

Mobile phone policy

Highwood Primary



Highwood Primary
School

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1. Introduction and aims

At Highwood Primary our policy aims to:

- ◆ Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- ◆ Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones, where applicable
- ◆ Provide clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, 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
- ◆ Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- ◆ Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of section 36 of the [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026](#), and the Department for Education (DfE)'s [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 required to actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

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 Head of School is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every year and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default: anything other than this should be by exception only.

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone during the school day, while children are present / during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils 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 head of school will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01245 248200 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Gemini).

See school's data protection policy or ICT acceptable use policy for more details.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, 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 pupils.

See ICT acceptable use or online safety policies.

Staff can only use their personal mobile phones to take photographs in special circumstances and only a designated member of staff. For example, school trip, forest school, photos easier to take on a phone rather than taking out an IPAD. DSL to ensure all photos are transferred to school equipment as soon as possible and deleted permanently from designated member of staff's phone.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones or a similar device during the school day in front of pupils 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

[See Educational visits policy. All calls home will be made via school office.]

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils is not allowed in Highwood

Pupils cannot bring a mobile phone to school, unless it is for the particular purpose of coming to and from school by them selves (only for those in years 5 & 6)

Parents need to request this and the phone is stored securely on the pupils arrival on site and returned at the end of the school day.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [mobile phones guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

- ◆ Pupils are not allowed to wear smartwatch in school

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances Consider:

- Whether:
 - Some pupils are allowed to bring a mobile phone to be used on their journey to and from school For example, pupils travelling to school by themselves
 - Some pupils will be permitted to possess, or use, a mobile phone/smart device in school

For instance:

- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood glucose levels

If some pupils are allowed to use mobile phones / smart devices due to exceptional circumstances, adapt and insert:

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. Permission will only be granted where there is a documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact Mrs. Lipski, Head of School.

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's [code of conduct / acceptable use agreement] for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

5.3 Sanctions

Explain the sanctions you will use if a pupil is in breach of this policy.

For example:

- ◆ mobile phones will be confiscated and stored safely (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- ◆ The parent will be contacted and allowed to collect them, at the end of the school day.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows you to

search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

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 (SEN), disability)
- The pupil'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 [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). This will include speaking with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy, who will consider if pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care, is appropriate

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

Parents are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

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 pupils, unless it's at a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- ◆ Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent

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

If a pupil has been given permission to bring a phone to school (see above)

They must ensure that their phones are appropriately labelled, ready to be stored away securely and turned off. They will be kept in the school safe.

Pupils 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 data breaches.

All schools continue with:

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

Explain how you will make sure pupils and parents/carers are aware of the disclaimer above. For example, you could:

- ◆ Include disclaimers in your permission forms for bringing a phone to school
- ◆ Provide a copy of your policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents/carers

If your school confiscates phones from pupils, add:

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office and] in a locked cabinet

Lost phones should be returned to Mrs. Brett 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 pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- ◆ Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- ◆ Feedback from staff
- ◆ Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- ◆ Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

Use this form if you don't normally allow pupils to bring their phones to school, but are granting an exception.

It should be signed by parents/carers.

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow [pupil name] to bring [their] mobile phone to school because they:

List the appropriate reasons here. We've listed some common reasons below (you can delete as required):

- ◆ Travel to and from school alone
- ◆ Are a young carer
- ◆ Need the phone to support their medical needs
- ◆ Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed
- ◆ Attend a before or after-school activity where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its [code of conduct / acceptable use agreement].

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Print out and cut copies of this slip to give to visitors when they arrive at your school. Adapt the template to reflect section 6 of this policy.

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- ◆ Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- ◆ Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to [insert location]
- ◆ Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- ◆ Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

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