



USE OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES POLICY

AUTUMN 2024

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CHANGES

May 2017

Policy adopted by the Board of Trustees. This policy has been adapted from the South West Grid for Learning Use of Mobile Technologies template, with appropriate amendments made for the purposes of Discovery Multi Academy Trust's arrangements.

July 2023

Policy amended to reflect change in technologies.

December 2024

Policy amended to include mobile phone use by visitors (including parents/carers), as well as to expand upon pupil mobile phone use.

PURPOSE

At Discovery Mutli-Academy Trust (“the MAT”), we recognise that mobile phones and other devices including smart phones and tablets, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as for the wider school community.

Mobile technology devices may be owned/provided by the MAT or be a privately owned smartphone, tablet, notebook / laptop or other technology that usually has the capability of utilising the MAT’s wireless network. The device then has access to the wider internet which may include the MAT’s learning platform and other cloud based services such as email and data storage.

The absolute key to considering the use of mobile technologies is that the pupils, staff and wider MAT community understand that the primary purpose of having their personal device on MAT premises is educational and that this is irrespective of whether the device is MAT owned/provided or personally owned. This Use of Mobile Technologies policy sits alongside a range of polices including but not limited to the Safeguarding Policy, Acceptable Use Agreements, Security Policy, E-Safety Policy and Behaviour Policy.

AIMS

Our policy aims to:

- Promote and set an example for safe and responsible use of mobile phones and devices.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones and devices for pupils, staff, parents, carers and volunteers.
- Support the school’s other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones and devices in schools such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of loss, damage or theft
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

CONSIDERATIONS

There are a number of issues and risks to consider when implementing mobile technologies. These include; security risks in allowing connections to the MAT network, filtering of personal devices, breakages and insurance, access to devices for all pupils, avoiding potential classroom distraction, network connection speeds, types of devices, charging facilities, total cost of ownership

Potential Benefits of Mobile Technologies

Research has highlighted the widespread uptake of mobile technologies amongst adults and children of all ages. Web-based tools and resources have changed the landscape of learning. Pupils now have at their fingertips unlimited access to digital content, resources, experts, databases and communities of interest. By effectively maximizing the use of such resources, the academies in our MAT not only have the opportunity to deepen pupil learning, but they can also develop digital literacy, fluency and citizenship in pupils that will prepare them for the high tech world in which they will live, learn and work.

For further reading, please refer to “Bring your own device: a guide for schools” by Alberta Education available at: <http://education.alberta.ca/admin/technology/research.aspx> and to the “NEN Technical Strategy Guidance Note 5 – Bring your own device” - <http://www.nen.gov.uk/bring-your-own-device-byod/>

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of a breach of this policy.

Governors are responsible for approving this policy and ensuring it is enforced appropriately

ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENTS

The MAT Acceptable Use Agreements for staff, pupils, parents and carers and community users give consideration to the use of mobile technologies.

The MAT allows:

	MAT Devices			Personal Devices		
	MAT owned and allocated to a single user	MAT owned for use by multiple users	Authorised device ¹	Pupil owned	Staff owned	Visitor owned
Allowed in MAT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (handed in to teacher)	Yes (stored in locker)	Yes (switched off)
Full network access	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Internet only	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

¹ Authorised device – purchased by the pupil/family through a MAT-organised scheme. This device may be given full access to the network as if it were owned by the MAT

Appropriate access control is applied to all mobile devices according to the requirements of the user (e.g Internet only access, network access allowed, shared folder network access)

For all mobile technologies, filtering will be applied to the internet connection and attempts to bypass this are not permitted

Appropriate exit processes are implemented for devices no longer used at a MAT location or by an authorised user. This includes: revoking the remote access, removing proxy settings, ensuring no sensitive data is removed from the network and uninstalling MAT-licenced software etc.

All MAT devices are subject to routine monitoring.

PERSONAL DEVICE PERMISSIONS

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive personal calls or messages while pupils are present.

Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room).

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time, for instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- For acutely ill dependents or family members

The Head of School will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number as a point of emergency contact.

