Expect the Best, Achieve Success

Mobile Phone Policy

Spring 2026

Agreed by Governors: 10.03.26

Next Review: Spring Term 2027

This policy will be reviewed annually and will be published to all staff, parents and governors. It will be available from the school office as well as through the school's website.

Chair of Governors signature: .....

Head Teacher signature: .....

1. Introduction and aims

At Westoe Crown Primary School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, 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 safe and responsible phone use
- Set 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
- 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 monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, 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.

3.2 Governors
Governors will review this policy annually.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones
Use of personal mobile phones by Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom or classroom when children are not present).

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

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 0191 427 2160 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 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 Bard). This is covered in more detail in the school's Data Protection Policy.

4.3 Safeguarding
Staff must not give 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 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.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes
In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work to use the multi-factor authentication app in order to access online systems used by the school (e.g. Googlemail, CPOMS, online learning platforms etc).

Off-Site Visits (excluding residential visits) – staff may use their personal mobile phones in case of emergency only when taking children off-site.

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 or a school mobile device

Residential Visits – a school mobile phone will be provided and staff use school devices to take photographs/recordings of children taking part in activities.

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 staff disciplinary policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that pupils should not use mobile phones throughout the school day.

It is the school's policy that pupils in **Years 4, 5 and 6** can bring their mobile phone to school as pupils in these year groups are allowed to walk home unaccompanied (with appropriate permission from parents/carers).

- On arrival into the school site, pupils must switch off their phone and place it in the safe box on the teacher's desk
- The box is brought to the school office and kept in a safe location for the school day
- The box is collected from the school office and phones are handed back to pupils, they must remain switched off until pupils leave the school site

- Any pupil arriving to school late/leaving early must report to the school office and hand their phone in/collect it from a member of office staff

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils
Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them, they are not permitted in school. If worn to school they need to be held in the mobile phone box.

5.2 Exceptions
The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances e.g. pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor blood sugar.

This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the Headteacher.

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

5.3 Sanctions

If a child is found with a mobile phone during school hours then it will be confiscated and stored in the class phone box and will be issued at home time. If it is a child below Y4, then it will be given to the parent. If this is persistent then the behaviour policy will be followed.

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 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 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 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, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any 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.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are appropriately identifiable.

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 and from school.

A disclaimer will be shared with parents through the consents on the Arbor App.

If your school confiscates phones from pupils, add:

Lost phones should be returned to the School Office who will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

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

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

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

1. Phones must be switched off on entry to the school site and placed in the class phone box on entry to school.
2. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
3. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
4. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
5. 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
6. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal.
7. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
8. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
9. Don't use your phone to view or share harmful content.
10. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's mobile policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
11. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Add to sign in system if not already on

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 school office and ask to be let out of the building
- Do not take photos or recordings of any pupils (including your own), 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.