



Brabin's Endowed Primary School

Residential Trip Technology Policy

Policy on the Use of Personal Technology and Tracking Devices Including Mobile Phones, Smart Devices and AirTags during School Trips and Residential Visits

1. Purpose of This Policy

This policy sets out the school's position regarding the use of personal technology and tracking devices, including mobile phones, smart watches, tablets and tracking tags such as Apple AirTags, during school trips and residential visits.

The school recognises that parents and carers may have understandable concerns about their child's safety. However, the use of such devices presents significant safeguarding, privacy and data protection risks. In line with UK safeguarding legislation and data protection law, personal technology and tracking devices are not permitted on school trips or residential visits.

2. Legal and Statutory Context

This policy is informed by and aligns with the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

The school has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to ensure that personal data is processed lawfully, fairly and securely.

3. Safeguarding and Child Protection Considerations

a) Safeguarding Risks

- Tracking devices may disclose the real-time location of individual pupils or groups of children, increasing the risk of harm.
- This is of particular concern for pupils who:
 - are subject to safeguarding or child protection plans
 - are in foster care or under local authority care

- are subject to court orders or protection arrangements
- The use of personal tracking devices may compromise the school's ability to maintain a safe and controlled environment during off-site activities.
- If a device is lost, shared, or accessed by an unauthorised individual, it may place a child or group of children at risk.

b) Risk of Online Harm and Social Media

- Sharing live location data or trip locations on social media platforms may expose pupils and staff to safeguarding risks.
- This could unintentionally identify the whereabouts of vulnerable children, including those fleeing domestic abuse or subject to legal restrictions.

4. Data Protection and GDPR Considerations

Under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018:

- Location data is classified as personal data, and in some cases special category data, when linked to an identifiable child.
- Children cannot provide informed consent for the continuous tracking of their location during school activities.
- The school, as Data Controller during trips, must ensure that any personal data is:
 - processed lawfully, fairly and transparently
 - collected for specified and legitimate purposes
 - kept secure and protected from unauthorised access

The use of parent-owned tracking devices undermines the school's ability to meet these obligations and may result in unlawful data processing.

5. Impact on Supervision and Trip Management

- During trips and residential visits, responsibility for pupils' safety rests with school staff.
- Staff undertake detailed planning, including risk assessments and contingency planning, to ensure pupils are supervised safely at all times.
- Personal devices and tracking tags may interfere with established safeguarding procedures, communication systems and emergency responses.
- Alerts, sounds or notifications from devices may cause unnecessary alarm, confusion or disruption.

6. Additional Practical and Security Risks

- Some tracking devices emit audible alerts or notifications which may distress pupils or cause panic.
- Certain devices can be detected by nearby phones, potentially alerting unknown individuals to the presence and location of children.
- These factors present an additional security and safeguarding risk during off-site activities.

7. School Policy on Personal Technology and Tracking Devices

- Personal mobile phones, smart devices and tracking tags (including AirTags) are not permitted on school trips or residential visits.
- Any such device found in use will be removed by staff and returned to parents or carers at the end of the visit.

- Parents and carers are expected to support the school in fulfilling its statutory safeguarding and data protection duties.
- Any specific concerns about a child's wellbeing should be discussed with the school prior to the trip so appropriate support can be put in place.

8. Alternative Safeguarding Measures

The school will continue to implement robust safeguarding arrangements, including:

- Appropriate staff-to-pupil ratios in line with risk assessments
- Regular headcounts and clearly defined supervision routines
- Buddy systems and designated meeting points
- Staff trained in safeguarding, first aid and emergency procedures

Parents and carers will be provided with clear contact details for the school during trips and residential visits.

9. Conclusion

This policy supports the school's statutory duties under safeguarding and data protection legislation and ensures that school trips and residential visits remain safe, secure, well-managed and inclusive for all pupils.

We appreciate the cooperation of parents and carers in supporting these responsibilities and helping to ensure positive and safe experiences for all children.

Parent Summary: Use of Personal Technology and Tracking Devices

School Trips and Residential Visits

To help keep all children safe during school trips and residential visits, the school does **not allow personal technology or tracking devices**, including mobile phones, smart watches, tablets or tracking tags such as Apple AirTags.

Why are these devices not permitted?

While we understand that parents and carers may feel reassured by using tracking devices, there are important reasons why they cannot be used during school trips:

- **Safeguarding:**
Tracking devices can reveal the live location of a group of children. This creates a risk, particularly for pupils who are vulnerable, in foster care, or subject to court or protection orders.
 - **Privacy and Data Protection:**
A child's location is personal data. Schools have a legal duty under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 to protect children's personal information. Personal tracking devices make it difficult for schools to meet these obligations.
 - **Security Risks:**
Some tracking devices can be detected by nearby phones or may be lost or misused, potentially putting children at risk.
- Trip Management:**
School staff are fully responsible for pupils during trips and undertake detailed planning and risk assessments. Personal devices can interfere with supervision, communication and emergency procedures.
- **Disruption:**
Alerts or sounds from devices may cause confusion, distress or unnecessary alarm during visits.

What is the school's approach to safety?

The school has robust safeguarding arrangements in place, including:

- Appropriate staff-to-pupil ratios
- Regular headcounts and supervision routines
- Buddy systems and clear meeting points
- Staff trained in safeguarding, first aid and emergency procedures

Parents and carers will be provided with clear contact information should they need to reach the school during a trip.

What happens if a device is brought on a trip?

Any personal technology or tracking device found in use will be removed by staff and returned to parents or carers at the end of the trip.

What if I have concerns about my child?

If you have specific concerns about your child's wellbeing or safety, please speak to the school **before** the trip so appropriate support can be discussed and arranged.

By working together, we can ensure that school trips remain **safe, enjoyable and inclusive** experiences for all children.

Thank you for your understanding and support.