



Mobile Phone Policy

Approved by Board of Trustees:	10 Sept 2026
Revision date:	July 2028
Version:	1.0

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Mobile Phone Policy

1. Aims

This policy establishes a consistent Trust-wide approach to mobile phones and other personal smart devices. It supports calm, safe and supportive schools in which pupils can learn, play and socialise without distraction, while recognising that a small number of pupils may require an individual adaptation for medical, safeguarding or other exceptional reasons.

A mobile-phone-free environment means that pupils do not use or have access to mobile phones or covered smart devices throughout the school day. It does not require every school to prohibit pupils from bringing a phone onto the premises. Where a school permits a phone to be brought in for independent travel or another agreed reason, it must remain switched off, inaccessible and stored in accordance with that school's published arrangements.

The Trust will:

- prohibit pupils' use of mobile phones and covered devices throughout the school day, including lessons, movement between activities, breaktimes, lunchtimes, clubs occurring within the school day and educational activities on site;
- apply expectations consistently, fairly and proportionately, with regard to age, SEND, disability, medical needs, safeguarding circumstances and other relevant individual factors;
- protect children from distraction, bullying, harassment, image-based abuse, exploitation, inappropriate content and unauthorised photography or recording;
- protect personal data and maintain clear professional boundaries;
- ensure parents and carers contact pupils through the school office during the school day; and
- teach pupils how to use technology safely, responsibly and respectfully beyond the school day.

Our Trust schools serve primary-aged pupils. The expectation is that most primary-aged pupils will not need to bring mobile phones to school.

Each school will determine and publish its specific arrangements in **Appendix 1 (School Local Arrangements Schedule)**, which may include:

- Which year groups (if any) may bring a basic phone for independent travel
- The process for requesting permission
- Storage arrangements
- Individual exceptions for medical, safeguarding or other exceptional circumstances

Schools must ensure their arrangements:

- Maintain the phone-free environment throughout the school day
- Provide for appropriate reasonable adjustments and exceptions
- Are clearly communicated to parents and pupils

This policy should be read with the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, Data Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use Agreements, Educational Visits Policy, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and Complaints Policy.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy has been prepared having regard to:

- Section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 and the resulting provisions concerning statutory guidance on mobile phones in schools;
- the Department for Education's Mobile phones in schools statutory guidance (updated 29 June 2026), to be followed by schools from 1 September 2026;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff;
- Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools;
- the Education and Inspections Act 2006, including relevant powers relating to discipline, searching and confiscation;
- the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments;
- the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018; and
- the Human Rights Act 1998 and common-law duties of care.

The statutory guidance requires schools and trusts to implement a policy prohibiting mobile phone use throughout the school day. Any departure or exception must be justified, clearly defined and consistently managed.

The DfE leaves headteachers to determine how the mobile-phone-free environment will be achieved in their individual school context. This may include not permitting phones on site, requiring phones to be handed to staff, or requiring permitted phones to be switched off and stored securely. The Trust therefore sets the minimum standard through this policy and requires each school to publish its practical arrangements using Appendix 1.

3. Definitions

For this policy, 'mobile phone' or 'device' includes any personal device capable of communication, internet access, photography, video or audio recording, location tracking or receiving notifications. This includes but is not limited to smartphones, basic phones, smartwatches, camera-enabled watches, internet-enabled wearables, tablets, personal music players, earbuds, headphones, glasses with communication functions and any comparable emerging technology.

'School day' means the period from the pupil entering the school site until the pupil leaves it at the end of the day, including breakfast provision, school-arranged transport where specified by the school, breaktimes, lunchtimes and any school-supervised activity. Arrangements for after-school clubs and off-site or residential activities are set out locally or in the activity risk assessment.

