



Pupils' personal electronic device policy

To Be Approved by: Local Governing Body

Date: January 2026

Review Date:

1. Rationale

The Trust is committed to ensuring all primary academies provide a calm, safe, and focused learning environment, free from the distractions and risks associated with mobile phones and smart technology.

This policy aligns with the Department for Education (DfE) guidance 'Mobile Phones in Schools' (updated 19 January 2026), which states that all schools should be mobile-phone-free environments **by default**, with exceptions allowed only in limited circumstances.

DfE guidance also highlights the safeguarding, wellbeing and behavioural risks created by unrestricted mobile phone access, and the need for schools to set high, consistent expectations around use.

This policy ensures:

- Safe and positive learning environments.
- Reduced distraction and improved attention.
- Protection from online harms.
- Compliance with DfE behaviour and safeguarding expectations.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to:

- All pupils in Trust primary academies.
- All staff, governors, trustees, volunteers and visitors.
- All types of mobile and smart devices; this policy applies equally to smart watches and any wearable or handheld electronic device capable of messaging, recording, receiving notifications or accessing the internet. These devices present the same safeguarding, distraction and data-privacy risks as mobile phones and are therefore subject to the same expectations and restrictions.

3. Policy Statement

Our primary academies are **mobile-phone-free environments**. Pupils must not use, access, or display mobile phones or smart devices at any point during the school day, including:

- Lessons
- Transitions between lessons
- Breaktimes and lunchtimes



- Any structured or unstructured school activity on site

This requirement reflects DfE expectations for a phone-free school day.

4. Expectations for Pupils

4.1 Bringing Phones to School

Primary pupils are strongly discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school. In line with DfE case-study evidence, the school recognises the importance of implementing practical systems that minimise distraction and reduce opportunities for hidden phone use. While secondary examples include lockable pouches or phased restrictions, the underlying principle remains consistent: clear routines and simple, enforceable systems help pupils meet expectations and maintain a calm learning environment. The school's procedures for handing in devices on arrival and storing them securely reflect this evidence-informed practice. Where a mobile phone is permitted for travel to and from school, it must remain switched off and stored out of sight from the moment the pupil enters the school grounds until they leave the site at the end of the day. The device must be handed in immediately on arrival and must not be accessed again until the pupil is leaving the premises.

Where exceptional circumstances apply, a parent/carer may request consent from the Headteacher for a child to bring a device. Exceptional circumstances include:

- Medical needs requiring device-based monitoring (e.g. diabetes tech).
- Safeguarding reasons when travelling to/from school.
- Identified SEND or communication needs.

4.2 Storage and Security

If permission is granted:

- Devices must be switched off on arrival.
- They must be handed in at the school office or to the class teacher.
- Devices will be securely stored and returned after school.

4.3 Prohibited Use

A pupil must never use, display or access their phone during the school day. Any use during the day constitutes a breach of the Behaviour Policy.

4.4 Consequences for Breaches

Breaches will result in:

1. Immediate confiscation (kept securely until collected by an adult).
2. Sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.
3. Repeat breaches may result in withdrawal of permission to bring any device.



5. Expectations for Staff

5.1 Personal Devices

- Staff must keep personal phones out of sight and not in use during teaching, learning activities or duties, unless authorised by the Headteacher.
- Personal devices **must not** be used for photographing, filming, or contacting pupils.

5.2 Professional Conduct

Staff must model appropriate digital etiquette and adhere to safeguarding obligations under *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

6. Expectations for Visitors and Volunteers

- Visitors are expected to keep devices on silent and out of sight.
- Photography or recording is strictly prohibited unless explicitly authorised.

7. Adjustments & Equality Considerations

The Trust will make **reasonable adjustments** as required under the **Equality Act 2010**, including for:

- Disabilities or medical requirements involving device-based monitoring.
- SEND-related communication needs.
- Specific safeguarding circumstances.

Any adjustments must be formally agreed with the Headteacher and recorded.

8. Communication with Parents and Carers

The school's approach also reflects learning from DfE case studies of successful mobile-phone-free environments, which emphasise the importance of securing strong parental buy-in and maintaining clear, consistent messaging about expectations. As evidenced in these case studies, sustained communication with parents helps create a shared approach to online safety, screen-time habits and the wider safeguarding benefits of reduced mobile-phone use. The school will therefore continue to engage parents proactively, ensuring they understand both the rationale and their role in supporting a phone-free environment

School will clearly communicate this policy through:

- School website
- Newsletters
- Induction materials
- Parent information meetings

Parents will be reminded that mobile phones are not required in primary settings and can create avoidable safeguarding risks. The school will ensure clear, consistent and proactive communication of



this policy to parents, carers and pupils, in line with DfE expectations. This will include prominent website information, regular reminders through newsletters, induction and transition materials, and visible messaging throughout the school. The purpose of this communication is to ensure that all members of the school community understand the mobile-phone-free expectations and the reasons for them.

9. Loss, Theft or Damage

Where a device is brought into school under agreed exceptional circumstances:

- It remains the **responsibility of the parent/carer**.
- The school and Trust accept **no liability** for loss, damage or theft.

10. Searching, Screening & Confiscation

Schools will follow DfE guidance on searching and screening where mobile phones are involved, consistent with DfE's behavioural expectations.

11. Monitoring & Ofsted Compliance

Ofsted will review the effectiveness, consistency, communication and impact of the school's mobile phone policy in every inspection. Schools must ensure:

- The policy is fully implemented.
- Staff and pupils understand expectations.
- Enforcement is consistent.

12. Roles & Responsibilities

Trust Board

- Approves and monitors implementation across all primary academies.

Headteachers

- Ensure effective implementation and communication.
- Approve exceptional arrangements.
- Oversee staff training.

Staff

- Enforce expectations consistently.
- Model appropriate device use.
- Report safeguarding concerns.

Parents/Carers

- Support the Trust's expectations.



- Ensure children do not bring phones unnecessarily.

13. Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if:

- DfE guidance changes
- Safeguarding requirements change
- Ofsted issues further expectations

Next Review: January 2027

This policy reflects DfE guidance published 19 January 2026 and supporting materials referenced throughout.