PORG International School

Mobile Phone and Personal Device Policy

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Introduction

PORG International School provides a phone-free environment during the school day so that pupils can focus on learning, play, face-to-face relationships and their wellbeing. This policy sets clear expectations for mobile phones, smartwatches and similar personal devices across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Primary School.

Pupils must not use or have access to personal mobile phones or smart devices during the school day. In the normal course of school life, pupils should leave these devices at home. Where a specific journey, medical or accessibility need makes an exception appropriate, the Head of School may agree a written arrangement with the parent or carer.

Purpose and principles

The policy supports safeguarding, positive behaviour, privacy and uninterrupted teaching. It is applied consistently and in an age-appropriate way, with individual adjustments where required for a pupil's medical condition, disability or other exceptional need.

PORG International School operates in the Czech Republic. Czech law and the requirements of relevant Czech authorities apply. The school has also considered the Department for Education's mobile phone guidance for England as a professional benchmark for its British international school context; that guidance is not presented as Czech law.

Scope and definitions

This policy applies to all EYFS and Primary pupils, aged 3 to 11, while on school premises, during the school day, at clubs and activities organised by the school, and on educational visits, trips and other school-related activities. It applies from a pupil's arrival until they have been collected or leave the school site under the school's arrangements.

A "personal device" includes a mobile phone, smartphone, smartwatch or other wearable, tablet, camera, audio recorder, gaming device, headphones or earbuds that a pupil owns or brings from home. A smartwatch is covered if it can make or receive calls or messages, connect to a mobile or internet network, display notifications, take or transmit photographs, record audio or video, or otherwise communicate.

A basic watch without these functions is permitted. School-owned or school-issued devices used for learning are governed by staff direction, the school's Online Safety and Acceptable Use arrangements, and any applicable individual plan.

Rules for pupils

During the school day and school-related activities, pupils must:

- leave personal mobile phones, smartwatches and other connected or recording devices at home unless the Head of School has given written permission;
- not switch on, use, wear, access or display a personal device, including at break, lunch, clubs, in changing areas or while travelling on a school trip;
- not use a personal device to call, message, photograph, film, record, livestream, access social media or share another person's information;
- follow staff instructions about school-owned devices and use them only for the learning activity or purpose authorised by staff.

Pupils may not use a personal device to contact home during the school day. If a pupil needs to contact a parent or carer, they should tell a member of staff, who will arrange contact through the school office.

Exceptions and safe storage

A parent or carer may submit a written request to the Head of School where a pupil needs to bring a device for a specific reason, such as a journey to or from school. Permission must be agreed before the device is brought onto the site. Permission to bring a device does not permit the pupil to use it during the school day.

Unless the written agreement states a different safe arrangement, an approved phone must be switched off on arrival and handed to the school office or a designated staff member for secure storage. It will be returned at dismissal. Approved devices must not be kept in a pupil's pocket, bag or locker during the day. The school will explain the collection and storage arrangement to the pupil and parent or carer.

EYFS children should not bring personal phones or smartwatches to school. An exception for a medical or accessibility need must be agreed individually with the Head of School and recorded in the child's relevant care or support plan.

Medical needs and reasonable adjustments

The school will consider an individual arrangement where a device is necessary to support a pupil's medical condition, disability or accessibility need. The Head of School will agree the purpose, permitted functions, times, locations, supervision and storage with the parent or carer and, where appropriate, the relevant health or support professional.

For example, a phone or wearable may be required to receive medical monitoring alerts. Any approved use will be limited to what is needed for the pupil's safety or access, recorded in the pupil's care plan, and reviewed when circumstances change. Staff must follow the agreed plan and must not disable a medically necessary function.

Breaches and response

If a pupil is seen using or wearing a prohibited device, a staff member will ask the pupil to stop and hand the device to the staff member or school office. The device will be stored securely and returned to the parent or carer at the end of the day, unless a different proportionate arrangement is agreed with the Head of School. Staff will inform the parent or carer and record repeated or significant breaches.