4. Scope and Application

This policy applies across every Trust school and setting to pupils, employees, agency and supply staff, volunteers, governors and trustees, contractors, parents and carers, visitors and any other person working in or attending a Trust site or Trust-led activity.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Trust Board	Approve the Trust-wide policy; seek assurance that it is implemented consistently; monitor safeguarding, behaviour and equality implications.
Chief Executive Officer	Ensure Trust-wide implementation, sufficient support and appropriate escalation of material concerns.
Head of Operations and DPO	Maintain the policy; advise on data protection, implementation and cross-Trust consistency; coordinate review.
Headteacher	Complete and publish the local arrangements schedule; communicate expectations; approve exceptions; identify authorised staff; ensure secure storage and consistent sanctions; report significant concerns.
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Advise on safeguarding exceptions and incidents; respond where a device or its content indicates that a child may be at risk of harm; liaise with agencies where necessary.
Staff	Model appropriate use; actively and consistently enforce the policy; record and escalate breaches; safeguard confiscated devices; never investigate content outside authorised procedures.
Pupils	Follow the phone-free requirement and any individual agreement; hand over a device when lawfully instructed; report concerns.
Parents and carers	Support the policy; use the school office for contact; ensure any permitted device is suitable and appropriately secured; discuss online safety at home.
Local governors	Monitor implementation and impact at school level and provide assurance or challenge through the Trust's governance arrangements.

6. Trust-wide pupil requirements

6.1 Mobile phone-free by default

Pupils must not use, access, view, wear visibly, switch on or receive notifications on a mobile phone or covered device at any time during the school day, unless use is expressly authorised under section 7. Devices must not be used for learning simply as a matter of convenience; schools will provide authorised equipment where technology is required.

6.2 Bringing a device to school

Our Trust schools serve primary-aged pupils. Pupils should not ordinarily bring a mobile phone or smart device to school. A headteacher may permit a pupil to bring a device where there is a reasonable need connected with independent travel, a medical requirement, safeguarding, young-carer responsibilities or another exceptional circumstance. Permission may be given to a defined group through published local arrangements or to an individual through Appendix 2.

The Trust-wide restriction is therefore on access and use during the school day. It is not an absolute Trust-wide ban on a phone being brought onto school premises. Each headteacher will determine,

through the school's local arrangements, whether pupils may bring phones for independent travel and how any permitted devices will be stored.

Where permitted, the device must:

- be switched off before the pupil enters the school site;
- remain off and stored using the school's published local arrangement for the full school day;
- not be accessed until the pupil has left the site, unless a senior member of staff expressly authorises access;
- have alarms, vibration, scheduled notifications and wearable connections disabled; and
- be labelled or identifiable in the manner specified by the school, without displaying unnecessary personal information.

Schools may adopt a stricter rule that devices must not be brought onto the premises, provided appropriate exceptions and reasonable adjustments remain available.

6.3 Smartwatches and wearables

A pupil may wear a basic watch that only tells the time. A smartwatch or wearable capable of communication, recording, internet access or receiving notifications is treated as a mobile phone. If brought under an agreed exception, its connected functions must be disabled and it must be stored in accordance with the local arrangements unless it forms part of an agreed medical or accessibility plan.

7. Exceptions and reasonable adjustments

The Trust recognises that a blanket arrangement may place some pupils at a substantial disadvantage or create a safeguarding or medical risk. Schools will work with pupils and parents or carers to make an appropriate, proportionate and documented adaptation.

Possible grounds include:

- monitoring or responding to a diagnosed medical condition, such as use with a continuous glucose monitor;
- an accessibility or communication need linked to SEND or disability;
- a documented safeguarding need;
- a young carer's need to be contactable under an agreed plan;
- independent travel where bringing—but not using—a device during school is considered appropriate; or
- another exceptional, time-limited circumstance approved by the headteacher.

Permission to bring a device does not automatically mean permission to use it. Wherever possible, the school will identify an alternative that preserves the phone-free environment. Individual arrangements must be recorded using Appendix 2 or an equivalent medical or safeguarding plan, reviewed at an agreed interval, shared only with staff who need to know and applied without publicly identifying the pupil's circumstances.

The headteacher should consult the DSL, SENCO, medical lead and Trust DPO as relevant. Parents and carers may request a review of a decision through the headteacher and, if unresolved, use the Trust Complaints Policy.

