



MacIntyre
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MacIntyre School



MacIntyre School Personal Electronic Devices Policy

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Contents

Underpinning Principles

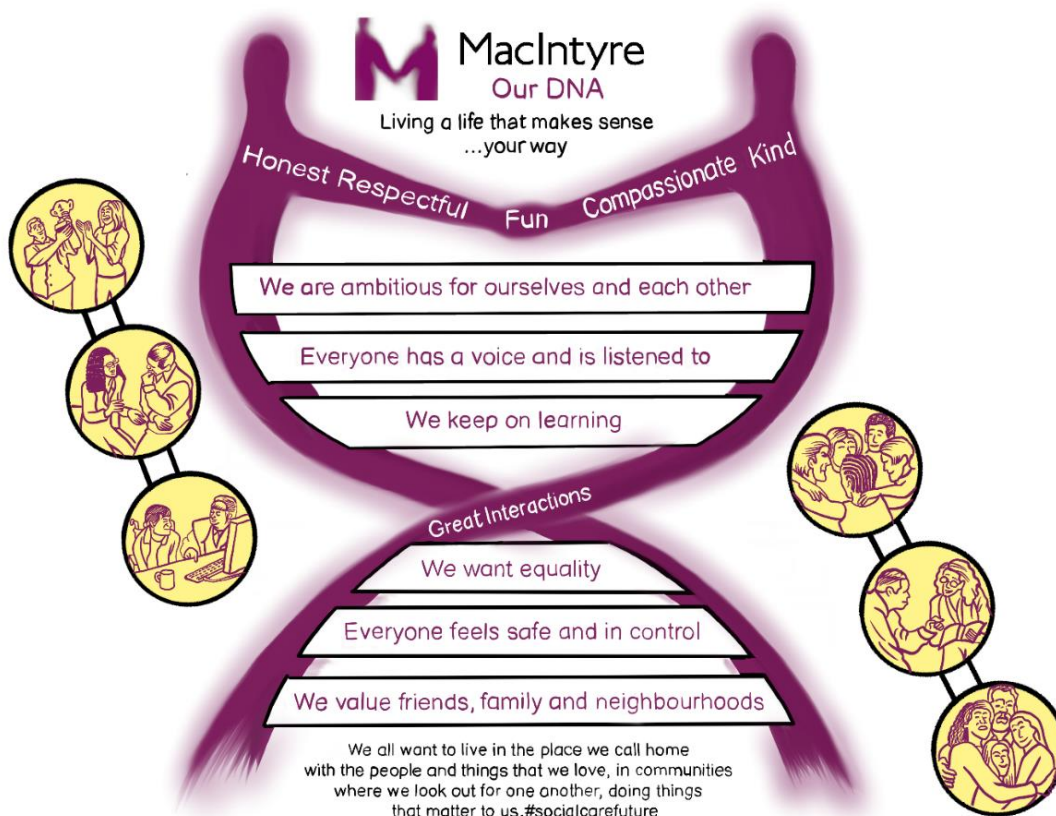
- 1. Policy Statement**
- 2. Scope**
- 3. Legal Framework**
- 4. Roles and Responsibilities**
- 5. Ownership and responsibility**
- 6. Acceptable use**
- 7. Unacceptable use**
- 8. Cyberbullying**
- 9. Adaptations and Reasonable Adjustments**
- 10. Responding to Inappropriate Device Use**

Annex A: Device and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement

Underpinning Principles

MacIntyre's DNA shows the importance we put on ensuring each person is at the centre of their support. People who draw on MacIntyre's support have gloriously ordinary lives, living the life they choose, using their gifts, skills and passions to contribute and connect to the people in their local neighbourhood. MacIntyre invests in, and helps shape, neighbourhoods to be inclusive and welcoming spaces for everyone.

This is evident in our distinctive philosophy and way of working that underpins all our activities. It is the very essence of what we do, and that is why we refer to it as our DNA.



1. Policy Statement

At MacIntyre School, we recognise that personal electronic devices, including mobile phones, tablets, smart watches and similar technology, can present both opportunities and risks for our pupils.

The school aims to provide a safe, calm and purposeful learning environment in which pupils can engage fully in education and social development. In general, the use of personal electronic devices during the school day is restricted because such devices may:

- Distract from learning and engagement;
- Increase anxiety, dysregulation or dependence on technology;
- Create safeguarding risks, including access to inappropriate content, cyberbullying and unauthorised photography or recording;
- Interfere with communication and social interaction opportunities.

However, we also recognise that many pupils at MacIntyre School have significant Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). For some pupils, personal electronic devices may form an important part of their communication, emotional regulation, independence, medical management or transition arrangements.

The school is therefore committed to balancing the general restriction of personal devices with a person-centred approach that makes reasonable adjustments where necessary to meet individual needs in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Any adaptations or exceptions to this policy will be considered on an individual basis and recorded within relevant plans, such as EHCP outcomes, communication plans, behaviour support plans, risk assessments or medical care plans.

