



Mobile Phone Policy

Date	September 2026 – To be ratified by the Governing Body November 2026
Review	September 2027

1. Introduction

Crookhill Primary School is committed to providing a calm, safe and supportive learning environment free from unnecessary distractions. Mobile phones and smart devices can disrupt learning, present safeguarding risks, contribute to online harms, and affect pupil wellbeing.

This policy has been written in line with the Department for Education statutory guidance (June 2026) 'Mobile phones in schools' and the school's statutory safeguarding duties as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2023, and subsequent updates). The policy will be reviewed annually or whenever statutory guidance changes.

The Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance (June 2026) states that all schools operate as mobile-phone-free environments by default, unless there is an agreed exception. This policy outlines the appropriate use of mobile phones on our school site.

2. Aim

Mobile phones and smart watches, alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance; however, there are also associated risks. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe.

The aim of the Mobile Phone policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through the establishment of clear and robust acceptable use guidelines.

This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools - which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related devices on site. This includes staff, volunteers, governors, children, young people, parents, carers, and visitors. This list is not exhaustive.

Where mobile phone is referenced, it includes any device capable of sending/receiving calls, SMS, MMS, internet messaging or recording images and audio (e.g., smartphones, smart watches, tablets, e-readers).

‘Work time’ is the period during which staff are on duty, including before and after school activities where staff are supervising pupils.

‘Personal device’ is any device not owned by the school.

4. Policy statement

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones and smart watches that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

When mobiles phones and smart watches are misused, it can impact on an individual’s dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile devices is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

5. Staff Code of Conduct

The Staff Code of Conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus, creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity. It is therefore ensured that all practitioners:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- know how to minimise risk.
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use.
- are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours.
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

Photographs and Images

The use of mobile phones by staff to take photographs and videos of children is NOT permitted in school or on school trips.

6. Personal Mobiles and Wearable Technology e.g., Smart Watches

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile phones causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against potential misuse.

In the interests of equality, and to further promote safety, the guidance applies to any individual who has a mobile phone or other device on site, including children, parents and visitors, as detailed below:

6.1 Staff

Staff should not use their mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils. Use of personal mobile phones and smart watches onsite by staff is restricted to staff only areas. Mobile phones and smart watches can only be used by staff at break and lunchtimes when they are not on duty.

Where multi-factor authentication (MFA) or other work-related use of a personal device is required, staff should use school devices where available. If personal devices must be used, staff should do so away from pupils. Use should be in accordance with the school's IT acceptable use policy. Personal devices used for work must have an approved level of security (PIN/password, up-to-date OS) and not be used to store school data unless authorised.

Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, phones must be switched off/on silent and calls and texts must not be taken or made during work time. Likewise, wearable technology including smart watches must be set to 'silent/do not disturb' during work time and staff must not read/respond to messages or calls during contact time with pupils. Where a wearable provides health-related monitoring that the staff member needs (e.g., medical alerts), this should be discussed with the head teacher to agree reasonable arrangements.

Staff are not permitted to take photographs or videos of pupils on personal devices in school or on school trips. All authorised photography or video for educational purposes must be carried out using school equipment and in accordance with the school's photography consent procedures and data protection policy. Images must be stored on school systems and deleted from personal devices immediately if they were taken in error.

6.2 Pupils

In line with DfE expectations, pupils must not have access to or use a mobile phone or smart device during the school day, including:

- lessons
- transitions between lessons
- assemblies
- breaktimes
- lunchtimes
- before and after-school clubs on site

Phones must not be seen, heard, used or accessed at any point during the school day.

Y5 and Y6 pupils who walk to and from school independently may bring a mobile phone only with prior written parental permission. The phone must be switched off before entering the school site and handed in to the class teacher immediately, where it will be stored securely. Phones will be returned at the end of the school day. The school accepts no liability for loss or damage. Repeated breaches will lead to withdrawal of the exception and standard sanctions in line with the Behaviour Policy. Phones must be switched off before pupils enter the school site and must not be switched on until a pupil has left the school site. Pupils who do not walk home independently or are not in Y5 or Y6 are not allowed mobile phones in school.

If a pupil is found with a device in breach of the policy, staff may confiscate and store it securely until the end of the day. If there are concerns that a device contains evidence of a criminal offence or safeguarding risk, the device must be handed to a senior leader and safeguarding procedures followed, including referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and possible involvement of police. The school reserves the right to inspect the device where there is an allegation of misconduct, following the school's search and confiscation guidance and DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Pupils' own wearable technology such as smart watches and personal iPad and tablets are NOT allowed in school.

6.3 Parents, visitors and contractors Parents and visitors should not use mobile phones anywhere on site where pupils are present and should switch them off or set to silent before entry. Signage is displayed at all entrances to remind visitors.

In safeguarding or emergency situations, staff may use phones to contact parents or external agencies as required."

Contractors are respectfully requested to use devices in designated staff-only areas; if essential calls must be taken in other areas, contractors must notify a member of staff and take calls where pupils are not present.

Any individual bringing a personal device into the setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

In safeguarding or emergency situations, staff may use phones to contact parents or external agencies as required.

6.4 Reasonable Adjustments

Requests for reasonable adjustments for pupils or staff must be discussed with the head teacher, and accompanied by supporting evidence where appropriate (e.g., medical note, EHCP reference). Each case will be considered and documented, with agreed adjustments recorded and reviewed regularly.

6.5 Educational Visits

Mobile phones are part of the emergency toolkit on off-site trips and provide a back-up facility should problems be experienced with a landline – or where contact needs to be made outside of work hours for example on residential trips.

Staff are asked to take their own personal mobiles so that they may be contacted by school if necessary.

Where parents are accompanying trips, they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children).

Pupils are NOT allowed to take mobile phones or other devices on school trips or residential visits.

6.6 Safe storage

Lockers and lockable drawers/desks are available for staff to store their personal belongings during the working day. Staff have the **option** to store their mobile phones or smart watches in these areas, should they choose. Mobile phones should not be left on desk tops in view of children.

Practitioners leave their belongings in safe storage at their own risk. It is therefore recommended that phones are security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damages is accepted.

As well as safeguarding children and avoiding any unnecessary disruptions during the day, this procedure also aims to protect staff against any unfounded allegations.

Devices belonging to pupils will be stored safely during the day in a locked drawer or cupboard.

7. Curriculum

The school will teach pupils about online safety and responsible device use through the computing and PSHE/RSE curriculum. Pupils will be reminded of mobile device rules at the start of each term and as part of safeguarding assemblies.

8. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher/DSL and Governors (Safeguarding or Curriculum Committee) will monitor compliance and the impact of this policy annually. Any incidents, confiscations, breaches or safeguarding concerns related to personal devices will be reported to governors in the safeguarding report. The policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if statutory guidance changes.

Related documents:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Behaviour Policy; Data Protection/GDPR Policy; Staff Code of Conduct; Search and Confiscation Guidance; Educational Visits Policy; E-Safety/Online Safety Policy.