8. Staff use

8.1 Personal use

Staff, agency staff, volunteers and contractors must not normally use personal phones in front of pupils or while supervising or working with them. Personal use must be confined to non-contact time in a staff-only area. Devices must remain silent and secured when not in use.

The headteacher may approve a discreet, time-limited arrangement where a staff member needs to remain contactable because of an urgent personal or caring circumstance. The school office should normally be used as the emergency contact point.

8.2 Work-related use and school devices

A personal phone may be used briefly for an essential work purpose only when authorised by the academy headteacher and no suitable school device or alternative is reasonably available for example, multi-factor authentication, an emergency evacuation or an approved off-site activity. Use must be professional, minimal and in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct.

Staff must not:

- use a personal device in front of a pupil;
- use a personal device to photograph, film or audio-record pupils, pupils' work or information that identifies a pupil;
- store, download or process pupil, parent, employee or other confidential Trust information on a personal device, except through an expressly authorised and secured Trust application;
- enter personal or confidential Trust information into an unauthorised AI tool or personal application;
- contact pupils or parents through a personal number, social-media account or messaging service;
- share a personal mobile number with pupils or parents and carers, except where a separately authorised work number or managed service is used;
- use a personal hotspot, VPN or other method to bypass the Trust's filtering, monitoring or security controls; or
- permit a pupil to use a staff member's personal device.

Trust- or school-issued devices must only be used by authorised people for legitimate work purposes, kept secure, protected by an appropriate passcode and managed in accordance with Trust IT, cyber-security, data-protection and acceptable-use requirements. Any loss, theft, unauthorised access or suspected data breach must be reported immediately under the Trust's data-breach procedure.

8.3 Failure to comply

A staff breach may be addressed under the relevant conduct, disciplinary, safeguarding or data-protection procedure. The response will be proportionate to the circumstances and risk. Staff should refer to the Staff Code of Conduct for further guidance.

9. Parents, visitors, volunteers, governors and contractors

Everyone on a Trust site must support a phone-free environment around pupils. They must not use a phone while working with, supervising or moving among pupils, and must not photograph, film or record pupils, staff or confidential material unless specifically authorised for a legitimate purpose.

At public performances, sports events or celebrations, the headteacher may permit personal photography. Any event-specific instructions must be followed. Images must be for personal use only; no image containing another child should be published or shared online without appropriate consent. Photography may be prohibited entirely where safeguarding, privacy or event arrangements require it.

Visitors and contractors may use a phone for essential work in a designated area or with staff permission. Anyone receiving an urgent call should move away from pupils and where conversations cannot be overheard. Refusal to follow these requirements may result in the person being asked to stop, leave the site, or have future access reviewed.

Parents and carers must contact their child through the school office. Parents and carers must not call, message or use a device to contact or monitor their child during the school day.

10. Educational visits, residentials and emergencies

Pupils should not bring mobile phones on educational visits or residentials. The visit leader will use school devices for group communication, emergencies and authorised photography.

The normal school-day rules apply to all visits. Pupils must not bring phones on day visits.

Pupils must not bring phones on residential visits. The visit leader will provide:

- School devices for emergency contact
- Designated times for pupils to call home using school phones if appropriate
- Alternative arrangements for capturing memories (e.g., school cameras, disposable cameras)

The visit leader will determine appropriate communication arrangements in the risk assessment.

In exceptional circumstances only (e.g., a Year 6 pupil with a specific medical need), the visit leader may permit a pupil to bring a device. This must be:

- Approved by the headteacher in advance
- Documented in the risk assessment
- Communicated to parents
- Subject to strict rules about when and how it may be used

Staff must not use personal devices to photograph pupils or communicate with families except in an emergency authorised by the headteacher or visit leader. Any emergency use must be reported and relevant data transferred to school systems and deleted from the personal device.

Emergency procedures must not depend solely on personal phones. Each school and visit must maintain suitable alternative communication arrangements.

