



MOBILE PHONES IN SCHOOLS POLICY

Status	Current	Approval	FGB
Review frequency	Annually	Author (role)	Headteacher
Date first written	May 2026	Date last approved	
Date of next review	May 2027	Date withdrawn	N/A

Purpose

The Department for Education (DfE) states that “all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only” (Mobile phones in schools’ guidance, 19th February 2026, P.3)

This policy sets out how our Federation, comprising of Foxhills Infant and Foxhills Junior Schools, prohibits the use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality throughout the school day, to support calm, safe and focused learning, pupil wellbeing, and safeguarding.

Status of guidance and scope

This policy has been developed with regard to DfE non-statutory guidance (updated 19 February 2026) and should be read alongside wider behaviour and safeguarding expectations. This policy applies to

- all pupils on roll
- all staff
- volunteers and visitors while on site or supervising pupils
- school-organised activities, where stated in this policy.

Definitions

In this policy, the term ‘mobile phones’ includes all communications and smart technology the schools use, particularly devices that are able to:

- send/receive notifications/messages via mobile networks, and/or
- record audio/video (e.g., smartphones).

This policy also applies to smart technology with similar functionality (e.g., smart watches where they can message/record)

Policy statement

Both schools are mobile phone free by default which means that pupils must not have access to a mobile phone or equivalent smart device at any point during the school day, including:

- lessons,
- time between lessons/transitions,
- breaktimes,
- lunchtime
- before or after school, whilst on the school campus.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

The federation does not operate a BYOD approach for learning (e.g., laptops/tablets) as all staff are provided with school equipment for professional use. BYOD policies do not extend to the mobile phones of staff.

Implementation arrangements

Clear expectation for pupils and families

- Our schools are mobile-phone-free environments throughout the school day. This includes when pupils are on the school site before and after school.
- As a general rule, pupils should not bring mobile phones or smart devices to school.
- Only in exceptional circumstances, such as for safety when travelling to and from school, may a pupil bring a mobile phone, and only with parental agreement and full compliance with this policy.

Hand-in on arrival

Where a mobile phone is brought to school:

- the device must be switched off before entering the school grounds, and
- must be handed in immediately on arrival to the class teacher or designated member of staff.

Pupils must not keep mobile phones on their person, in bags, pockets or coats, at any time during the school day, including at breaktimes and lunchtime.

Secure storage during the school day

- All handed-in devices are placed in secure, staff-managed storage: classroom safe.
- Pupils will not have access to their mobile phone at any point during the school day.

This ensures learning time is calm and focused and removes safeguarding risks linked to mobile phone access.

End of day collection

- Mobile phones are returned to pupils only at the end of the school day, under staff supervision.
- Devices must remain switched off until pupils have left the school site.

Communication during the school day

- Parents/carers who need to contact their child during the school day must do so via the school office.
- School staff will ensure urgent messages are passed on appropriately.
- Pupils do not need personal mobile phones to communicate with home during the school day.

Failure to hand in

- Any pupil found with a mobile phone during the day, or who fails to hand it in immediately on arrival, is considered to be in breach of this policy and the Behaviour Policy.
- This includes phones that are seen, heard or accessed in any way.

Communication of the policy

We know that clear communication, setting out our expectations in a transparent way creates and maintains a safe school culture. School leaders will ensure that staff, pupils and parents understand the policy, how it is implemented, and sanctions for breaches. This policy will be available on our website.

We will:

- publish this policy (and relevant behaviour expectations) on the school website and/or provide it directly to families on request
- teach and routinely remind pupils of the policy and consequences (see Section 8)
- ensure staff are trained and consistent in enforcement (see Section 7).

Roles and responsibilities

Responsible body (Governing Body)

- Ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and regularly reviewed in line with safeguarding expectations.
- Hold leaders to account for consistent implementation as part of behaviour and safeguarding oversight.

