

Applecroft School



Mobile Phone Policy

Person Responsible:	Headteacher
Review Cycle:	Annual
Date of Issue:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2027

Mobile Phone Policy

1) Introduction:

School Vision:

'To be a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life'.

School Mission Statement:

'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'.

School Values:

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience

2) Aims:

At Applecroft School, 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

Throughout this policy, the term 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

3) 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 includes Keeping Children Safe in Education, which sets out the expectation that all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default.

4) Roles and Responsibilities:

4.1 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 Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it annually 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.

4.2 Trustees

Will monitor and review this policy at least annually as part of its Policy Review Committee and whilst visiting the school.

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 in the presence of children during the school day. 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 or other areas where children are not permitted e.g. PPA room, kitchen areas etc.

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.

In such cases, it is the responsibility of the staff member to request permission from the Headteacher. The Headteacher 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 as a point of emergency contact.

5.2 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). More detailed guidance can be found in our AI Policy.

5.3 Safeguarding

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

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

5.4 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 include, but are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication,
- 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 pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office.

5.5 Work phones

A limited number of school 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 authorization from the Headteacher.

Staff must:

- Only use school phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Make sure that all communication and conduct linked to the device is always appropriate and professional, in line with our staff code of conduct.

5.6 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

6) Use of Mobile Phones by Pupils:

Applecroft is a phone-free school. Pupils must not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

If parental preference is to provide their child with a mobile phone and their child is an independent traveler then we do permit the child to bring their mobile phone, which must be switched off, into the school building with them at the start of the day. On arrival to their classroom, the child must immediately hand the mobile phone over to the class teacher and sign the phone 'in'. All mobiles will be locked away in the classroom for the school day. At the very end of the school day, the teacher will re-distribute the mobile phones to their owners and pupils will sign them 'out'. All mobiles must be kept switched off when on the school site and therefore children are only permitted to switch them back on once outside the school.

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to make sure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Pupils will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone-free environment as desirable and valuable.

6.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

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

At Applecroft School, the wearing of smartwatches is permitted with some clear restrictions unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason). All smartwatches must have all 'smart' features disabled during the school day - some smartwatches have a 'school-mode' option in which case this can be used. 'Smart' features that must be disabled during the school day include (but are not limited to): internet access, text messaging including What's App, camera, voice notes, phone calling, notifications. Essentially, the smartwatch is only permitted to be a watch and therefore we would strongly recommend parents/carers think carefully about the limited benefits of sending their child into primary school with such an expensive piece of equipment.

6.2 Exceptions for Special Circumstances:

In the case of permission due to exceptional circumstances, permission will only be granted where there is documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should in the first instance, request permission from their child's class teacher who in turn will discuss this with the Headteacher and/or SENDCo. Any pupils who are given permission must adhere to the school's mobile phone acceptable use agreement (see appendix 1).

6.3 Sanctions:

If a child is in breach of this policy, their mobile phone/smartwatch or other device, will be immediately confiscated by a member of staff and their parent/carer contacted and arrangements made for them to collect it (schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006). The incident for the child will be managed via the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). This guidance allows schools to search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so e.g. if it is being / has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person.

In each case, any 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 whether pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.
- 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:

- Making of or sharing nudes and semi-nudes including images that are digitally altered or wholly generated using AI (such as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes')
- Upskirting
- 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.

7) Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors:

Parents/carers, visitors, volunteers (including members, trustees and contractors) are not permitted to use their mobile phones (or any other device) anywhere on the school site. In urgent / emergency situations, should a parent/carer, visitor or volunteer need to make or take an urgent call then they should alert a member of staff immediately and the member of staff will find a child-free area of the school site where the call can be made/taken as soon as possible.

Parents and carers 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 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 any images or video containing any other child or staff member without their consent
- Not using phones in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

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 or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to contact other parents/carers,
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil,
- Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones but must refer any proposed sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices,
- 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.

8) Loss, Theft or Damage:

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must make sure that their phones are:

- signed in and out each day,
- appropriately labelled and/or identifiable,
- always switched off when they are on the school site
- immediately handed over to the class teacher when they first arrive in the classroom at the beginning of their school day.

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.

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 or from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored securely in the Headteacher's office until they are collected by the child's parent/carer.

Lost phones should be taken to the main school office where they will be stored securely, and the school will then attempt to identify and contact the owner.

9) Monitoring and Review:

The school is committed to making sure that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will consider:

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

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Policy Review Committee.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy,
- Child Protection Policy,
- Home School Agreement,
- Online Safety Policy & Acceptable Use Agreements,
- Staff Code of Conduct.

Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Agreement

(for pupils permitted to bring their mobile phone to school due to exceptional circumstances)

To be allowed to bring your mobile phone / device to school you must agree to the following:

- ☐ You may not use your mobile phone / device throughout the school day, including lesson times, in between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, unless a teacher specifically allows you to for a specific reason
- ☐ Phones / devices must be switched off (not just put on 'silent') when on the school site (i.e. as you enter the playground)
- ☐ You may not use your mobile phone / device in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils
- ☐ You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils
- ☐ Do not share your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent
- ☐ Don't share your phone's / device's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else
- ☐ Always be respectful and polite when using your mobile phone / device
- ☐ Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
- ☐ You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone / device when asked to. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour and discipline policy and will be dealt with accordingly
- ☐ Mobile phones / devices are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone / device, you will be asked to give it to a member of staff that will store it / keep it safe for the duration of the test.

Permission Form for Bringing a Mobile Phone / Device to School

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 / device to school because they:

- ☐ Need the phone to support their medical needs
- ☐ Are a young carer
- ☐ Are an Independent Traveler
- ☐ Other reason:

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's mobile phone policy and its Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Agreement.

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

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

Parent/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Mobile Phone Information for Visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices at Applecroft School:

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment

Please keep your mobile phone / smart device(s) on silent/vibrate while on the school site.

Please do not use your mobile phones / smart device(s) where pupils are present. If you must use your device due to unforeseen and/or emergency circumstances, please alert a member of staff beforehand and they will find you an appropriate, child-free area of the school.

Do not take photos or recordings of staff

Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless you are directly informed by a member of staff that this is permitted and in which case, this would only be permitted for your own child/ren)

Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones /devices that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school site

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