11. Breaches, confiscation, searching and safeguarding

11.1 Initial response and sanctions

A pupil who breaches the policy will be instructed to switch off and hand over the device. Staff will respond calmly, consistently and in accordance with the school Behaviour Policy and local schedule. Sanctions must be reasonable and proportionate, taking account of the pupil's age, SEND, disability, medical needs, safeguarding circumstances, any agreed adjustment and whether the behaviour indicates that the pupil may be at risk of harm.

The usual graduated response is:

- first or minor breach: device secured until the end of the school day, incident recorded, parent informed and expectations reinforced;

- repeated breach: parent or carer informed and required to collect the device; permission to bring a device may be reviewed;
- serious breach: immediate referral to a senior leader and DSL where relevant, with sanctions under the Behaviour Policy and consideration of external-agency involvement.

A school may vary this graduated response where the breach is serious or local circumstances require a different proportionate arrangement. The completed local schedule must make collection and recording arrangements clear.

11.2 Confiscation and storage

Authorised senior staff may confiscate a device as a disciplinary penalty where this is lawful and proportionate. The member of staff must record the pupil, device, date, time, reason, condition where relevant, storage location, person receiving it and its return. The device must be switched off where possible, placed in secure locked storage and accessed only by authorised staff. Once a device is confiscated, the school must take reasonable care of it.

A pupil's refusal to hand over a device must be referred to a senior leader. Staff must not use force simply to obtain an item banned only under school rules. Any consideration of searching or reasonable force must follow the law, current DfE guidance and Trust procedures.

11.3 Searching a pupil or device

A mobile phone is not, by itself, a statutory prohibited item. Searching a pupil, their possessions or electronic device must only be undertaken by staff authorised by the headteacher and in accordance with the current Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance. Staff must establish the lawful basis and record the rationale and outcome.

Staff must not routinely browse a device, demand a passcode or delete data. Where there is good reason to suspect that data or a file has been or could be used to cause harm, disrupt teaching or break the law, an authorised staff member must seek senior-leader and DSL advice before examining data, unless delay creates an immediate risk. If there may be evidence of a criminal offence, staff should preserve the device and seek police advice rather than opening, forwarding or deleting content.

11.4 Safeguarding and harmful content

Any concern involving bullying, harassment, coercion, sexual content, nude or semi-nude images, AI-generated sexual imagery, upskirting, threats, exploitation, extremist content or evidence that a child may be at risk must be referred immediately to the DSL. Staff must follow safeguarding procedures and Appendix 6; they must never copy, print, forward, screenshot or unnecessarily view a nude or semi-nude image of a child.

Where conduct may be criminal, the school will consider referral to the police and other agencies. Parents will normally be informed unless doing so would increase risk or conflict with advice from the DSL, police or children's social care.

12. Loss, theft, damage and security

Responsibility and liability

A device brought to school remains the responsibility of the owner. The Trust and school do not accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage to a device voluntarily brought onto the site, subject to any legal responsibility arising from the school's own negligence.

Once the school has confiscated or accepted a device into secure storage, the school must take reasonable care of it.

Insurance

Trust insurance: The Trust maintains insurance that covers confiscated devices while in the school's secure storage, subject to policy terms and excess.

Parent and carer insurance: Parents and carers are strongly advised to check whether their home insurance covers devices outside the home before permitting their child to bring a device to school.

Security measures

Permitted devices should be:

- Protected by a passcode
- Labelled with the pupil's name
- Registered with the school office if required by local arrangements

Lost, stolen or damaged devices

Report any loss, theft or damage immediately to the school office. If a device was in the school's secure storage, the school will investigate. If it was in the pupil's possession, parents should report to their own insurance and, if appropriate, the police.

Any suspected personal-data breach must be reported immediately to the School's DPO and Headteacher.

13. Communication, implementation and review

Each school must complete Appendix 1 before this policy takes effect, ensure arrangements are workable and equality-informed, and communicate them to pupils, parents, staff and regular site users. Expectations should be included in induction, pupil teaching, visitor sign-in information, parent communications and relevant trip documentation. Signage or the visitor summary should be displayed at reception.

