



# Mobile Phone & Electronic Devices Policy

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## Pembridge Hall School

Date of adoption of this policy	September 2021
Date of last review of this policy	June 2023
Date for next review of this policy	June 2024
Primary person responsible for this policy	Seema Zerafa [Head of Digital Learning]

**Circulation:** This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children.

'Parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.



## Vision

Pembridge Hall places our girls at the heart of everything. By combining traditional values with an innovative education, girls are prepared for life in an ever-evolving world through an ambitious and aspirational prep school experience. Placing emphasis on each girl as an individual, we recognise that happiness, a love of learning and emotional well-being are intrinsic to academic performance. Pembridge Hall girls are nurtured, challenged and empowered to succeed.

## Aims & Values

At Pembridge Hall we aim for all Pembridge girls to:

**BE INDIVIDUAL** - Pembridge girls are encouraged to strive to achieve their personal best whilst developing their unique character. They are seen as individuals and their interests and talents are nurtured. The girls are encouraged to be articulate and confident, whilst understanding the importance of humility.

**BE KIND** - Pembridge girls develop the skills to work collaboratively with one another, using their emotional intelligence and a toolkit of strategies to support both themselves and others. The girls are encouraged to develop a sense of self-understanding and empathy for others.

**BE CURIOUS** - Pembridge girls are stimulated to be intellectually curious, ask questions, and develop a love of learning. They are given a breadth of experience and are encouraged to aim high in all they do.

**BE ASPIRATIONAL** - Pembridge girls are taught to understand the importance of making mistakes and are encouraged to step out of their comfort zone in their learning. A progressive curriculum embeds a culture of striving for excellence and families are supported to be aspirational in their senior school choices.

**BE RESILIENT** - girls are given numerous opportunities to reflect on their learning and develop strategies to manage their wellbeing. Girls develop a growth mindset, enjoy challenge and take risks.

**BE RESPONSIBLE** - Pembridge girls gain an appreciation of wider society and the diversity of nationalities, faiths, beliefs and languages represented by Pembridge Hall families. Girls develop a sense of responsibility to help others, through charitable work and community outreach.



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## 1. Scope of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out general rules about mobile devices and personal electronic devices, and to give staff guidelines regarding the appropriate use of such devices in the course of carrying out their duties.

The responsible, considerate and safe use of mobile phones and portable electronic devices is part of the multi-dimensional, social and behavioural goals which are embedded within our educational and management processes. This policy is part of our strategy for safeguarding children within our care. It complies with [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) (effective 1 September 2023) and should be read in conjunction with our other policies, notably:

- Safeguarding and child protection
- Online safety
- Anti-Bullying
- ICT Usage
- PSHEE and RSE
- Photos and Images
- Social Media
- Data Protection

## 2. General rule for children

Children are prohibited from bringing mobile and personal electronic devices to school. The exception to this is where a Year 6 child has been granted parental permission to walk home alone and they are, therefore required to bring a mobile phone to school – these devices are handed to their class teacher who will store the phone in a locked location in the child's classroom.

Our staff are authorised to search for<sup>1</sup> and to confiscate any device. They can also search the device and (if appropriate) delete content if they consider that it has been, or could be used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break the school rules. Inappropriate usage will be dealt with consistent with our policies on discipline, behaviour, sanctions and exclusions. If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that a device contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give it to police as soon as is reasonably practicable. Any evidence of an offence or material that contains a pornographic image of a child should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.

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<sup>1</sup> If in doubt, staff should consult their Head/Principal and the Department for Education guidance: [Searching, screening and confiscation](#) (2018).



### 3. Searching, screening and confiscation

Staff authorised by the Head have the right to search for, examine and confiscate any device where they reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break the school rules. This will be done in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance: [Searching, screening and confiscation](#) (2018). Inappropriate usage will be dealt with consistent with our policies on discipline, behaviour, sanctions and exclusions. Following an examination of an electronic device, the member of staff has the right to erase any data or files, if they think there is a good reason to do so. However, care should be taken not to delete material that might be required in a potential criminal investigation. If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that a device contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must alert the Head and the DSL [or the Deputy DSL, when the DSL is not available] and, where there are safeguarding concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead [Nicola Mooney: [nicola.mooney@pembrokehall.co.uk](mailto:nicola.mooney@pembrokehall.co.uk)]. The device should then be given to police as soon as is reasonably practicable. Any incidents will be recorded in the online safety log.

