone must be left in the school office at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day. Devices should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own. Devices should be turned off before handing in.

Parents are advised that Ysgol Capelulo accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones and other smart devices which are brought into school or school grounds.

The school has the right to confiscate or search a mobile phone. In the unlikely event of needing to do this, we will endeavour to contact a parent or carer. As part of this agreement, your child should agree to unlock the phone if required by a member of staff.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone or smart watch, the phone will be confiscated from the pupil, handed to a member of the office team who will record the name of the pupil and attach it to the phone/watch. The mobile phone will be stored by the school office. The pupil may collect the phone/watch at the end of the school day.

A letter will be sent home to parents requesting that a permission slip be returned the next day. If this practice continues more than three times, then the school will confiscate the phone/watch until an appropriate adult collects the phone from a senior teacher.

If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone, tablet or smart watch of either other pupils or teachers, the device will be confiscated and this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to our Behaviour policy.

If images of other pupils or teacher have been taken, the device will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a senior teacher. (Please see more guidance in our Safeguarding policy).

Should a pupil be found to be using their phone or devices inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a phone into school.

We ask that parents should talk to their children about the appropriate use of text messages and images as they can often be used to bully pupils.

Should parents need to contact pupils or vice versa during the school day, this should be done via the usual school procedure of contacting the school office via phone or email.

The policy supports the Health & Safety, Anti bullying, Child Protection, Safeguarding, Social Media, Safe Arrival and Collection, Walking to School and eSafety policies. This policy will be monitored and reviewed as required but at least every three years.

Parents may want to look at the advice on www.internetmatters.org which explains how to add some parental controls to the phone and gives advice on how to keep children safe.

Mobile Phone, Devices and Smart Watch Policy Parental Consent Form

Dear Parent/Carer

In accordance with our Mobile phone, Devices and Smart Watches policy, if your child is bringing in a mobile phone or Smart Watch to school on a regular basis, please could you sign the form below to give your permission for your child to do this and remind them of our school policy.

- Your child needs to bring their device to the school office first thing in the morning before they go their classroom.
- The school bears no responsibility for the loss or damage to a mobile phone, tablet or Smart Watch
- Your child's phone should be appropriately marked so that they can recognise it
- Should your child be found using their phone, device or smart watch inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring them into school.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Head teacher

.....

MOBILE PHONE PARENTAL CONSENT

I/we give permission for our child (name) in Year
to bring their mobile phone into school.

Please name the type of device.....

We have read the policy and understand its implications

Signed

Name (please use capitals).....

Date.....

PLEASE RETURN PERMISSION SLIP TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE. THANK YOU