



Mobile Devices Policy

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Policy Start Date:	February 2026
Policy Review Date:	August 2026

This policy is an interim policy between Feb 2026 and August 2026 following recent guidance from the DfE regarding Mobiles in Schools.

Introduction

Mobile devices are an established part of modern society, and the Trust recognises that many pupils will carry them, particularly for safety when travelling to and from school. However, teachers and pupils are entitled to a learning environment that is free from disruption caused by mobile phones and similar devices. Mobile devices in school can interrupt lessons, risk theft, create challenges during public examinations, enable inappropriate use through advanced technological features, require pupils to manage their belongings responsibly, and contribute to issues such as social media misuse and cyberbullying.

While mobile phones offer benefits to pupils and parents, the Trust is responsible for ensuring their safe and responsible use during the school day. Although the Trust would prefer pupils not to bring mobile phones to school and to use existing school communication facilities, we acknowledge that this may not be practical for periods of travel.

As a Trust, we must strike a balance between personal safety and a suitable educational setting.

For this reason, the following policy has been developed. The Trust also recognises that parents often provide mobile devices to pupils for personal security; however, such devices can present risks that may undermine the learning environment.

Throughout the Trust the welfare and wellbeing of our pupils and staff members is paramount.

The aim of the Mobile Devices Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice. This is achieved through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile devices user guidelines. The Policy recognises that mobile devices are effective communication tools and sets out ways to protect against potential misuse and unnecessary cost.

Definition

As it is difficult to detect specific usage, this Policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices, including Mobile Phones, Smart Phones, Smart Watches, Tablets (including iPads), portable gaming devices and Wi-Fi Dongles, Digital Assistance.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory and good practice guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Mobile phones in schools'
- DfE 'Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents'
- DfE 'Behaviour in Schools'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school'
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019

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- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff'

Roles and Responsibilities

The Executive Leadership and Trust board are responsible for:

- The implementation of the policy and procedures.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and procedures.
- Ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Reviewing the policy following additional guidance from the DFE.
- How best to achieve a mobile phone-free school environment.

The Senior Leadership Team of each site are responsible for:

- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- The day-to-day implementation and management of the policy.
- Informing parents and pupils of the Acceptable Use Policy
- Communicating this policy to the relevant staff members and the wider school community.
- Communicating what devices can be brought to school and when they can and cannot be used.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Negotiating incidents of cyberbullying in conjunction with the headteacher, in line with the Behaviour Policy.
- Applying this policy consistently and proportionately, including confiscating devices where appropriate.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns to the DSL, or deputy, where misuse indicates risk of harm.
- Teaching pupils about the risks associated with mobile phones, other devices and social media, both in school and more broadly.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Initiating and managing responses to incidents of upskirting with relevant staff members and in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Liaising with and reporting the relevant information to children's social care and/or the police, when it is necessary to do so.

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Pupils are responsible for adhering to the provisions outlined in this policy.

Scope

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory mobile phone guidance and behaviour guidance. Additional information can be found on the links below:

- mobile phone guidance -<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools>
- behaviour guidance -<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools—2>

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal and work mobile devices on site. This includes staff, volunteers, committee members, pupils, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors.

This Policy should be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Child Protection Policy/Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable User Policy
- Photography Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy

Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a co-operative workforce where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other, thus creating a strong morale.

Therefore, our aim is that all staff:

- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- Know how to minimise risk.
- Avoid putting themselves in a compromising situation which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- Understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use of **all** mobile communication devices, especially in relation to social media.
- Are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours.
- Are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

Misuse refers to any activity that is non-school related or could bring the school into disrepute. It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive, therefore an agreement of trust is promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones/devices within the setting which is agreed to by all users.

General Expectations

- Personal mobile devices should **not be used in the presence of pupils or visitors** except in the circumstances stated elsewhere in the policy.
- Personal communications (calls, texts, emails) should only be accessed in **staff-only areas** such as offices, the staff room, or empty classrooms.

Use During Activities and Visits

- Staff may take a personal phone on school activities and should only be used in an **emergency**.
- On residential visits, personal devices may be used in **appropriate locations away from pupils**.

Professional and Curriculum-Related Use

- Staff, Governors and Trustees may use mobile devices for **multi-factor authentication (MFA)** when accessing secure educational systems.
- Personal devices may be used for **curriculum-linked educational purposes** where appropriate and authorised.

Restrictions on Recording and Images

- Staff must **not use personal devices to record, photograph, or share images of pupils**.
- All legitimate recordings must be taken using **managed school equipment** (e.g., school cameras, iPads, Trust-issued phones).

Security, Social Media and Personal Information

- Staff should ensure **robust security settings** on personal devices to prevent unauthorised access.
- Apps used on personal devices must be purchased using the staff member's **own personal ID**.
- When using social media, staff must ensure privacy settings are strict, avoid sharing personal information, and maintain professionalism.
- Staff must not share personal contact details with pupils or parents/carers, including through **social media or messaging apps**, nor publicise these details online.

Loss, Theft and Responsibility

- The Trust is **not responsible** for personal devices that are lost or stolen on site.