The completed School Local Arrangements Schedule forms part of this policy for that school and must be published alongside, or clearly linked from, the Trust policy. A school may adopt stricter arrangements, including a general rule that phones must not be brought onto the premises, but it must not reduce the Trust-wide prohibition on pupil access and use during the school day without prior Trust approval. Any stricter arrangement must still provide for lawful reasonable adjustments and exceptional individual circumstances.

Headteachers will monitor implementation using behaviour and safeguarding records, confiscation patterns, complaints, pupil and parent feedback, staff feedback and the impact on groups of pupils. Repeated inconsistency, disproportionate impact or a pattern of safeguarding incidents must be addressed and escalated through Trust arrangements.

The Head of Operations and DPO will coordinate a review every two years, drawing on headteacher and governance assurance and changes to DfE guidance. The Trust may make non-material administrative updates between formal reviews; substantive changes will follow the Trust's approval arrangements.

14. Reference links

DfE statutory guidance and legislation:

- Mobile phones in schools (statutory guidance): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools>
- Keeping children safe in education: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

- Behaviour in schools: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2>
- Searching, screening and confiscation: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2026/21/section/36>

Related Trust policies:

These policies should be read alongside this Mobile Phone Policy.

They are available at: [Aspire and Shine Education Trust - MAT Policies](#)

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Acceptable Use Agreements
- Educational Visits Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Appendix 1: School local arrangements schedule

This schedule forms part of the Trust policy. It must be completed, approved by the headteacher, published with or alongside the policy and reviewed annually.

School detail	Local arrangement
School name	[insert]
Headteacher	[insert]
Date effective and reviewed	[insert]
May pupils bring a phone for independent travel?	[No or Yes – specify year groups, criteria and permission process]
How permission is requested	[insert contact/form/process]
Arrival procedure	[insert: switched off before gate; handed in to and stored securely]
Secure storage location and access	[insert, including arrangements for confiscated devices]
End-of-day return and access	[insert]
Breakfast and after-school clubs	[insert]
School transport	[insert if applicable]
Educational visits and residentials	[refer to visit-specific arrangements]
Who may approve individual exceptions	[Headteacher or delegated role]
Authorised staff for confiscation and/or searching	[insert roles; searching remains subject to law and DfE guidance]
Breach and parent-collection arrangements	[insert, consistent with section 10 and Behaviour Policy]
School office contact for urgent messages	[insert telephone and/or email]

Appendix 2: Individual exception and reasonable-adjustment plan

[SCHOOL LOGO]

[TRUST LOGO]

Field	Record
Pupil and class	
Reason for request	☐ Medical ☐ SEND and accessibility ☐ Safeguarding ☐ Young carer ☐ Independent travel ☐ Other
Evidence and pupil and/or parent views considered	
Relevant staff consulted	☐ DSL ☐ SENCO ☐ Medical lead ☐ DPO ☐ Other:
Permission	☐ Bring only ☐ Use at agreed times and purpose ☐ Wear or use as assistive or medical technology Other:
Device and functions permitted	
Where and how stored	
When, where and how it may be used	
Alternative communication and emergency plan	
Privacy and staff-who-need-to-know arrangements	
Start and review and end date	
Decision and reasons	
Headteacher or delegate signature and date	
Pupil and parent or carer agreement	

Appendix 3: Pupil agreement

[SCHOOL LOGO]

[TRUST LOGO]

This agreement is for a pupil who has permission to bring a mobile phone or smart device to school. It should be adapted to the pupil's age and communication needs.

- I will switch my device off before I enter school and store it exactly as my school has told me.
- I will not use, check, wear or switch on my device during the school day unless a member of staff has specifically agreed this under my plan.
- I will not take photographs, videos or audio recordings at school or on a school activity unless a member of staff has authorised this using school arrangements.
- I will not use my device to bully, threaten, embarrass, contact or share information about another person.
- I will hand my device to a member of staff when instructed and will not hide or pass it to someone else.
- I understand that permission may be reviewed if I do not follow this agreement.
- I will tell a trusted adult straightaway if anything on a device worries, frightens or pressures me.