### 4. General rule for staff and visitors

The use of personal electronic devices by staff or visitors for any purpose when in the company of children is prohibited<sup>2</sup>. This applies to situations both on-site and off-site (e.g. on trips). When in the presence of children, personal electronic devices should be kept out of sight of pupils (e.g. in a draw, bag or jacket pocket and set to silent. In an emergency, personal calls can be directed to the school's landline number so that a message can be relayed to the member of staff.

Personal electronic devices may be used when not in the company of pupils. Where they are used, staff should be respectful and considerate towards colleagues and others, and should be mindful of setting an example, e.g. by not being unnecessarily distracted by electronic communications.

Staff must ensure that there is no inappropriate or illegal content on their personal devices. The Head reserves the right to check the contents of a staff-member's devices should there be any cause for concern relating to our responsibilities for the safeguarding of children.

### 5. Use of cameras

An increasing number of electronic devices now have built-in cameras and have the capability to capture copy and transmit images and other recordings through a range of technologies

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<sup>2</sup> A pragmatic and common sense approach must be taken to the interpretation of this rule in the context of evolving technologies. For example, the **Apple Watch** and other wearable devices would technically be in breach of this rule. If staff choose to wear such devices, they must be especially mindful that their professional behaviour is not compromised, either in the quality of their vigilance and supervision of children, or in the example they set to children by avoiding being, or being seen to be, distracted or addicted to message and alert-checking.



and formats. Staff must not take or transmit any recording of pupils on any personal device. Only school hardware must be used for this purpose.

No parent or visitor is permitted to use a camera (including a mobile phone's camera facility) whilst on school premises, except for some<sup>3</sup> specific events such as plays, recitals, concerts, sporting events, open days or other promotional events. We strongly advise parents against the publication of any such photographs on the internet (e.g. on social media), and will request parents to remove any such material if we deem it illegal, harmful or inappropriate in any way.

Where appropriate, our policy regarding this matter should be explained clearly to parents by a member of staff before difficult situations arise.

Staff should also be aware that taking photographs of colleagues using personal devices should only happen with the permission of that member of staff.

See our [Photos and Images Policy and Social Media Policy](#) for further information on these matters.

## **6. EYFS settings**

Given the more vulnerable nature of children within the EYFS setting, extra care should be given to the use of devices in these year groups. All existing regulations regarding the use of devices apply to the EYFS. The following regulations are expected to be of particular note to the EYFS setting:

- Mobile phones must not be used in any teaching area or within the bathroom area.
- All mobile phones and similar devices must be stored securely away from pupils during contact time with children. This includes staff, visitors, parents, volunteers and students.
- Only school devices should be used to take photographs.

## **7. Contact with parents/carers**

All contact with Parents/Carers must be made through the Alpha Plus Group network: emails must be from a Group account and telephone calls made on a Group phone. Personal phones or other personal contact details should only be used with parents in an emergency.

## **8. Security**

Staff must ensure that personal electronic devices are PIN protected to ensure their own privacy and security. This also applies to the use of e.g. personal webmail accounts through school devices, which should also be password protected and not set to automatically log in.

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<sup>3</sup> We reserve the right to prohibit the use of cameras for some events if deemed inappropriate by staff.



## **9. Health and safety considerations**

In circumstances where staff are lone-working in remote areas of the school, or out of hours, a work mobile or two-way radio should be provided if there is no land-line in the room. Staff are reminded that using hand-held mobile phones whilst driving is a criminal offence.

## **10. Alpha Plus phones and devices**

Any staff member who has been provided with a Group mobile phone or device must comply with Group policies, which are available on the [Group Portal](#). These phones must be PIN protected at all times. Mobile phone usage data and associated phone bills are checked on a regular basis.