



Mobile Phone Policy 26/27

The school is committed to reviewing this policy regularly to ensure it remains compliant with current legislation, statutory guidance, and best practice.

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1. Introduction and aims

At Arbour Academy, 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
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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 is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

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 Deputy Headteacher, is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every 2 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 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. All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default: anything other than this should be by exception only.

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone during the school day, during contact time. 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).

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
- As part of Safeguarding on an offsite trip/visit to be able to make contact with school directly should an emergency warrant this
- In case of a medical emergency on or offsite

The Executive Headteacher or 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 0161 4643483 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 Gemini).

Further guidance and advice are available in the below policies:

- Acceptable use policy
- Data protection policy
- Trips & Visits Policy
- 1st Aid 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 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
- Supervising residential visits
- Medical Emergencies

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 by withholding their number

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 school 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

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).

We understand that lots of pupils will bring a mobile phone into school to support their safety when travelling to and from school, including school transport, this may be to support their route or to advise parents/carers that they have arrived safely. In addition to this some pupils use their mobile phone as part of their medical care therefore the below is in place to support our pupils and their families

- Staff collecting mobile phones on arrival
- Pupils keeping mobile phones in a secure location, such as in lockers or locked pouches

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure 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.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [mobile phones 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 smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

As with mobile phones the use of smartwatches is not to be used while in school, these devices can be used in the same vein as phones and form part of this policy, the only exception to this would be to support the medical needs of any pupils as outlined in their personalised care plan.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances and for sixth-form pupils

Some pupils are allowed to bring a mobile phone to be used on their journey to and from school: For example, pupils travelling to school by themselves.

Some pupils will be permitted to possess, or use, a mobile phone/smart device in school

- Young carers who need to be contactable with permission from the Headteacher.
- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood glucose levels

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, 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 Executive Headteacher, head teacher or Head of school, all of which are the named designated safeguarding lead at their settings

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

5.3 Sanctions

Our school's daily routines are firmly established around pupils handing in their mobile phones upon arrival. As part of our entry procedures, pupils may be screened to ensure that mobile phones and any prohibited or previously confiscated items are not brought into the school environment. These measures are designed to support a calm, safe and distraction-free environment, enabling all pupils to remain focused on their learning.

Where a pupil refuses to be screened, they are provided with a quiet space in which to reflect and are given the opportunity to meet with a member of the Inclusion Team. This provides an opportunity to discuss the purpose and importance of the screening process and to support the pupil in making positive and appropriate choices. Parents/carers are also contacted by telephone to ensure they are informed of the situation and are kept updated.

Pupils and parents/carers are kept fully informed of the standards of behaviour and conduct expected within the school through a range of established communication channels, including:

- Initial transition and induction: Behavioural and conduct expectations are clearly communicated to pupils and their families as part of the transition into school.
- Regular home-school communication: Ongoing communication between school and home ensures that parents/carers are kept informed of pupils' progress, behaviour and any relevant concerns.
- Parents' Evenings: Formal opportunities are provided throughout the academic year for parents/carers to meet with staff, discuss their child's progress and address any concerns.
- Informal meetings and ongoing engagement: Additional opportunities for communication are provided throughout the academic year to maintain positive and effective partnerships between the school, pupils and their families

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 if 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:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- 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

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents 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 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. A copy of this policy will be available at reception for visitors to the school to view

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 their phones are appropriately labelled, ready to be stored away securely when not in use during the 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 and from school.

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:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- 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 Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher in a timely manner.