



## **Abingdon Prep School**

### **Mobile Technology Policy**

#### **To whom does this policy apply?**

This policy applies to all pupils (including those in EYFS setting) to all members of staff or those working at the school whether in a voluntary or paid capacity and to parents.

It is expected that the school will enjoy the full support of all parents in implementing this policy.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy (Prep and Pre-prep), the Anti-bullying policy, the Anti-cyber bullying policy, the ICT policies (both staff and pupil) and the Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy.

#### **What is mobile technology?**

Mobile technology is a device that can store, access, create, allow to modify, organise, or otherwise manipulate data in various forms from a location without being required to be tethered to any particular spot. It includes, but is not restricted to mobile phones, tablets, laptops, watches, AI glasses and cameras.

#### **Why is a Mobile Technology policy necessary?**

Abingdon Prep School recognises the need for some pupils to bring personal devices to school in order to communicate effectively with parents and carers before and after school hours. It also recognises the needs of staff and those working at the school to have and use personal devices.

There is the potential for devices to be misused at school, causing disruption to teaching and learning. They can also be used as an instrument for bullying directed against pupils and staff. It is the aim of APS to provide an environment in which children, parents and staff are safe from images being recorded and inappropriately used. This policy aims to ensure pupils, parents and staff are able to enjoy the benefits of mobile technology whilst being protected against any potential harm it may cause.

#### **Pupil Policy**

Pupils should not bring devices into school with them. The only exceptions to this are phones used for medical reasons or where a parent has contacted the Head or Senior Deputy Head to request specific permission. An example might be where a pupil moves between two homes. Once permission has been given, the pupil needs to follow the

guidance set out below when bringing the phone into school.

Pupils are not allowed smartphones in school or while under the supervision of school staff. Any phones pupils bring into school (with permission) should be basic and not have internet access. The only exception would be a phone required for medical use where express permission has been given.

If a pupil who travels to school with a parent or carer brings a device into school, this must be handed in at the office on arrival and collected on departure.

For pupils who travel to or from school on a school minibus or coach, phones should not be used on the journey and only available to contact parents in the case of an emergency. If attending a club after school, the device must be collected from the office after the club. If attending a club (including After School Club) that finishes after the office is closed, the device is to be collected before the club and given directly to the club leader who will keep it for the duration of the club in an appropriate storage facility until the end of the club.

Any devices collected from the office at the end of the day must not be used, unless with the express permission of a member of staff as set out below, whilst the pupil remains in the care of the school.

Pupils may, on occasions, be allowed to use their personal devices at school or while in the care of members of staff. This will only be with the express permission of a member of staff who will supervise the use of the devices eg school residentials and long trips. Whether devices will be allowed on trips is at the discretion of the member of staff leading the trip and pupils will be notified prior to the trip of the decision that has been made. Whilst pupils should only have basic (no internet access) phones, there may be occasions (eg for medical reasons) a child's phone may sometimes have access to the internet on 3G and 4G networks outside the School's monitored systems on such trips. When using 3G and 4G networks, the School expects all pupils to abide by the rules contained in the ICT and E-Safety Policy. Inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action.

A pupil is not permitted to use personal devices to take photographs or video footage of other pupils or staff during school time or whilst under the care of the school, unless on a residential trip and with the express permission and supervision of staff.

*The use of cameras or filming equipment (including on mobile phones) is not allowed in toilets, washing or changing areas or swimming pool areas, nor should photography or filming equipment be used by pupils in a manner that may offend or cause upset (Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy para 7.1.g)*

Pupils may not use photography or filming equipment in bedrooms on residential trips.

If a pupil is found to be in breach of this policy, disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with the Behaviour Policies (Prep and Pre-prep), Anti-Bullying Policy, Anti-cyber bullying policy and ICT (Pupil) Policy.

## **Staff Policy**

Personal devices (including mobile phones) must be switched off or switched to 'silent'

mode during lessons and stored out of sight of pupils during school hours.

Personal devices will not be used during teaching periods or on duty unless permission has been granted by the Head (or a member of the Leadership team in his absence) such as in emergency circumstances. If any staff member has an emergency which requires them to keep their device close at hand, they should consult with the Headmaster and get permission for this. In this situation, any phone calls taken or made should be done so in an area of the setting away from the children.