Exceptional Circumstances

Staff may need to use a personal phone during contact time in exceptional, pre-agreed circumstances, such as:

- Emergency contact from their own child or their child's school
- Urgent situations involving acutely ill dependants or family members

Work-Related Exceptions

Personal devices may be used for work-related purposes only where necessary, e.g.:

- Multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Taking registers, e.g. PE, when servers are down, outside activities

NB This list is not exhaustive.

Mobile Phones/Devices for work-related purposes

Where a mobile phone has been issued by the Trust, it will remain the property of the Trust and can be recalled at any time and content checked. The user will be responsible for its safekeeping, proper use, condition and eventual return. During the day mobile phones/devices should always be with the user.

All mobile devices owned by the trust are part of a Mobile Device Management system and therefore logging in using personal accounts is disabled by default.

Photographs of pupils can be taken on work mobiles/devices; however, these must be stored securely, and the phone/device must be locked when not in use. All such photos should be deleted from the mobile device/phone within a school term (where there are three terms in a school year).

Should there be any queries on the use of the mobile device/phone the IT Team is available to help. If staff should leave the Trust their work-related devices must be returned to the IT staff.

Social Media on Mobile Phones/Mobile Devices

- All social media use must comply with the Trust Social Media and Photography Policies (see related documents)
- Teachers will not engage in activities involving social media which might bring the school into disrepute.
- Teachers will not represent their personal views as those of the school on any social media platform.
- Social media will not be used as a platform to attack, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, colleagues or other professionals.
- Content expressed on school social media accounts will not breach copyright, Data Protection or Freedom of Information legislation.
- All sites across the trust have specific staff who have access to the site's social media account. These accounts are managed by the IT Department
- Teachers participating in social media are expected to demonstrate the high standards of behaviour as expected within the school.
- The school's social media accounts will always comply with site rules, particularly regarding the minimum age limit for use of the site.

Cloud-based Data Storage

- As mobile devices have access to Cloud based storage systems, all staff are aware that data held there is still required to be protected in line with the Data Protection legislation
- Teachers ensure that Cloud-based data is kept confidential and no data is copied, removed or adapted.

Sanctions

- Staff who fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.
- Additional information can be found in the school's staff disciplinary policy.

Mobile Phones/Devices – Offsite Activities, Educational Visits and School Trips (Staff)

- Mobile devices must be used in a professional and appropriate manner.
- Staff should not use mobile devices to make general contact with parents during school trips taking place within the normal school day; all routine communication must be made through the school office.
- Mobile devices may only be used to contact parents in an emergency or when the trip takes place outside normal school hours, such as during residential visits.

- When parents accompany trips, they must be informed that they should not contact other parents or use their phones to take photographs of pupils.

Mobile Phones/Devices – Parents/Carers, Visitors and Volunteers

The Trust would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones/devices while in school, but it recognises that this would be impossible to regulate. The Trust asks that parents' usage of mobile phones/devices whilst on school sites is courteous and appropriate to the school environment.

The Trust allows parents to photograph or video school events such as shows, sports day, etc, using their mobile phones/devices, but insists that parents do not publish images, for example on social networking sites, that include any children other than their own (see Photography Policy).

Lost or Stolen Trust owned Mobiles/Devices

The staff member is always responsible for the security of the mobile phone/device they have been allocated. A PIN number should be used on the mobile/device to enable maximum security. All confidential information, for example login details, must be password protected and changed on a regular basis.

If the phone/device is lost or stolen, a member of the IT staff should be informed immediately. If this is not possible then contact the provider directly, quoting the mobile number to ensure that the account is stopped and there is no unauthorised usage. In the event of a theft of a mobile phone/device, the incident must also be reported to the Police and an incident number obtained and used to report to the ICT staff.

Monitoring of Usage and Costs

The Trust's phone bills are monitored monthly and if a user's bill is over the designated monthly cost, then the user is contacted by the IT Team. If the reason for the higher cost is work-related then no extra cost is incurred; if the calls were personal, then the Trust would bill the user for anything above the designated monthly fee. Mobile phones can be spot checked at any time. Such checks will be undertaken by a member of the IT Team or Executive Leadership Team and will ensure that the phone has been used appropriately. The user will be told of the UK inclusive allowances when the phone is issued.

Using a Work Owned Mobile Device Abroad

The Trust phones used abroad will be charged at cost to the user, unless the calls/data usage is work related. Prior to the trip abroad, that user must contact the IT Department to give advice and to check the usage abroad. The user will switch off 'data roaming' unless Internet access is needed, as this may be charged at a premium rate abroad.

Personal Mobiles/Devices – Pupils

The Trust recognises that mobile phones/devices are part of everyday life for many of our pupils and can play a role in helping pupils feel safe and secure. However, the Trust also recognises that they can be a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others. Therefore, personal devices will not be accessed or used during the normal school day, and the trust has drawn up a Code of Conduct for pupils.

Across all phases, pupils are discouraged from bringing mobile devices to school unless essential for travel or safety.

