Mobile phone policy

Barwell Church of England Junior School

Approved by:	Lisa Stewart	**Date:** October 2026
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1. Introduction and aims

At Barwell Church of England Junior School we recognise that mobile phones and other personal electronic devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers, staff and the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Create a mobile-phone-free environment for all pupils throughout the school day.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones and personal devices by pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers.
- Support the school's wider policies, particularly those relating to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour, online safety and data protection.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones and personal devices in school, including:

- Risks to safeguarding and child protection.
- Data protection and privacy issues.
- Potential disruption to teaching and learning.
- Risks of theft, loss or damage.
- The appropriate use of technology within the school environment.

For the purposes of this policy, personal devices include mobile phones, smartphones, smart watches, tablets, AI-enabled wearables, recording-enabled devices and any other internet-connected, communication-enabled or recording-enabled technology brought into school by pupils.

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 Computing Lead is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy and reviewing it annually.

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

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 (including smartwatches as a mobile device), while children are present. 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

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 as a point of emergency contact.

Approved Work Use of Personal Devices

Staff may be required to access organisational systems using an approved personal device for legitimate work purposes, including multi-factor authentication (MFA), emergency communication, educational visits or where specifically authorised by the Headteacher. Such use must be limited to the approved purpose and must comply fully with the Trust Colleague IT Acceptable Use Policy. Personal devices used to access organisational systems must meet any security requirements specified by the Trust IT team, including password protection, software updates and other security controls where required.

4.2 Data Protection and Artificial Intelligence

Staff must not use personal mobile phones to process, store or transmit personal data or confidential school information except through approved organisational systems and in accordance with Trust policies. Personal data, safeguarding information and confidential organisational information must not be entered into generative artificial intelligence (AI) systems unless expressly permitted by the Trust Artificial Intelligence Policy and appropriate safeguards are in place. Any actual or suspected data breach must be reported immediately in accordance with Trust procedures.

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 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.

Wearable Technology

Staff must not use wearable technology, including smartwatches, smart glasses, AI-enabled wearables or similar devices, to record, photograph, livestream, listen to or process information relating to pupils, staff or visitors whilst on school premises or engaged in school business. Any ambient or background recording functions must be disabled whilst on school premises or undertaking school activities. Staff must comply with any Trust Wearable Technology Policy and related guidance.

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
- 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 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 via the 'School Trip' phone while on an educational visit.

Where personal mobile devices are used for approved work purposes, users must ensure that organisational data remains within approved organisational systems and is not downloaded, copied or stored locally on personal devices unless specifically authorised. Communication with pupils and parents/carers must take place only through approved organisational systems and communication channels.

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.

Any photographs, video, audio recordings or electronic communications made using school-issued devices must comply with safeguarding requirements, data protection legislation and Trust policies. Recordings may only be made where there is a legitimate educational, safeguarding or operational purpose and where any required approvals have been obtained.

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 devices by pupils

Pupils should not have their mobile phones or wear wearable technology during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

- Mobile devices will not be used by pupils while on the school site unless an agreed exception is in place.
- Where an agreed exception is in place, use of a personal device will be strictly limited to the specific purposes outlined within that exception and will be subject to any conditions set by the school.
- In exceptional circumstances, for example walking to and from school alone, a parent/carer may request that their child be permitted to bring in a phone
- A parent/carer can request a mobile phone contract from our school office stating what exceptional circumstances require their child to have a mobile phone
- Children with permission to bring phones must hand them in each day and collect at the end of the day
- They must be switched off and not simply turned to silent mode
- The mobile phones are kept in a secure location throughout the day
- Pupils are required to adhere to the terms outlined in the school's mobile phone contract. Any student found using their phone in violation of these terms may have their contract revoked. Once revoked, the pupils will no longer be permitted to bring a mobile phone onto school premises.
- This policy should be read alongside the Discovery Trust Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement, Online Safety Policy and Behaviour Policy. A pupil who breaches this Mobile Phone Policy may also be considered to have breached the Trust's Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement where relevant.

5.1 Use of smartwatches and/or wearable technology by pupils

From 1st November 2026, pupils must not bring or wear wearable, recording-enabled or AI-enabled technology on school premises unless the Headteacher or Principal has given written permission in advance. This includes, but is not limited to, smart watches, fitness trackers, camera-enabled watches, smart glasses, digital pens, smart jewellery, recording badges or pendants, AI-enabled wearables, devices that send or receive messages or notifications, and devices that can record, photograph, film, listen, livestream, analyse or process information about people nearby.

Written exceptions may be authorised for medical, disability, SEND, safeguarding or other agreed needs. Any exception will be recorded through the school's agreed arrangements and reviewed periodically.

These devices can create safeguarding, privacy, data protection, behaviour and learning concerns, including recording or processing information without others knowing and causing unnecessary distraction or anxiety. The position applies across the school day and on school premises, including classrooms, corridors, playgrounds, wrap-around care, trips, clubs, holiday camps and school events, unless a specific written exception has been agreed.

If a pupil brings a wearable device to school, staff will follow the school's usual behaviour, safeguarding and confiscation procedures. Parents or carers may be contacted and asked to collect the device where appropriate. Please check that your child leaves smart watches, fitness trackers and similar devices at home. A standard analogue or non-smart watch may be worn if a watch is needed.

5.1a Artificial Intelligence and Personal Devices

Pupils must not use personal mobile phones, wearable technology or other personal devices to access artificial intelligence systems whilst on school premises unless this forms part of an approved educational activity supervised by staff. Pupils must not enter personal, private or sensitive information about themselves or others into AI systems. AI must not be used to create content which is harmful, misleading, offensive, humiliating or intended to impersonate another person.

5.2 Sanctions

- Mobile phones that are in school without a contract and not locked away in a morning will be confiscated as per sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- When a phone has been confiscated, only a parent or carer will be able to collect them at the end of the day of confiscation
- Children who are found to have a mobile phone within school without a contract or without handing it in on more than one occasion will be banned from bringing in a mobile phone for the remainder of the school year
- If a mobile phone is found once a ban has been put in place, then we will follow our behaviour policy for serious misbehaviour

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/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 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.

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.

Phones will be stored in either the school office or lockers within the staffroom. Phones that are confiscated will be kept in the secure locked cupboard by the main school office.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

This policy should be read alongside:

- Trust Colleague IT Acceptable Use Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Artificial Intelligence Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Wearable Technology Policy (where applicable)
- Behaviour Policy

Where this policy and a Trust policy both apply, staff must comply with the requirements of both documents. A breach of this policy may also constitute a breach of the Trust Colleague IT Acceptable Use Policy and may result in disciplinary action.

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 our Family Link Worker in a timely manner.