Responses will be proportionate, consistent with the Behaviour Policy and appropriate to the pupil's age, understanding, individual needs and circumstances. Repeated breaches may result in a meeting with the parent or carer and a written plan. Staff will not access or inspect the contents of a pupil's device as a routine response. If a device or its contents raise a safeguarding concern, staff must preserve the situation and refer it promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL, who will follow the safeguarding policy and applicable local procedures.

Educational visits and activities

The same restrictions apply to educational visits, clubs, sports activities and other school-organised events. If a particular visit requires a different arrangement, the trip leader will explain it to pupils and parents in advance and record how devices will be managed. Staff will provide a suitable way for pupils to contact the school or their family in an emergency.

Roles and responsibilities

- The Head of School implements the policy, decides requests for exceptions and reasonable adjustments, and reviews its effectiveness.
- The DSL and Deputy DSL advise on safeguarding concerns involving devices, recording, online contact or inappropriate sharing.
- All staff explain and apply the rules consistently, respond calmly to breaches and report safeguarding concerns through the school's established procedures.
- Parents and carers ensure that their child understands the rules, do not arrange direct contact with the child during the school day, and request any exception in writing in advance.
- Pupils follow staff instructions, respect other people's privacy and ask an adult for help if a device or online interaction causes concern.

Communication, monitoring and review

The school will make this policy available to staff and families and explain the expectations to pupils in language appropriate to their age. The policy will be reviewed annually and sooner if there is a significant incident, a change in relevant guidance or law, or a change in school practice.

Sanctions and Consequences

The school responds to breaches calmly, consistently and proportionately. The response is intended to stop the prohibited use, protect pupils' privacy and safety, and help the pupil understand and follow the rules. Staff will consider the pupil's age and level of understanding, the nature and impact of the breach, whether it is repeated, any relevant medical or accessibility plan, and any safeguarding concerns.

How the school will respond

First or accidental breach

The staff member will give a clear instruction to stop using the device and ask the pupil to hand it over. The device will be switched off where appropriate, stored securely and returned to the parent or carer at collection. The parent or carer will be informed. For an isolated incident, an explanation and reminder may be sufficient.

Use of a device or failure to follow an instruction

The device will be secured for the remainder of the day and returned to the parent or carer. The incident will be recorded and the parent or carer contacted. The school may use an age-appropriate response under the Behaviour Policy, such as a reminder, restorative conversation, warning or temporary loss of a relevant privilege.

Repeated breaches

The Head of School may meet with the pupil and parent or carer, agree a written plan, and require the pupil not to bring the device or to hand it to the school office each day. Any existing permission will be reviewed with the pupil's individual needs in mind. A medically necessary arrangement will not be withdrawn without an appropriate review and alternative plan.

Recording, sharing or other serious misuse

Any photographing, filming, audio recording, livestreaming, online harassment or sharing of another person's information will be referred promptly to the DSL or Deputy DSL. The school will record the concern, inform the parent or carer as appropriate, and follow relevant safeguarding, online safety, anti-bullying and data protection procedures. Further disciplinary action may be taken under the Behaviour Policy and applicable local procedures.

EYFS children

Staff will use a calm, immediate and developmentally appropriate response, such as stopping the activity, explaining the boundary in simple language, redirecting the child and speaking with the parent or carer. Consequences intended for older pupils will not be applied to young children.

Safeguarding and device handling

Staff will not routinely search a pupil or inspect, unlock, copy or delete content on a personal device. If a device or its contents raise a safeguarding concern, staff will not investigate the content; they will refer it promptly to the DSL or Deputy DSL and follow their instructions and applicable local procedures. Any device retained by the school will be kept securely and returned to the parent or carer as soon as appropriate. A device or function authorised in a pupil's medical or accessibility plan is not a breach when used within that plan.

Related policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use arrangements
- Data Protection and Privacy Notice
- Medical Needs and First Aid arrangements

Reference

Department for Education (England), Mobile phones in schools, statutory guidance updated 29 June 2026. The guidance applies to England and is used here as a professional benchmark, alongside Czech legal requirements and PORG International School policies.

Key Contacts

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