

Mobile Phone Policy

Fairmead School



Wellbeing Statement: At Fairmead School we take a holistic approach to the wellbeing of our students and staff. All policies are written with this in mind and consider the physical and mental wellbeing of our students, staff and our school community.

Signed by: Mrs T Felstead

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Next review: March 2026

Contents

1. Introduction and aims	2
2. Relevant guidance	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	2
4. Use of mobile phones by staff	3
5. Use of mobile phones by pupils.....	4
6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors	5
7. Loss, theft or damage	6
8. Monitoring and review.....	7
9. Appendix 1: Student Code of conduct / acceptable use agreement.....	8

1. Introduction and aims

At Fairmead 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 incl. smart watches.

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 and Head of School are responsible for monitoring the policy every 12 months, 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.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day.

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 contact time with young people. The only exception to this is to access the two factor authentication. 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 PPA room / staffroom). Transporting a mobile phone around the school site must never be in a persons clothing, but in a bag. All bags should be locked away in the classroom cupboard. All phones should be switched on to silent – and not on vibrate. Pupils should be absolutely unaware of staff mobile phones and therefore they must, at all times, not be visible or audible. Any infringement of this must be reported as a low level safeguarding concern.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for medical emergencies – the Headteacher will give permission for this along with further details on a case-by-case basis.

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, 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 01935 421295 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process student's or other people's 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).

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found within the school's data protection policy and ICT acceptable use 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.

The school does not encourage staff (including ex-staff) and ex-student communication on social media, however should staff / students, and/or their families, wish to befriend each other on social media the students must have reached a minimum age of 18 and have left the school for a minimum of three years before this happens.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils.

The schools ICT acceptable use and online safety policy includes details about connecting with parents/carers or pupils over messaging apps.

Staff must not use their personal 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.

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:

- To use multi-factor authentication,
- Emergency evacuations,
- Supervising off-site trips (Trip leaders only),
- Supervising residential visits (Trip leaders only).

The schools cloud based emails and storage requires two factor authentication. This can be carried out on a mobile phone or an iPad and is the only reason a personal device should be used to carry out school business.

With agreement from the senior leadership team during communication with parents (e.g. parents evening or residential trips) staff may wish to use their personal mobile phone to make these calls. This must be agreed by the senior leadership team first. This must be done by anonymising the call (withholding the number) dialling 141 before making the call. Parents contact numbers should be deleted off of the device after the call is made. There are no circumstances where a text message or sharing of photos should happen from any staffs personal device. School devices can be provided to carry this out.

When supervising residential visits or school trips, a school mobile will be designated and the contact details can be made available to pupils and parents/carers. Staff supervising school trips both residential and day trips must;

- 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 or trip mobile phone.
- All staff personal mobile phones should remain out of sight of pupils at all times.

4.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes. These are the Headteacher, Head of School, PFSA, School Business Manager, EHCP co-ordinator and caretaker.

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.

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

- Pupils may keep their mobile phones in their school bag, on the condition they are never used, seen or heard. Staff are happy to securely keep these devices and can collect them on arrival and/or a secure location can be provided.
- If phones are seen out during the day the headteacher reserves the right to ban the pupil from bringing a device into school altogether.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by staff and 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.

Staff and pupils may wear smartwatches to school.

- Staff and pupils should not use a smartwatch to communicate via text, even if their phone is in their bag or pocket.
- No photos should be taken by a smart watch. If this happens the headteacher reserves the right to ban the staff or pupil from wearing a smartwatch into school altogether.

5.3 Sanctions

- The headteacher reserves the right to confiscate any device or smart watch. (Under [sections 91 and 94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- If they are confiscated, a member of staff nominated by the head teacher, will collect the item and parents and carers will need to collect this from school in person. 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 school staff 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.
- 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](#)

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. Fairmead 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

6.a Parents/carers must use the lockers provided when visiting the school for their mobile phones. However, during school events such as school performances, sporting events etc.. they may have their phone on them but must adhere to the following:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's at a school event, unless agreed by the head teacher.
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media.

Parents/carers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

6.b Visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must all adhere to this policy, however their mobile phones must be either securely stored in the lockers provided by reception, kept in the staffroom or offices or not brought onto school site.

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 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, 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 labelled and are stored securely when not in use. This means they must be stored in their bags or given to a member of staff who will store them until the end of the 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 (staff, pupils, visitor or volunteer) mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while staff, pupils, visitors or volunteers are travelling to and from school.

This disclaimer will be communicated by the following:

- Include disclaimers in our parent/carer agreement which goes out once every academic year and/or in induction pack.
- Include disclaimers in our staff code of conduct.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in locked cabinet/safe.

Schools that confiscate phones from pupils become responsible for the phone, and can be held responsible for loss, theft, or damage.

All schools continue with:

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/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 attention of the headteacher on office@fairmeadschool.com in a timely manner.

9. Appendix 1: Student Code of conduct / acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances – with Headteacher approval.

Student Code of conduct / acceptable use agreement

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone / mobile device / smart watch 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.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent, including adding contacts to WhatsApp groups (or similar applications).
6. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) 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 hand 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 it appropriately, or turn it 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.