Agreement	Details
Pupil name / signature / date	
Parent/carer name / signature / date	
School representative / date	
Review date	

Appendix 4: Visitor summary

[SCHOOL LOGO]

[TRUST LOGO]

Welcome to our school

We are a mobile-phone-free environment around pupils.

While on site, please:

- keep your phone silent and out of sight when pupils are present;
- do not use your phone while working with, supervising or moving among pupils;
- do not photograph, film or audio-record pupils, staff, displays or documents unless the school has specifically authorised this;
- take any urgent call in a staff-approved area away from pupils and where conversations cannot be overheard;
- follow event-specific photography instructions; and
- tell your host or reception immediately if you see a safeguarding concern or become aware of a breach.

If you need to use a phone for an essential work purpose, please agree this with your host. Refusal to follow these requirements may result in you being asked to stop or leave the site.

Thank you for helping us keep children safe and focused on learning.

Appendix 5: Parent and carer summary and FAQs

[SCHOOL LOGO]

[TRUST LOGO]

Mobile Phone Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

From September 2026, our school is implementing a mobile-phone-free environment in line with new government guidance.

What does this mean?

- Pupils must not use mobile phones or smart devices during the school day
- Each school will publish its specific arrangements about whether pupils may bring phones for independent travel
- Exceptions can be made for medical needs, safeguarding or other exceptional circumstances

Why are we doing this?

To protect children from distraction, support their wellbeing and mental health, and create a calm, focused learning environment.

How do I contact my child during the school day?

Please call the school office on [INSERT NUMBER]. We will pass on urgent messages promptly.

What about school trips?

Pupils should not bring phones on trips or residential. The school will provide devices for emergencies and contact.

What if my child has a medical condition?

Please contact the headteacher to discuss an individual exception plan.

What happens if my child breaks the rules?

The device will be confiscated and kept securely. You will be asked to collect it. Repeated breaches may result in permission being withdrawn.

What about online safety?

We will continue to teach digital literacy and online safety through our curriculum and provide resources to support you at home.

Questions?

Please contact your school office or see the full policy on the trust website: [Aspire and Shine Education Trust - MAT Policies](#)

Appendix 6: Staff quick reference guide and response to suspected harmful or unlawful content

Mobile Phone Policy – Quick Reference for Staff

PUPILS:

-  No phones used during school day
-  Each school determines which pupils (if any) may bring phones – see your school's Appendix 1
-  Exceptions: medical or safeguarding (documented in Appendix 2)

IF A PUPIL HAS A PHONE OUT:

1. Calmly ask them to switch it off and hand it over
2. Take it to secure storage [INSERT LOCATION]
3. Record: pupil, date, time, reason
4. Inform headteacher or senior leader
5. Contact parent

STAFF USE:

-  No personal phones in front of pupils
-  Use only in staff areas during non-contact time
-  Never photograph pupils on personal devices
-  Never store pupil data on personal devices

VISITORS:

- Give them Appendix 4 on arrival
- Phones silent, not used around pupils
- No photography without permission

TRIPS:

- Pupils do not bring phones
- Use school devices for emergencies where possible

SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS:

- Refer immediately to DSL
- Never view or forward or delete inappropriate images
- Secure the device and record details

Staff response to suspected harmful or unlawful content

- Keep the situation calm. Do not ask pupils to forward, share or display content to others.
- If there is an immediate danger, contact emergency services and follow safeguarding procedures.
- Secure the device without unnecessarily opening or navigating it. Record who provided it, when, why and its condition.
- Refer immediately to the DSL and a senior leader. Do not conduct an informal investigation yourself.

- Do not copy, print, screenshot, forward or delete suspected evidence. Never intentionally view nude or semi-nude imagery of a child unless the specific safeguarding guidance makes limited viewing necessary and the DSL authorises it.
- The DSL or senior leader will decide whether police or children's social care advice is required before the device is examined or returned.
- Record decisions, rationale, actions, people consulted, parent communication and return or transfer of the device in the appropriate secure system.
- Provide appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support to all affected pupils.