

Upham CE (A) Primary School

Mobile Phones Policy (including other smart devices)



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1. Introduction and aims

At Upham CE Primary 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 safeguarding, child protection and behaviour and the prevention of bullying

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

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 headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every three years, 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 pupils

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that the use of mobile phones should be prohibited throughout the school day.

At Upham CE Primary School, pupils must not bring mobiles phones to school at all and therefore not use at any point during the school day, including before school (ie breakfast club) and after school (ie clubs/ after school childcare). This includes all activities off site, including trips and residential visits. Children with a medical reason (such as diabetic pupils who use continuous glucose monitoring systems that connect to a smart device) are given special authorization and will need to carry their mobile device with them throughout the school day.

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.

4.1 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, take photographs and listen to music. Some smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

Since children are not permitted to have phones on site, devices to connect to for broader communication are not possible. However, some devices are able to connect independently of phones and technology is increasingly moving in this direction.

Children can wear smart watches but under the following conditions:

- They are responsible for them throughout the day – they are fragile and could easily get knocked, damaged or lost
- They are not to use the camera function at any point to take images or film of themselves, peers or staff
- They are not to use any audio recording capability at any point
- If the device has connectivity, they must not send/ receive messages or access the internet independently.

School staff may speak to individuals/ groups/ classes to set out the requirements as necessary. Children are encouraged to be independently and responsible (part of our school vision) so it is appropriate that the initial expectation is for children to follow the rules set out. If children are not able to follow the expectations, the device may be confiscated by a member of staff (and secured appropriately), and handed to the collecting adult at home-time.

4.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

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

In the case of permission 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 the headteacher, David Woolley, via email: adminoffice@upham.hants.sch.uk

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's Code of Conduct for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

4.3 What happens if A child Does Bring in a Mobile Phone, Including Sanctions

There are times a child might accidentally bring a mobile phone into school and realise their mistake – perhaps because they have a different set of belongings due to take to a separated parent. In these situations a member of staff will calmly help the child, reassure them they are not in trouble and secure their phone for them (in the office) and pass to the collecting adult at home-time.

However, if the child is actively concealing a phone or has deliberately tried to bring a device to use, this negative behaviour needs to be addressed. This will be conducted in accordance with any unwanted behaviour, in accordance with the Behaviour and the Prevention of Bullying Policy, but will involve the confiscation of the mobile device which will be secured in the office. There may also be safeguarding implications which would be responded to in accordance with Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.

Sanctions which could be used:

- The mobile phone will be confiscated. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- If they are confiscated, a staff member will hand the device at the end of the school day to the collecting adult, most usually on the day of the incident. (Headteachers can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the [DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools](#))

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 whether pastoral support is also required. 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

5. 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. Staff will often need to use a mobile phone or similar device (ie linked smart watch) in order to complete multi-factor authentication required to access school-related systems, as part of their own medical management or for other reasons which the headteacher has been made aware. It is acceptable for staff to carry mobile devices on their person or have on their desk but they should not be overtly visible or positioned by children. In an emergency situation, such as if the evacuation plan is required to be enacted, multiple staff carrying mobile phones is an essential form of communication, especially given that the immediate locality has such poor mobile connection. There may also be occasions where showing children a device could help support some teaching or communication, for example when teaching about E-safety or when teaching about how to access emergency services.

5.1 Personal mobile phones

As a general principle, staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone for personal reasons during the school day, whilst working with pupils. Use of personal mobile phones, especially for extended reasons, must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (the staffroom or since mobile signal is so poor in the locality, outside, whilst the children are inside).

There will be many circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time, including for personal reasons. For example (list not exhaustive):

- For emergency contact
- When trying to arrange medical appointments which can only be booked during working hours
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members
- Awaiting medical updates or acutely significant information

If an occasion is anticipated, staff should inform the headteacher in advance of the need for special arrangements.

School staff can always 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).

Further guidance can be found in the school's Acceptable use of IT policy and also the Use of Generative 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 may include, but are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips, events and fixtures
- 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
- As a general principle, refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers, contact must be made via the school office. However, on school trips, during sporting fixture off-site and residential visits this may be required, on occasion.

5.5 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 parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

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 (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
- Not using phones when children are in lessons breaktimes, 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 make contact with 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.

7. Loss, theft or damage

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 in the school office in locked cabinet at which point the school becomes responsible for the phone and can be held responsible for loss, theft or damage.

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 making sure 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 DfE, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of David Woolley, headteacher, in a timely manner.

9. Appendix 1: Code of Conduct for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Pupil Code of Conduct Agreement

You must obey the following rules if you bring a smart watch to school:

- You may not use any functions of the watch except checking the time during lessons.
- You must not use the camera to take photos or film of yourself, other children or staff at any point during the day (including breakfast club and after school clubs)
- You must not use the device to record any audio at any time during the school day.
- You need to look after your device – do not take it off and leave it somewhere. If you do need to take it off, ask your teacher to look after it.
- Do not share things that might be on your watch with other people, like messages, pictures or games/
- If your watch can make messages, you are not allowed to use it to send messages or talk to anyone else, which includes your parents.
- If your watch is able to, you must not connect to the internet at all during the school day.
- Smart watches will need to be removed during test environments.

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school to use for medical reasons:

- You may not use your mobile phone throughout the school day, for anything other than the medical Apps.
- You may not use your mobile phone 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 yourself, other children or staff.
- Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
- You may not receive or send any messages when in school, which includes to family and parents.
- Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the school's behaviour policy.
- Mobile phones are not permitted in any test environment (except for medical reasons which would be planned carefully). If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room.

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

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

The school has agreed to allow _____ 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):

- ☐ **To use throughout the school day as part of essential on-going blood testing & insulin pod delivery control for Type 1 Diabetic control.**
- ☐
- ☐

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.

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

Parent/carers signature: _____ Date: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors during the normal school day

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Do not use phones where pupils are present, including lessons, in shared areas such as the library, outside at breaktimes. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staff room or step out to the front of the school.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons for personal reasons (ie to check messages), 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 and is published on the school website.
