



**Great
Learners
Trust**



Elmhurst School

Mobile Phone Policy

Approved by: Trust Board

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Next review due by: May 2027

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1. Introduction and aims

At the Great Learners Trust (GLT) we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones and smart technology, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/ carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/ carers 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
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

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

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 headteacher is responsible for 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

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts when pupils are present.

Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact or break time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room).

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:

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

The headteacher will decide on a case-by-case -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.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process pupil or staff 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 Bard).

For more detailed guidance on data protection please see the GLT's data protection policy and ICT acceptable use policy

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving 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.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which 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.

SLT are allowed to use their mobile phones in school for the purpose of promoting the school on social media e.g. Instagram/Facebook/Class Dojo. However, these staff must ensure they take no photos of children's faces on their phone and should not use their phone to upload photos of children. Any photos of children should be taken with a school device and uploaded from a staff device.

SLT, Family Support Workers and Learning Lounge Leaders may also have their mobile phone on gate duties for the purpose of communicating quickly in case of an emergency situations or to answer queries from parents regarding school information which is contained on Class Dojo/the school website.

Those staff who have access to their mobile phones should only use them to support the business of the school and not for personal use.

4.4 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 aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

Please see the school's policy on educational 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 which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4.5 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:

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

4.6 Sanctions

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

See the school's conduct and discipline policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

No children from Nursery to Year 4 are permitted to bring a mobile phone to school.

Children in Years 5 and 6 are permitted to bring a mobile phone into school if they walk to and from school alone.

- Staff in classes will collect mobile phones on arrival, these will be switched off by pupils.
- Phones will be stored in a safe location throughout the day.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [non-statutory mobile phone 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 smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

- Smartwatches are not permitted in school.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

The following pupils may bring a mobile phone to school:

- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar.

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the school SENDCo via the school office.

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1) and parents/carers must also complete a permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school (see appendix 2)

5.3 Sanctions

Any breach of the acceptable use agreement by a child may trigger disciplinary action in line with the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy, which may result in the confiscation of their device under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#))

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, 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 Part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

5.4 Work Experience Students

Work experience students are not permitted to have their phone in school. Mobile phones will be handed in to the school office on arrival and will be stored in the safe. They will be returned at lunchtime for them to access when they are on their break in an identified area of the school e.g. staff room and then they will be given them back at the end of the day.

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 pupils, unless it's 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.
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils.

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 which could identify a pupil.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 5 above.

Parents 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 his/her personal mobile during the school day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, and are stored securely when not in use.

Pupils must secure their 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 and from school.

Pupils and parents are aware of the disclaimer above when completing the walkers form giving permission for their child to walk to and from school alone.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the School Business Manager's office in the safe.

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

- Feedback from parents and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Acceptable Use Agreement

"I agree not to bring a personal mobile phone to school or on school trips/visits unless the Headteacher has permitted me to do so in writing."

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent')
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent
6. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'
9. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or turn over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store these appropriately, or turn them over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid

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

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

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

- Need the phone to support their medical needs

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

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

Parent/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

- 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 the staffroom
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils, or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils

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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