

**Bell Farm Primary School**  
**Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras in School**



**Bell Farm Primary School recognises that parents may wish their children who come to school unaccompanied to have mobile phones for use in cases of emergency. However, mobiles and other devices with cameras or internet access can be used inappropriately and are potentially targets for theft and bullying.**

This policy provides clear guidance on the use of mobile phones and cameras in school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour and Discipline policy
- Child Protection Safeguarding policy
- ICT and Online Safety policy

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 This policy provides guidance on the appropriate use of personal mobile phones by members of staff and pupils.

1.2 Bell Farm Primary School has a clear policy on allowing pupils to bring mobile phones into school, and this policy makes explicit reference to camera mobile phones.

### **2. Camera Mobile Phones**

3.1 Camera mobile phones are becoming increasingly popular. A built in digital camera enables users to take high quality pictures. These can then be sent instantly to other mobile phones or e-mail addresses. They can also be posted on the internet or in chat rooms.

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

### **3. Staff Policy**

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

- Outside of their contracted hours
- Discreet and appropriate e.g. not in the presence of pupils

3.2 Mobile phones should be switched to silent. In the event of an activation of the lockdown alarm, as an additional method of communication to email, a mobile phone may be used to check for a text from the office as to whether the lockdown is full or partial.

3.3 Staff should never give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil or parent a school telephone should be used.

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

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

3.6 This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff, the school and the Local Authority.

3.7 Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy is likely to result in the enforcement of our Whistleblowing policy and associated procedures.

### **4. Appropriate use of a mobile Phone during the School Day**

4.1 Mobile phones have a place on outings or in school buildings which do not have access to a school landline. In these cases, they are often the only means of contact available and can be helpful in ensuring children are kept safe. Ideally staff should use school mobile phones in these circumstances but, if required to use a personal phone, should input 141 to ensure their own number is hidden.

4.2. By arrangement with SLT (Senior Leadership Team), a member of staff's mobile phone may be designated as the means of communication for specific activities.

4.3 When leaving the school building with children (e.g. for sport, going to the playground or on school trips), the mobile phones of all members of staff must be switched on and turned to loud to ensure that staff can be contacted by the school. The leader of the trip should ensure all participants (including parents, volunteers and partners) in the activity are aware of this Bell Farm Mobile Phone and Camera Policy.

4.4 Contact numbers for all members of staff accompanying the children must be left at Reception and a list of contact telephone numbers for all children should be with the leader of the off-site activity (although these must be kept confidential).

## 5. Pupil Policy

5.1 **Unless in exceptional circumstances, children may not bring mobile phone/cameras to school unless they are travelling to and from school on their own. These children are in Years 5 and 6 only.** In this case, the child will need written permission and the phone should be handed in to, and collected from, the class teacher at the start and finish of each day. If you would like your child to bring a mobile phone into school for other reasons, please discuss this with your child's class teacher.

5.2 While we fully acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone to school if they walk to and from school on their own, Bell Farm Primary School discourages pupils from bringing mobile phones to school due to the potential issues outlined in this policy.

5.3 When a child needs to bring a phone into school, a permission slip must be signed by their parent and the mobile phone must be left with the class teacher at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day.

Children who bring a phone to school without parental consent will have the phone removed and taken to the school office for safe keeping. An appropriate adult should then come and collect the phone and sign the parental consent forms.

Phones should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone. Parents are advised that Bell Farm Primary School accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into the school or school grounds.

5.4 Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone, the phone will be confiscated from the pupil, handed to a member of the school office team who will record the name of the pupil and attach to the phone. The mobile phone will be stored by the school office. The pupil may collect the phone at the end of the school day. A letter will be sent home to the 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 until an appropriate adult collects the phone from a senior member of staff.

5.5 If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers on school grounds, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Behaviour Policy.

5.6 If a pupil is found to have uploaded photographs or video footage taken with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers on school grounds to social media or the internet, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Behaviour Policy.

5.7 If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a senior teacher, and a consequence in line with the school's Behaviour Policy will take place.

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

5.9 Please talk to your child about the appropriate use of text messages and image sharing as they can often be used to bully pupils.

5.10 Should parents need to contact pupils during the school day, or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures: via the school office. (tel no. 01932 224 009).

## 6. Parent and Visitor Policy

6.1 Parents must ensure mobile phones/cameras are not on display (switched off or silent mode) while in the presence of children or in public areas of the school such as during meetings and school events.

6.2 The school records images of children, both through moving pictures and stills, for assessment and reporting of progress, as well as celebration of their activities. It goes to some lengths to photograph events and performances which are available on request (or through purchasing), particularly in order to avoid distraction of children while performing and disturbance within the audience.

6.3 However, some parents may want to record their own images of their children at school events such as assemblies, matches or concerts. They are welcome to do this so long as **these images are for personal use only** (e.g. a family album) and so are exempt from the Data Protection Act 1998.

6.4 Staff should remind parents regularly of school policy with regard to mobile phone use with the following statement on weekly emails, when announcing events and at the beginning of events such as productions/ concerts etc where practicable:

“You are welcome to photograph your child at this event **providing the images are for personal use only** (e.g. a family album) and so are exempt from the Data Protection Act 1998. Please be aware these images (which may include other children) must not be shared on social networking sites or other web-based forums since we regard this as ‘making the image public’. Sharing images, or uploading them into a ‘public space’, is likely to be in breach of the Act.”

<b>Status of Policy</b>	<b>Date</b>
Authored by Charlotte Hendy	September 2015
Policy reviewed	January 2018
Agreed by Staff	January 2018
Review	Every two years, January 2020