Ashlands Church of England Primary School

QUANTOCK EDUCATION TRUST

*Love of Learning, Love of Life,*
*Love of One Another*

# Ashlands Primary Mobile Phone Policy

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| **Approved by:** | N Ball – Head Teacher D<br>Harvey – Chair of Governors | **Date:** LGC1 2026<br>2027 |
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## 1. Introduction and aims

At Ashlands CofE Primary School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for some 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 Child Protection and Safeguarding, Online Safety, Acceptable User Policy and Relationship and Behaviour Policy

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 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 2 years, 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 Local Governing Committee

The Local Governing Committee will review this policy alongside other policies related to safeguarding and Child Protection at LGC 1.

## 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, whilst working directly with children. 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
- Awaiting a call from a medical professional
- 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. In the Headteacher's absence the lead SLT will make the decision

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01460 73437 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 Copilot chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard). More information can be found in the QET Data Protection/GDPR/Protections of children's biometric information/Freedom of information and school 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.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils. Staff should adhere to the Online Safety, Staff Conduct and Acceptable User Policies at all times.

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. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of 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 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 place 141 in front of the number when making calls, or use withhold caller id

### 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

Pupils are not permitted to bring their mobile phones to school at all during the school day.

### 5.1 Use of smartwatches by 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.

Pupils may only wear SMART watches if the internet is disabled. The school reserve the right to gain confirmation of this from parents/ carers.

### 5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar will be able to bring their phone to school but it will be checked by staff to ensure it is only used for this purpose.

Years 5 and 6 pupils are allowed to bring mobile phones to school if they are walking to or from school alone. Pupils should hand their phones in to their class teachers at the start of each day. Pupils are not allowed to have their phones on or with them during the school day or during any Extended Services provision. Parental permission will need to be provided to allow pupils to bring a mobile phone to school. The school cannot assume liability for issues associated with loss or damage to mobile phones.

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the Headteacher via the school office.

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

### 5.3 Sanctions

If a child brings a mobile phone to school without permission, it will be confiscated and placed in the school office. It must be collected by a parent from the Headteacher or member of SLT at the end of the school day. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

The DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation allows 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).

Any sanction or action taken will be in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Relationships and Behaviour Policy. Any investigation of a phone would take place by a DSL of member of SLT.

. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, 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 Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education

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.

Visitors will have the mobile phone policy explained to them when signing in. School do not allow mobile phones into the main body of the school and ask visitors to place them in a box in the office whilst they are in school

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. Visitors will be asked to hand in their phone to the school office whilst in school unless they need it for their work. If this is the case, then the DSL should be informed.

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.

## 7. Loss, theft or damage

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.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office.

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 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 attention of the Headteacher in a timely manner.

## 9. Appendix 1: Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

## Code of conduct

- Sometimes, children may be allowed to bring a mobile phone to school for special reasons. If you are given permission, you must follow these important rules to keep everyone safe and happy:
- **Turn it off**: Make sure your phone is completely switched off before you hand it in.
- **Hand it in**: Your phone must be given to your teacher **or a member of the Senior Leadership Team** at the start of the day and will be kept safely until home time.
- No phones in toilets or changing rooms: Phones are not allowed in these places to protect everyone's privacy.
- No photos or videos without permission: You must never take pictures or videos of other children or adults unless they say it's okay.
- Keep your details private: Don't share your phone number or other personal information with people you don't know. Never share someone else's details without asking them first.
- Keep your phone safe: Don't tell anyone your phone's password or unlock code.
- Be kind online: Never use your phone to be mean or hurtful to anyone. This includes sending unkind messages or posting things online.
- Stay safe: Never send or look at anything that is rude, scary, or against the law.
- Good behaviour always: These rules still apply even when you're not at school.
- Use kind words: Don't use rude or hurtful language on your phone or on social media.
- No harmful content: You must not use your phone to look at or share anything that could upset or harm others.
- Listen to adults: If a teacher asks you to turn off or hand over your phone, you must do so straight away.
- No phones in tests: Phones are not allowed in any test or exam. If you bring one, it must be handed in before the test starts. If you don't follow this rule, your test might not count.

## 10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

5th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Subject: Updated Mobile Phone & Smart Watch Procedure for Y5 and Y6

We understand that for some children in Years 5 and 6 who walk to or from school on their own, having a mobile phone or smart watch can provide reassurance and safety. To make sure this is managed responsibly, we have updated our procedure and acceptable use agreement.

When can children bring a device to school?

Children should only bring a mobile phone or smart watch if:

· They walk to school alone, or

· They walk home alone, and need the device for emergency contact.

What do you need to do?

If your child meets the above criteria, please complete our permission form using the link below: https://forms.office.com/e/CasJhiBTY1

This form confirms that you wish your child to bring a device for safety reasons and includes our Acceptable Use Agreement, which you should share with your child. Please complete the form even if you have already contacted the school, as we are updating our records.

Key points from the Acceptable Use Agreement

· Devices must be switched off before entering the playground and handed in at the office or to a designated member of staff at the start of the day.

· Devices must not be used anywhere on the school site, including when arriving or leaving.

· Devices will be stored securely during the day.

· If a device is lost or damaged, the school cannot accept responsibility for repair or replacement.

· Misuse of a device will result in permission being withdrawn. During any breach, the device will be kept by the Headteacher until a parent collects it.

Children agree to:

· Treat having a device as a privilege and responsibility.

· Keep the device switched off during the school day.

· Hand the device in every morning.

· Never share passwords or personal details.

· Never take photos or videos on or near school grounds.

Parents agree to:

· Understand that devices are brought at the child's own risk.

· Accept that the school may withdraw permission if rules are broken.

We regularly teach online safety and responsible device use as part of our curriculum. This agreement supports those lessons and helps children develop sensible habits.

If your child already brings a phone or smart watch, please complete the form as soon as possible and have a discussion with them about these rules.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for your support in keeping our children safe and responsible.

Nicola Ball

Ashlands CofE Primary

Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information for visitors on sign in

## Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

- Please hand your phone into the school office on arrival unless you need it for your work. It will be kept in a box
- 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 outside the front of the office area or ask for a private space to use
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), 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.

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