


# Mobile phone policy

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## 1. Introduction and aims

### 1.1 Aims

At Fullbrook School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our students, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for students, staff, parents/carers, visitors 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 in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices, such as Smart watches.

### 1.2 Rationale

**Over 1 in 5 children has experienced online bullying**, and **31% of 8- to 17-year-olds have been on the receiving end of hurtful messages via technology** — a risk reduced when phones aren't in students' pockets all day.

(Department of Education*, Mobile phones in school guidance,* updated January 2026)

**"Communication: The Impact of Mobile Phones on Student Performance" found that after schools banned mobile phones, the test scores of students aged 16 improved by 6.4%. The economists cite that this is the "equivalent of adding five days to the school year**".
(Louis Philippe Beland and Richard Murphy, published by the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics, 2015)

Aside from the safeguarding issue, the rationale for this policy is that it has been shown that the effect of banning mobile phones from school premises adds up to the equivalent of an extra week's schooling over a child's academic year.

## 2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory mobile phone guidance and behaviour guidance. Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently 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.

The Senior Leadership team (SLT) is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and students accountable for its implementation.

## 4. Use of mobile phones by students

### 4.1 Personal mobile phones

Students should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. The specific details of the best use policy can be found below:

- Children are allowed to bring mobile phones to school to ensure their personal safety at all times on their journey to and from school
- Children must not use a mobile device, smart watch or electronic device including headphones anywhere in school between the hours of 8:00-15:05
- For the purposes of this policy, the school day begins the moment the children enter the school site and ends once the children have been dismissed from their final lesson at 15.05
- Mobile phones will not be permitted to be used at any after school extra-curricular clubs, unless specifically permitted by the supervising member of staff
- If a child brings their phone to the school, then on arrival it should be switched off and kept out of sight, for example in a bag or locker. It should not be seen or heard throughout the school day
- The phone can be switched back at 15.05

**4.2 Contacting Children and Parents/Carers**

In non-urgent situations, parents wishing to contact their child during the school day should ring the school. We have a well-established and efficient system for getting messages to children and pastoral support if it is needed. Parents/carers should not call or message their child's mobile phone during the school day.

Children who need to contact parents in an emergency should speak to Student Services who will make a phone available.

**4.3 Sanctions**

- Any child found using or known to have used their phone during the school day will have the phone confiscated and returned at the end of the school day via Student Services. Parents will be informed via the Classcharts app with a "Mobile Phone Confiscated" notification
- Any refusal to hand a phone over to members of staff will result in the parent/carer being expected to come into school to collect the mobile phone from their child
- If the child receives 2 mobile phone infringements, the school will retain the phone until a parent/carer can come in and collect the phone from the school
- If the child receives 3 mobile phone infringements, the school will request a meeting with a parent/carer to resolve the issue. In unresolved cases, this will result in the student having to hand in their phone upon arrival every day.

Please find below an explanation of the above:

| Infringement | Sanction |
|---|---|
| First mobile phone infringement | The mobile phone is confiscated, and the student can collect from Student Services at the end of the day. |
| Refusal to hand over the mobile phone | A parent/carer will be contacted and expected to come into school to collect the mobile phone. |
| Second mobile phone infringement | The mobile phone is confiscated and retained until parent/carer can come in and collect the mobile phone. |
| Third mobile phone infringement | The mobile phone is confiscated and retained until a parent/carer can come in and have a meeting to resolve the issue. |

Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from children under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

If there is reason to believe that a mobile phone contains prohibited material, or that it is being or has been used to commit an offence or cause harm, staff may search the device in line with the Searching, screening and confiscation in schools - GOV.UK. Any such search will be carried out by a member of the Senior Leadership Team or pastoral team.

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:

- Youth-produced sexual imagery
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, disability)
- The student's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education

**Medical Exemptions**

The school recognises that a small number of students may require access to a mobile phone or smart device to support the management of a medical condition or disability. Requests for an exemption should be made to the school and supported by appropriate medical evidence where necessary.

Exemptions will be considered on an individual basis and, where approved, will form part of the student's Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP), Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or other agreed support plan.

Students granted an exemption must use their device only for its agreed medical purpose. Any use beyond the agreed arrangements will be treated as a breach of the school's Mobile Phone Policy.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Continuous glucose monitoring and insulin pump management for diabetes
- Medical monitoring applications prescribed or recommended by a healthcare professional
- Assistive technology required as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010.

The Principal (or nominated senior leader/SENDCo) will determine the reasonable adjustments required, including where and when the device may be used, following consultation with parents/carers and relevant medical professionals where appropriate.

## 5. Use of mobile phones by staff

### 5.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where students are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

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

The Principal will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

### 5.2 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or students, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or students.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

**5.3 Using personal mobiles for work purposes**

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student

**5.4 Work phones**

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct

**6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors**

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (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.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of students
- 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 students

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

Parents/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. They must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the school day.

**7. Loss, theft or damage**

Students bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use.

Students must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in GDPR breaches.

Where a mobile phone is brought into school, it is entirely at the child's and parents' own risk. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of any phone or electronic device brought into school. (Ref: Section 94, Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that "where a teacher disciplines a pupil by confiscating an item, neither the teacher nor the school will be liable for any loss or damage to that item').

Equally, there is no statutory liability on schools for items that go missing in other ways.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the Student Services office.

Lost phones should be returned to Student Services. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

**8. Monitoring and review**

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on students' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

This policy will be reviewed every two years.