Headteacher and Senior Leaders

- Decide the practical arrangements that make the school mobile phone-free.

- Ensure the policy is accessible, aligned with school culture, consistent, and straightforward to follow.
- Ensure staff understand the expectations for their own mobile phone use (Section 7.3).

All staff

- Consistently enforce the policy.
- Do not use personal mobile phones in front of pupils throughout the school day.
- Where phone/device use is appropriate for work purposes (e.g. multi-factor authentication), use in line with leadership direction.

Parents/carers

Parents play an important role by reinforcing expectations at home; the policy should be clearly explained, including reasons for why the federation is mobile phone free, and parents are encouraged to discuss the risks and the benefits of phone-free time.

During the school day, parents should contact pupils via the school office and the school will have clear arrangements for relaying messages and facilitating contact where necessary.

Education for pupils (risks and benefits)

Pupils should be taught:

- the risks associated with mobile phones (in school and more broadly), including loss of focus, classroom disruption and increased bullying. Our computing curriculum addresses these issues as well as our PSHE and relationships education (see website, curriculum).
- The benefits of a mobile phone-free environment, to build intrinsic motivation and support the Federations' culture.

Online safety teaching should align with relevant curriculum expectations (including RSE/Health Education where appropriate) and safeguarding practices: <https://www.foxhills-jun.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=Curriculum&pid=47>

Sanctions and consequences (including confiscation)

Principles

The school applies sanctions for breaches of this policy lawfully, reasonably and proportionately, in line with the Behaviour Policy and DfE guidance.

Sanctions:

- are applied consistently,
- take account of age, SEND and individual circumstances, and
- are intended to deter misuse, to maintain a calm, focused learning environment.

Examples of breaches

Sanctions may be applied where a pupil:

- uses or attempts to use a mobile phone or smart device during the school day,
- is found in possession of a phone after failing to hand it in,
- accesses a device during breaktime or lunchtime,
- allows a phone to ring or vibrate while stored on their person,
- refuses to hand over a device when requested by staff.

Confiscation

- Staff are authorised to confiscate mobile phones or smart devices where the policy is breached.
- Confiscation may occur even if the device is not actively in use (for example, if heard ringing).
- Confiscated devices are taken to a secure location and logged.

The law protects staff from liability for loss or damage to confiscated items, provided they have acted lawfully. Headteachers are supported by the DfE to confiscate devices for whatever length of time they deem proportionate.

Length of confiscation and escalation

The school operates a graduated response, for example:

- First breach: device confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- Repeated breaches: device may only be returned to a parent/carer.
- Persistent or deliberate breaches: additional behaviour sanctions applied in line with the Behaviour Policy.

(The exact steps may be adapted by the Headteacher to reflect individual circumstances.)

Safeguarding considerations

If misuse of a mobile phone gives cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or may be at risk of harm (including online harm), staff must follow the Child Protection Policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). Pastoral support, early help or referral to children's social care will be considered where appropriate

Searching pupils

Headteachers (and authorised staff) have a statutory power to search where there are reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil possesses:

- a prohibited item set out in legislation, or
- any item identified in school rules as searchable.

Adaptations and reasonable adjustments (exceptions)

While we prohibit mobile phone access during the day, to reduce distractions and disruption to children's learning, we must comply with other legal duties and may need case-by-case adaptations. This guidance is not exhaustive and the federation will assess each case on its merits.

Equality Act 2010 – reasonable adjustments

The Federation has a duty to take reasonable steps to avoid substantial disadvantage to disabled pupils caused by policies and practices. Allowing access to a mobile phone where necessary due to disability may be a reasonable adjustment. Failing to do so may breach duty.

Supporting pupils with medical conditions

Both schools within the federation are maintained schools and must have arrangements in place to support pupils with medical conditions, having regard to statutory guidance. In some circumstances, this can involve mobile phone use (e.g., diabetes continuous glucose monitoring linked to a phone).

