



Staplehurst School

# Mobile Phone Policy

Policy approved by Headteacher  
Learning & Development Committee notified  
Policy to be next reviewed

**9 March 2026**  
**17 March 2026**  
**March 2028**

## 1. Aims and Purpose

This policy provides clear guidance on the use of mobile phones and similar devices, in school by pupils, staff, parents and visitors.

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, including smartwatches.

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.

## 2. Use of mobile phones by staff

Staff (including volunteers and contractors) must keep mobile phones switched off or on silent when working with or supervising pupils. Phones must be stored in a secure place during lesson times.

Staff must not use their mobile phones during:

- Lessons
- Assemblies
- Playground duty
- Supervision periods

Staff needing to check their phone may do so only:

- During break periods
- In staff-only areas (e.g., staff room, office)
- Discreetly and out of sight of pupils

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:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Supervising off-site trips and residential visits, where phones may be used solely for health and safety purposes.

If photographs of pupils are required for educational, evidence or display purposes, staff must use a school-issued camera only. In emergencies, staff must seek permission from a member of the SLT.

Staff must never share personal mobile numbers with pupils or parents or contact them using personal devices, including connecting through social media and messaging apps. All school-related communication must go

through the school office.

Failure to comply with this policy may lead to action under the Whistleblowing Policy or staff disciplinary procedures.

### **3. Use of mobile phones by pupils**

Parents should discourage pupils from bringing mobile phones to school because they are valuable items and may be lost, damaged or stolen. However, we recognise that in Years 5 and 6, mobile phones may have a role in supporting pupils' personal safety as they travel independently to and from school.

Our expectation is that pupils in all other year groups are collected by an adult or responsible person, meaning that mobile phones should not be needed.

If parents need to contact their child urgently during the school day, they must contact the school office, and a message will be relayed promptly. Pupils must not be contacted directly on their mobile phones. Under no circumstances may pupils take mobile phones on school excursions, including swimming, sporting events or educational visits.

#### **3.1 Procedure for pupils who bring phones (Years 5 and 6 only)**

While the school acknowledges a parent's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone to support independent travel, we continue to strongly discourage this due to the risks outlined above.

Where a child in Years 5 or 6 needs to bring a phone to school:

1. Parents must complete the Permission Form (Appendix 1) and submit it to the class teacher or school office.
2. Parents must understand and accept that they do so entirely at their own risk.
3. The school accepts no responsibility or liability for any loss or damage to the device while it is on school premises.
4. Phones must be switched off before entering the school grounds.
5. Upon arrival, the phone must be given to the class teacher and will be stored securely until the end of the school day.
6. Phones must be clearly labelled with the pupil's name.
7. Phones must not be kept in bags, coats or pockets, and pupils must not access them during the school day.

#### **3.2 Use of smartwatches**

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.

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices, including smartwatches.

### 3.1 Inappropriate use of a mobile phones

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

If a pupil is found using a mobile phone during the school day:

- The phone will be confiscated immediately and returned to the pupil at the end of the day.
- If this happens a second time, the phone will only be returned to an appropriate adult, by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- Should inappropriate use continue, the school reserves the right to withdraw permission for the pupil to bring a phone to school.

If a pupil is found taking photographs or videos of pupils or staff:

- This will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter, in line with the Behaviour Policy.
- The phone will not be returned until the images or recordings have been deleted in the presence of a member of the SLT and an appropriate adult.

In rare cases where a phone contains evidence of harassment or bullying, the device will be:

- Confiscated and stored securely,
- With care taken not to delete any images or recordings that may be needed for investigation.

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

The policy is fully aligned with the school's Health & Safety, Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding, Child Protection and Internet/E-Safety policies.

## 4. Use of mobile phones by parents, carers 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. Parents and visitors must:

- Keep phones off or on silent when in classrooms or assemblies
- Use phones only in the school office or staff room
- Not take photographs of pupils unless at public events (e.g., Sports Day) and only of their own children
- Not share such photos on social media

On school trips:

- Parents/volunteers must not use their personal devices to take photos of pupils
- If photos are needed for educational records, the school will provide a school camera

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.

## **5. Loss, theft or damage**

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or during travel to and from school.

Phones brought to school under permitted circumstances must:

- Be clearly labelled
- Be stored securely by staff during the school day

Lost phones will be handed to the school office, and staff will attempt to contact the owner.

## Appendix A – Letter to parents/carers

Dear Parents/Carers,

### MOBILE PHONES

We recognise that in years five and six mobile phones have a part to play in securing pupils' personal safety before and after school and on journeys to and from school. We aim to develop a culture of responsible use of mobile phone and other digital devices by pupils by following our mobile phone policy.

- The phone should be given to their teacher upon arrival at school and will be locked away in the classroom until the end of the school day. Phones should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone. Under no circumstances should there be access to phones during the school day or be left in pupils' bags, coats or folders.
- The phone must remain switched off during the school day and may not be used for any purpose on school premises or during off-site school activities (such as swimming or sports).
- **The school accepts no responsibility or liability for any loss or damage whilst the device is on school premises.**

If you wish your child to bring a mobile to school, please sign the permission slip below and hand it to the class teacher.

Any phones brought to school without written permission of the parent will be confiscated and returned to the parent.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs L Wall  
Headteacher.

### MOBILE PHONE PERMISSION SLIP

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

My child needs to bring a mobile phone to school as he/she walks to school without an adult. I accept that the school cannot be held responsible for the security of my child's phone and understand that if the phone is used inappropriately at school, the phone will be confiscated and I will be responsible for collecting it from school.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_