For the purposes of this policy, a personal electronic device is a device owned by, or provided for the personal use of, a pupil, staff member or other individual. It does not include equipment provided by the school for teaching, learning, communication or support, which is managed under the Online Safety Policy and applicable acceptable-use arrangements. Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to the following items:

- Mobile phones.
- Smart watches.
- Handheld games consoles and portable media players.
- Portable internet-enabled devices, for example, tablets and laptops.
- Wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems, for example, devices used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture and/or recording, sound recording, and information transmitting, receiving and/or storing.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All pupils enrolled at MacIntyre School.
- All staff involved in teaching, monitoring or supporting pupils.
- Parents, carers and families of pupils attending the school.
- Volunteers, contractors, visitors and professionals working at or visiting the school, where relevant.

3. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory and good practice guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- DfE 'Mobile phones in schools'
- DfE 'Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents'
- DfE 'Behaviour in schools'

- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
- DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation: guidance for schools'
- DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Online Safety Policy
- Artificial Intelligence Policy
- Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding of Children and Young People Policy
- Positive Behaviour Support Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct and Appearance Code
- Anti-Bullying Policy & Procedures

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Advisory Board (governing body) will be responsible for:

- The implementation of the policy and procedures.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and procedures.
- Ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Reviewing the policy annually.

The Head of Education will be responsible for:

- Handling complaints relating to this policy in accordance with the Complaints Policy.
- The day-to-day implementation and management of the policy.
- Informing parents and pupils of the Device and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement.
- Communicating this policy to the relevant staff members and the wider school community.
- Communicating what devices can be brought to school and when they can and cannot be used.
- Deciding how best to achieve a mobile phone-free school environment.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Applying this policy consistently and proportionately, including temporarily removing and safely storing a device where this is necessary and proportionate, in accordance with this policy and the pupil's individual needs.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead where the misuse of a device indicates a risk of harm.
- Keeping personal mobile phones securely stored and not using them for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day, unless specific use has been authorised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Disabling or pausing notifications on smart watches and other personal smart devices while working with pupils, unless an agreed exception applies.
- Teaching pupils about the risks associated with mobile phones, other devices and social media, both in school and more broadly.
- Monitoring appropriate use of approved pupil devices and reporting any breaches.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Initiating and managing responses to incidents of upskirting with relevant staff members and in line with the Safeguarding of Children and Young People Policy.
- Liaising with and reporting the relevant information to children's social care and/or the police, when it is necessary to do so.

- Managing incidents of cyberbullying in conjunction with the Head of Education, in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy & Procedures and the Positive Behaviour Support Policy.

Pupils are responsible for adhering to the provisions outlined in this policy, according to their ability.

5. Ownership and responsibility

Pupils are responsible for their own belongings. Staff will support pupils to store their belongings appropriately where necessary. The school does not accept responsibility for replacing property that is lost, stolen or damaged on school premises, while travelling to or from school, or at school events, except where the school has failed to take reasonable care of an item placed in its custody.

Where a device is lawfully removed from a pupil, staff will be protected against liability for loss or damage, provided they have acted lawfully.

Pupils and staff should enable a personal PIN or passcode on all the devices they bring to school to protect their personal data, images and videos in the event that the device is lost, stolen or accessed by an unauthorised person.

6. Acceptable use

Personal electronic devices are not routinely used during the school day, including during break and lunchtime, unless this forms part of an agreed educational, therapeutic or safeguarding arrangement.

Where pupils need access to a device to support communication, emotional regulation, sensory needs, medical needs, independence or safe transition arrangements, this will be agreed by the school in consultation with parents/carers and relevant professionals.

Pupils using personal devices under an agreed arrangement will be appropriately supported and supervised by staff in accordance with the agreement and the Online Safety Policy. Any agreed use of personal devices will:

- Be proportionate to the identified need.
- Be monitored by staff where appropriate.
- Be recorded in the relevant support documentation, including the Device and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement.
- Be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains necessary and beneficial.

7. Unacceptable use

Unless an agreed reasonable adjustment or individual arrangement applies, pupils should not access personal electronic devices during the school day.

Staff will respond proportionately where devices are used inappropriately, taking into account the pupil's age, understanding, communication needs, sensory profile, SEND and any underlying reasons for the behaviour.

Pupils will not use their personal devices to access social media while attending school.

Responses will focus on education, support and regulation rather than punishment.

8. Cyberbullying

Any permitted use of personal electronic devices must comply with the Online Safety Policy.

Incidents of cyberbullying will be dealt with and reported in line with the Safeguarding of Children and Young People Policy.

As part of the school's ongoing commitment to the prevention of cyberbullying, regular teaching and discussion about online safety will take place as part of the learners' individualised learning programmes.

9. Adaptations and Reasonable Adjustments

MacIntyre School recognises that, for some pupils with significant SLD and ASD, access to personal electronic devices may constitute a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) applications.
- Visual timetables, social stories or communication supports.
- Sensory regulation strategies, including access to music or calming applications.
- Anxiety management and emotional regulation tools.
- Transition arrangements to support safe travel.
- Medical monitoring applications or devices.
- Support for developing independence and life skills.