- Staff should store mobile devices, including smart watches in designated areas. These devices may be accessed in 'staff only' areas of the schools, or in senior leader offices.
- Devices may not be used in tests or exams
- Visitors should switch off phones/ remove smart watches whilst on MAT premises
- Charging of personal devices is not permitted during the school day
- Devices must be in silent mode in MAT designated usage areas, and turned off at all other times.
- MAT devices are provided to support learning.
- The software / apps originally installed by the Trust must remain on the MAT-owned device in usable condition and be easily accessible at all times. From time to time the MAT may add software applications for use in a particular lesson. Periodic checks of devices will be made to ensure that users have not removed required apps
- The MAT will ensure that MAT devices contain the necessary apps for MAT work. Apps added by the Trust will remain the property of the MAT and will not be accessible to pupils on authorised devices once they leave the Trust roll. Any apps bought by the user on their own account will remain theirs

SAFEGUARDING

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff are strongly advised to avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils.

Staff must not use their mobile phone or device to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which would could identify a pupil.

If it necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment. Staff must secure their personal phone or device and failure to do so could result in a data breach.

USE OF MOBILE PHONES FOR PUPILS

Pupils are permitted to bring a mobile phone into school, but it should be switched off before they enter the school gate and only switched back on at the end of the day when pupils are outside of the gate.

Pupils' mobile phones should not be seen or heard by a member of staff to avoid confiscation. We also strongly recommend that expensive devices are not brought into the school as the school will not be responsible for any damage or loss.

If a pupil is found using their mobile phone (this includes the device ringing, vibrating or making sounds to notify the user of alerts etc.) it will be confiscated and only returned to a parent or carer who will have to come and collect it from the school. Using mobile phones in school may also lead to a consequence such as a time out, reflection or even a fixed term suspension.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones as set out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. Under the direction of the Head of School, staff can search a pupil's phone if they have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury. All searches must be authorised by the Head of School or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (as a delegated power).

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes but is not limited to:

- Consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation etc.

If during an investigation, staff believe that an indecent image of children or adults on the phone or device they should not view the image. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the

Trust CEO should be informed and the phone or device will be confiscated and secured by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the police will then be contacted to continue the investigation. The return of the phone or device will only be sanctioned on the conclusion of the police investigation.

USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY PARENTS, VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

Parents, volunteers and visitors (including Governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day and this means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it is a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child.
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only and not posting on social media without consent.
- Not using phones in lessons or when working with pupils.
- Parents, volunteers and visitors will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at Reception or attend a public event at school. Parents and carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:
 - Use their phone to contact other parents.
 - Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil.

Parents and carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones as set out in the section above. Parents and carers must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day and must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile phone.

LOSS, DAMAGE OR THEFT

Personal devices are brought into MAT premises entirely at the risk of the owner and the decision to bring the device into MAT premises lies with the user (and their parents/carers) as does the liability for any loss or damage resulting from the use of the device on MAT premises.

The MAT accepts no responsibility or liability in respect of lost, stolen or damaged devices while at school or on activities organised or undertaken by the MAT's academies (the MAT recommends insurance is purchased to cover that device whilst out of the home).

FOR PARENTS

Parents can seek further guidance on keeping children safe online from the following organisations and websites:

- UK Safer Internet Centre: <https://saferinternet.org.uk/>
- Childnet: <https://www.childnet.com/>

Confiscation and searching (England)

The MAT has the right to take, examine and search any device that is suspected of unauthorised use, either technical or inappropriate.

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy is based on the Department of Education's (DfE's) statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education and its advice for schools on:

- Teaching online safety in schools
- Preventing and tackling bullying
- Cyber bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges
- Cyber security standards for schools and colleges

It also refers to the Department for Education's (DfE's) guidance on protecting children from radicalisation. It reflects existing legislation including but not limited to Education Act 1996 (as amended), the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010. In addition, it reflects the Education Act 2011 (legislation.gov.uk), which has given teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by (if necessary) searching for and deleting inappropriate images or files on students' electronic devices where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

This policy also takes into account the National Curriculum computing programmes of study.