



Mobile Phone and Wearable Device (including Appletags) Policy

Presented to governors by A Elliott

Approved by governors September 2024

Review date September 2026

Rationale

At Neston Primary School we accept that mobile technology is part of the ever changing, digital environment we live and work in. We very much aim to encourage responsible and appropriate use of technology rather than seeking to enforce unrealistic bans or restrictions.

We are however, very aware of the possible dangers of the misuse of technology, specifically wearable devices. This policy therefore aims to provide guidance to staff, pupils, parents and visitors. It aims to do this ensuring privacy is protected, online safety is preserved and valuable equipment is looked after appropriately.

With the evolution of mobile and wearable technology including camera facilities as standard, it is of the upmost importance that the way we deal with mobile phones and wearable devices in school is planned for.

Aims

- To promote and set an example of safe and responsible device usage
- To set clear guidelines on acceptable use of devices
- To support other school policies, especially those relating to safeguarding and child protection.

The policy aims to address some of the challenges posed by devices such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for disruption in lessons
- Risk of theft, loss or damage

Staff

All staff are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Classroom staff are not permitted to make or receive calls or texts during contact time. Phones should be switched off or put on silent mode and kept in a safe place during teaching/contact time with pupils.

Smart watches and fitbits are permitted to be worn by staff but to be used only as a watch when working with children. Therefore, other functions must not be used when staff are with children.

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

- Appropriate only during break times
- In keeping with professional responsibilities and expectations

Staff should never contact pupils or parents via their own personal mobile and should not supply their mobile number to parents of children at the school.

Staff should never use their phones or wearable devices to take photographs or allow themselves to be photographed by pupils.

If during school trips/activity days etc a member of staff wishes to take photographs this must be done using the class/school ipad.

Misuse:

It is everybody's responsibility to enforce this policy, therefore any misuse of devices in classroom areas should be reported to the DSL/DDSL in line with safeguarding and whistleblowing policies and procedures.

Parents:

We ask that parents do not encourage children to bring mobile phones and wearable devices to school. However, we recognise that for older pupils this may form part of securing an understanding of independence and personal safety as they look beyond the primary environment.

It is our belief that if a child needs to contact a parent or carer, they do so swiftly from the school office. Similarly, if a message needs to be conveyed from a parent to a child, the school office will take these calls and pass the necessary information on promptly.

It is important that parents are aware that the school cannot take any responsibility for loss or damage to mobile phones belonging to parents or pupils on site.

It is also requested that whilst on school grounds that parents refrain from using their phones. Parents are also not allowed to use their phones to take photographs whilst on school grounds with the exception of during a champion assembly/performance when permission has been granted and declaration signed to not post on social media.

Pupils:

Smart watches/devices which can receive and send phone calls, text messages and video and voice recordings are not allowed in school. This is because they are a distraction and may interrupt learning. Mobile phones are only allowed to be brought in by pupils Y6 who are walking home independently (Y5 from the Summer term). It is a requirement that our younger children are collected from school by a responsible adult.

Y6 pupils:

It is important that any parents allowing a phone to be brought into school are fully aware of how they will be looked after and the sanctions that will be imposed in the event of misuse.

- ✓ Phones are to be switched off
- ✓ Phones are to be handed to the class teacher and locked away at the beginning of the day. They will be returned at the end of the day in class.
- ✓ It cannot be guaranteed that these cupboards will be locked at all times as members of staff require access to resources/materials and possessions.
- ✓ The taking of photographs and video footage using a camera phone is strictly prohibited on school grounds
- ✓ Any children found to have taken photographs/video will be asked to delete the photos in the presence of a member of the senior leadership team.

Misuse:

Any children found to have made an infringement of the above expectations will be dealt with under the following guidelines:

- ✓ The school reserves the right to hold onto the phone and ask the parent/carers to collect from school.
- ✓ For serious incidents, the school may withdraw the agreement to allow the child to bring the mobile phone to school.

Volunteers, visitors and contractors:

Volunteers, visitors and contractors must adhere to this policy if on site during the school day.

They must:

- ✓ Not take photos or recordings of pupils
- ✓ Not use phone and wearable devices when working with children (volunteers and visitors)
- ✓ Keep mobile phones and wearable devices on silent when at school
- ✓ Not use phones or wearable devices where pupils are present or make a staff member aware if the need to use a mobile arises. They will then be escorted to a place away from pupils.

Visitors, volunteers and contractors will be made aware of this policy and the rules for mobile phones and wearable devices when in school.

Loss, Theft or Damage:

Neston Primary School accepts no responsibility for mobile phones and wearable devices that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips or during travel to and from school.

Any found mobiles or wearable devices should be handed in to the school office. Contact with the owner will then be attempted.

Apple Air Tags

The placing of an apple air tag on a pupil or their belongings whilst on school premises or on a school trip is prohibited. This is due to the nature of the lithium battery which is located within the apple air tag and is a choking hazard.