If a member of staff needs to use their device during the school day, they should do so in the staff room or other area where they can do so discreetly without being seen by pupils.

Staff are not permitted to use their own mobile phones or devices for contacting children, young people or their families within or outside of the setting in a professional capacity. Staff should not give out personal mobile numbers or e-mails to pupils or parents/carers. The school email address assigned to each member of staff is to be used in all school related communications.

Staff should not use personally-owned devices, such as mobile phones, ipads or cameras, to take photos or videos of pupils and will only use work-provided equipment for this purpose. Images taken must be deemed suitable without putting the child in any compromising position that could cause embarrassment or distress.

Images may only be uploaded to the secure school website and should never be uploaded to the internet for any other reason, including onto social networking sites (e.g. Facebook).

Images of pupils in EYFS may only be taken on a school device which remains permanently at school. Under no circumstances should images of EYFS pupils be on a device which is taken off school premises, except when on school trips. In this instance the device must be left at school upon return. However, teachers may access photographs that are integrated within the chosen Seesaw pupil progress and development platform or on the APS Google Drive which may need to happen away from the school premises but will only be accessed via a school device.

There should be no mobile phone use in the EYFS setting at any time.

Under no circumstances must cameras of any kind be taken into a changing room, toilet, shower area or (in the case of a residential trip) bedroom without prior consultation with the Head or Safeguarding Team.

Should photographs need to be taken in a bathroom (e.g. of children washing their hands), then the Head or Senior Deputy Head must be asked first and staff should be supervised whilst carrying out this activity – the camera must be placed in a prominent place where it can be seen at all times.

It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure a school camera in their possession is stored in a location not accessible by children. In the Early Years children are encouraged to take photographs to form part of their Learning profile. Where this is the case there will be specific adult supervision. Should older children be asked to use school cameras or iPads to take photographs this will be under the supervision of a member of staff.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns to the Head and/or Safeguarding Team.

If a member of staff breaches the school policy then disciplinary action may be taken.

If a parent or pupil is not satisfied with a decision or course of action, reference should be made to the Complaints Procedure Policy.

## **Parents and Visitors**

Paragraph 7 of the Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy states:

*Parents are welcome to take photographs of (and where appropriate, film) their own children taking part in school events, subject to the following guidelines, which the School expects all parents to follow:*

*When an event is held indoors, such as a play or a concert, parents should be mindful of the need to use their cameras and filming devices with consideration and courtesy for cast members or performers on stage and the comfort of others.*

*In particular, flash photography can disturb others in the audience, or even cause distress for those with medical conditions; the School therefore asks that it is not used at indoor events.*

*Parents are asked not to take photographs of other pupils, except incidentally as part of a group shot, without the prior agreement of that pupil's parents.*

*Parents are reminded that such images are for personal use only. Images which may identify other pupils should not be made accessible to others via the internet (for example on Facebook), or published in any other way.*

*Parents are reminded that copyright issues may prevent the School from permitting the filming or recording of some plays and concerts.*

*Parents may not film or take photographs in swimming pool areas, changing rooms or backstage during school productions, nor in any other circumstances in which photography or filming may embarrass or upset pupils.*

*The School reserves the right to refuse or withdraw permission to film or take photographs (at a specific event or more generally), from any parent who does not follow these guidelines, or is otherwise reasonably felt to be making inappropriate images.*

*The School sometimes records plays and concerts professionally (or engages a professional photographer or film company to do so), in which case copies of the DVDs and CDs may be made available to parents for purchase. Parents of pupils taking part in such plays and concerts will be notified if it is intended to make such recordings available more widely.*

Parents will be asked to notify friends or family members attending an event at school of this policy.

Since there are stringent regulations surrounding children in the Early Years setting, parents are asked to refrain from using mobile phones and electronic devices in the Pre-Prep area or Early Years Garden. All parents are reminded, when signing in at the main school office, that mobile phones must not be used on site unless at a supervised event as detailed above.

**Deputy Head**

Last internal review: July 2025

Last governor review: May 2025

Next governor review: May 2026