In cases where phone use enables effective management of a medical condition, it would not be reasonable to prevent this.

Other exceptional circumstances (including home circumstances)

A need for access may depend on individual circumstances (including at home), and schools should allow flexibility and consider such arrangements in other relevant policies (e.g., young carers).

In all cases, flexibility does not mean exemption from all restrictions. Schools should enable phone use for a specific purpose and at specific times and locations.

Exceptional circumstances process:

If a parent considers their child has an exceptional case, they are advised to:

- Submit an exception request to the Headteacher with evidence, where appropriate.
- SENCo/DSL/SLT agree a written plan (purpose, times, location, supervision, review date).
- Reviewed at least termly or sooner if circumstances change.

Use outside the normal school day / off-site

The Federation considers it unlikely that children will require a mobile phone for any school activity but the Junior school will determine how to manage use on residential trips or activities outside the normal school day, ensuring trips are not disrupted.

Walking to and from school

In designing our smart phone free policy, the federation has taken into consideration that some pupils in years five and six travel to and from school alone. We understand that some parents want reassurance when children walk independently.

We permit the use of a non -smart (brick) phones for calls and texts only. The use of a basic phone does allow for contact before and after school, with the reassurance that children are not accessing social media, apps, or the internet.

Before and after school, responsibility rests with parents and carers. When walking to and from school, we acknowledge that some parents may choose to use tracking devices for safety.

Examples parents may already know:

- Key fob style GPS trackers
- Wearable clip on trackers

The Federation's position on trackers:

- Allowed only if not accessed, checked or used on site
- Responsibility remains with parents

DfE case studies highlight that perceived safety can be retained without phones in school and suggests that parents and carers establish:

- Family routines for walking routes
- Pick up points and timings
- Links with trusted adults at the end of the school day

Our smartphone-free policy follows Department for Education guidance and applies during the school day to protect learning, wellbeing and safeguarding. While pupils are on site, they are supervised by school staff under our safeguarding procedures. It is important to note that Ofsted is now explicitly checking consistency and enforcement of mobile phone policies and therefore the federation must have regard for DfE guidance.

Filtering and monitoring

Governing bodies ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and regularly reviewed to prevent access to harmful or inappropriate content, in line with safeguarding expectations.

Monitoring, review and accountability

- This policy will be reviewed annually (or sooner if national guidance changes).
- Leaders will monitor consistency of implementation (staff practice, pupil compliance, incident logs).

- Inspectors will discuss mobile phone policy, how it is communicated, whether staff and pupils understand expectations, and how consistently it is followed, as well as its impact on learning, behaviour and wellbeing

Appendix A – Parent/Carer summary (for newsletter/website)

Our school is mobile phone-free by default: pupils must not access phones/smart devices during the school day (including breaks and lunchtime).

If you need to contact your child during the day, please contact the school office; we will relay messages and facilitate urgent contact where needed.

We appreciate your support in reinforcing the risks of phone distraction and the benefits of a phone-free day. [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk)

Appendix B – Suggested on-the-day script for staff (consistency)

- “Remember: phones are not accessible in school at any time today—thank you for helping us keep learning calm and focused.” [\[gov.uk\]](#)
- “If I see or hear a phone, it will be confiscated and logged, and returned according to our behaviour procedures.” [\[gov.uk\]](#)

Appendix C – Record templates

Confiscation log

- Pupil / Class
- Device type
- Date/time confiscated
- Reason (seen/used/rang/refusal to hand in etc.) [\[gov.uk\]](#)
- Staff name
- Returned to (pupil/parent)
- Date/time returned
- Follow-up action/sanction (if any)

Exception plan (reasonable adjustment/medical/exceptional)

- Reason for access (disability/medical/exceptional) [\[gov.uk\]](#)
- Purpose of use
- Agreed times/locations (specific, limited) [\[gov.uk\]](#)
- Supervision arrangements
- Review date
- Named lead (SENCo/DSL/SLT)