The Trust does not accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage of personal mobile devices on any site

Primary Mainstream and SEND sites across the Trust

If a device is brought in; pupils are expected to hand it in at the start of the school day and collect it again at the end of the day for their journey home. All devices will be clearly labelled to identify their owner. Alternatively, mobile devices will be switched off and stored in school lockers or in pupils' school bags. Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones or other devices in school or on school trips unless specified within the individual school's risk assessments. These risk assessments must be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team, and the outcomes of the review must be formally recorded in the meeting minutes.

Secondary Mainstream Sites

The Trust has identified the need for additional guidance for mainstream secondary schools due to the larger number of pupils and the practical difficulties involved in collecting mobile devices at the start of the school day. This process can lead to an unnecessary loss of valuable teaching and learning time at both the beginning and end of the day. Therefore, we have developed further guidance tailored to each Key Stage.

Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 pupils

- Pupils are reminded that they should speak to the school's office staff if they need to contact their parents.
- Parents are reminded that only **URGENT** messages may be transmitted via the school office staff during school hours.

If parents choose to permit their child to bring a mobile phone to school, the following rules apply:

- Mobile phones may not be used at **any time** on school premises **unless a teacher gives explicit instruction for a specific learning task** (KS4 only)
- Mobile phones and accessories must always be switched off and out of sight. If a phone rings, or is seen by a member of staff it will be confiscated
- Parents needing to contact pupils can do so, either by calling the school office with **URGENT** messages or by sending a text message to their child's phone which can be checked at the end of the school day
- Teachers will not routinely set tasks in class that require Key Stage 3 pupils (Years 7-9) to use a mobile phone. Homework tasks may require access to the internet, but no assumption is made that pupils will own a smartphone for their homework
- In Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11) teachers may provide specific permission for pupils to access a mobile device during a lesson for learning purposes, e.g. to access an image taken on a phone for use in an Art lesson,

Key Stage 5 Students

It is recognised that Sixth Form pupils should have some privileges regarding the use of mobile phones in school, so it is essential that they model the responsible use of such devices to their younger peers. The following represents the behaviours expected of Sixth Form students:

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- Students should not walk around the school site using phones between lessons and at break and lunch in view of the younger students.
- Mobile phones may be used in class following instruction to do so from the class teacher and in the sixth form common rooms and designated workspaces.
- Mobile Phones can be used during Supervised Study Sessions or in the Library at KSHS and Sixth Form workspaces at CGS in Sixth Form Study sessions for 2 purposes:
 - 1.To support learning e.g., using it to research information, complete interactive quizzes, listen to TED talks etc.
 - 2.To listen to Music. This should be through earphones.
- KS5 students should not use their phone in the Library at KSHS or LRC at CGS during Break or Lunch

Any breach of this policy by Sixth Form students may result in sanctions as set out below for students in Key Stages 3 and 4.

This policy is the same for all Key Stage 5 students across all three sites in the Sleaford Joint Sixth Form.

Adaptions and Reasonable Adjustments

There may be exceptional circumstances in which individual sites within the Trust make reasonable adaptations to this policy for specific pupils. Some pupils may require access to mobile devices during the school day due to a disability or medical condition, such as when a device is needed to monitor and manage their health. In these cases, any agreed adaptations will be formally documented by the relevant site.

All Trust schools have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments where necessary, and adaptations may be approved in response to a pupil's specific needs, including those related to SEND.

Where required, pupils will be permitted to use a mobile phone or similar device during the school day strictly for the purposes outlined in their agreed plan. The school will not prevent pupils from using their mobile devices to effectively manage a medical condition, such as monitoring diabetes.

In addition to these requirements, the Trust recognises that some pupils may need access to a mobile device due to individual circumstances, for example, young carers. Limited flexibility may be granted where an agreed exception is deemed essential for the pupil's safety and wellbeing. Any such exceptions will be permitted solely for the specified purpose and within the boundaries of the approved plan.

Sanctions

All sites across the Trust will apply sanctions for breaches of this policy in a consistent and proportionate manner, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

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Where this policy is clearly breached, for example where a device is used, seen, or heard ringing, staff will feel confident to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty.

Confiscated devices may be retained for a proportionate length of time, as determined by the Headteacher and in consideration of the circumstances, including the pupil's age, SEND, and any agreed exceptions or reasonable adjustments. Sanctions will be applied as follows:

- First offence will result in the pupil collecting the phone from the School Office at 3.30 pm.
- A second offence means that parents will be contacted by email and asked for their support in enforcing the rules with their child.
- If there is a subsequent offence, then parents may be expected to collect the phone from the School Office. The phone will be confiscated during school hours for a period and kept in the safe.
- The only exemption to this is when the pupil has been given special permission to keep their telephone with them for specific health-related reasons.

Additional sanctions may include detentions or other disciplinary measures in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Where a breach gives cause to suspect a pupil may be suffering, or may be at risk of, harm, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the DSL.

Confiscated personal electronic devices will be locked away securely in the Headteacher office or, where appropriate, the main office.

Bullying via personal electronic devices will be dealt with in line with the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

This policy will be reviewed again prior to September 2026