The need for access to a device will be considered on an individual basis and may be identified through:

- EHCP provision.
- Recommendations from Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Educational Psychologists or other professionals.
- Behaviour support planning.
- Medical advice.
- Consultation with parents/carers and the pupil where appropriate.

Where an exception is agreed, it will be recorded in the Device and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement at Annex A and, where relevant, reflected in the pupil's other plans or support documentation. The agreement will set out:

- The purpose of the device.
- When and where it may be used.
- Any supervision arrangements.
- Safeguarding considerations.
- Arrangements for storage and charging where appropriate.
- Review arrangements.

The school may amend or withdraw an agreed arrangement where the use of a device no longer meets the identified need or creates a significant safeguarding concern. Any change will be considered with the pupil, where appropriate, and their parents or carers and relevant professionals.

10. Responding to Inappropriate Device Use

MacIntyre School does not use punitive sanctions or punishments in response to inappropriate use of personal devices or technology. Where the policy is not followed, staff will take proportionate, supportive and preventative action. This may include temporarily removing and safely storing the device, reviewing the pupil's individual arrangements, putting additional safeguards in place, or restricting access where this is necessary to manage an identified risk.

The school recognises that difficulties with technology use may arise from anxiety, communication difficulties, sensory needs, impulsivity, emotional regulation needs or a limited understanding of social expectations.

Staff will therefore respond in a proportionate, supportive and consistent manner, with the aim of understanding the reason for the behaviour and supporting the pupil to develop safe and appropriate technology use.

Where a pupil is finding it difficult to follow this policy, staff may:

- Remind and redirect the pupil in a calm and supportive manner.
- Provide appropriate support to put the device away or store it safely.
- Put additional strategies in place to reduce or avoid the use of personal technology where this is identified as a need.
- Provide alternative activities, communication or regulation strategies where appropriate.
- Review whether additional support, reasonable adjustments or changes to the pupil's environment are required.
- Consider whether the pupil's individual risk assessment, support plan or other relevant plan needs to be updated.
- Work with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant professionals to identify strategies that support safe and appropriate technology use.

Any restrictions or additional support will be proportionate, preventative and supportive rather than punitive and will reflect the pupil's individual needs, risks and circumstances.

Annex A: Device and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement

Families/Carers Agreement

Pupil Name: _____

Class/Form: _____

Date: _____

Purpose

At MacIntyre School, we aim to provide a safe, calm and purposeful learning environment. Personal electronic devices, including mobile phones, tablets, smart watches and similar technology, are generally not used during the school day.

However, we recognise that some pupils may require access to technology to support communication, emotional regulation, medical needs, independence or safe transition arrangements. This agreement sets out the expectations for parents/carers and the school regarding personal devices brought into school.

Parent/Carer Agreement

I understand and agree that:

1. My child may bring a personal electronic device into school only where this has been agreed with the school or where there is a specific reason for doing so.
2. Personal devices remain the responsibility of the pupil's family. The school cannot accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage, except where loss or damage results from the school failing to take reasonable care of a device placed in its custody.
3. Unless an agreed exception is in place, personal devices will be switched off and stored in the location identified by the school during the school day.
4. Where my child has an agreed individual arrangement or reasonable adjustment, the device will only be used for the purpose and in the circumstances recorded in this agreement. I will inform the school if the device:
 - Is required for medical reasons.
 - Contains communication software or AAC applications.
 - Is used as part of an agreed regulation strategy.
 - Has internet access, cameras or recording functions that may require additional safeguards.
5. I understand that personal devices must not be used to:
 - Take photographs or videos of pupils, staff or visitors without permission.
 - Record conversations or classroom activities.
 - Access inappropriate content.
 - Engage in bullying, harassment or unsafe online activity.
6. I understand that, if a device is used inappropriately, the school may temporarily remove and safely store it. Any response will be proportionate, supportive and consistent with this policy and the Positive Behaviour Support Policy.
7. I understand that any safeguarding concerns arising from device use may be investigated and, where necessary, referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and external agencies.
8. I will work in partnership with the school to review arrangements if my child's needs change.

Agreed Individual Arrangement or Reasonable Adjustment, if applicable

Please complete if your child requires access to a device during the school day.

Type of device: _____

Purpose of use: _____

- ☐ Communication / AAC
- ☐ Emotional regulation
- ☐ Sensory regulation

- ☐ Medical need
 - ☐ Transition / travel support
 - ☐ Independence skills
 - ☐ Other:
-

Agreed times and circumstances for use:

Agreed locations for use:

Storage arrangements when the device is not in use:

Charging arrangements, if applicable:

Internet, camera or recording restrictions:

Review date:

Parent/Carer Declaration

I have read and understood the MacIntyre School Personal Electronic Devices Policy and agree to support the expectations outlined above.

Parent/Carer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

School Agreement

The school agrees to:

- consider individual needs and reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010;
- work in partnership with parents/carers and professionals;
- ensure that any agreed arrangements are proportionate, person-centred and reviewed regularly;
- promote safe, responsible and appropriate use of technology.

Additional safeguards or supervision arrangements: _____

Member of staff responsible for agreeing and overseeing the arrangement: _____

Role: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____