



Esher Church School



Mobile Phone policy

September 2025

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1. Introduction and aims

At Esher Church 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.



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 year, 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 Governors

Governors will review and adopt the policy (and any revisions) every year.

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, while any 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 01372 463139 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 chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).



Staff are expected to read and adhere to 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.

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 never store parents' or pupils' telephone or contact details on their mobile phone, as this allows the possibility of inappropriate contact. If a staff member is a friend of a parent or carer from the school and they see them socially outside of school, this should be declared to the Headteacher.

Unless pre-authorised by the Headteacher, staff are not permitted to use their own mobile phones or devices for contacting pupils, young people or those connected with the family of the student. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a parent, a school telephone should be used.

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

Where necessary, this must be authorised by the Headteacher prior to any residential trips.

Please read the Educational Visits policy for further information

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



4.5 Work phones

Where appropriate, 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

Year 5 and Year 6 children who walk to and from school on their own, with written consent from their parent, are allowed to bring a mobile phone into school.

- All children's mobile phones and personally-owned devices should be handed into the school office if they are brought into school.
- If a pupil breaches the school policy then the phone or device will be confiscated and will be held in a secure place in the school office. Mobile phones and devices will be released to parents or carers in accordance with school policy.
- If a pupil needs to contact his or her parents or carers, contact will be made through the school office. Parents are advised not to contact their child via their mobile phone during the school day, but to contact the school office.
- Pupils should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to trusted friends and family members. Pupils will be instructed in safe and appropriate use of mobile phones and personal devices and will be made aware of boundaries and consequences and expected to use PIN's and other security as necessary.
- Parents and children should complete an Agreement Form and hand into the office if a parent wishes a child to have a phone at school.
- Pupils will be provided with school mobile devices (e.g. iPads and Chromebooks) to use in specific learning activities under the supervision of a member of staff. Such mobile devices will be set up so that only those features required for the activity will be enabled as necessary.

Pupils must adhere to the school's Code of conduct and Acceptable Use Agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

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.

- Smartwatches should not be worn by any pupils.
- Where a smartwatch is worn, the staff member should ask the child to remove it, store it in a safe space and return it to the child at the end of the day
- Further breaches will result in the smartwatch being confiscated and the parent/carer will need to collect it from the Headteacher

5.2 Exceptions

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances (e.g. pupils with diabetes who use their phone to monitor their blood sugar).. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, parents/carers should contact the Headteacher in writing through the school office.

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

5.3 Sanctions

Where it is believed that a pupil is using their mobile phone inappropriately, the school has the right under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), to confiscate their phone.

School staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows staff to search a pupil's phone if you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

If there is cause for concern about safeguarding and pupil's behaviour, 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

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. 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](#)

Where there is cause for concern, the mobile phone will be held in a secure place in the school office. Mobile phones and devices will only be released to a parent or carer in accordance with school policy.

See the school's Behaviour Policy for any sanctions for inappropriate mobile phone use.

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 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.

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.

Where a parent/carers needs to use their phone when supervising children/volunteering, they must only make any calls or write any texts from the school office area.

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.

To ensure all children, staff and parents are aware of their responsibilities, the school will:

- Put signs up in the school entryway or office
- Include disclaimers in any permission forms for bringing a phone to school
- Include a disclaimer in the home-school agreement
- Provide a copy of your policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents, where requested

If it is necessary to confiscate a mobile phone from a pupil it will be stored in the school office or in a Senior Leadership Team Member's office in a locked cabinet.

The school will be responsible for the mobile phone, where confiscated and will be held responsible for loss, theft or damage.

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 any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought o the attention of the Headteacher in a timely manner.

9. Linked policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy



10. Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Acceptable use agreement

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You must hand your phone into the teacher at the start of each day
2. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
3. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
4. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
5. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
6. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
7. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
8. 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
9. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
10. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
11. 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.
12. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
13. 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.
14. 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.



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

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow _____ to bring their mobile phone to school because they:

- Travel to and from school alone
- Are a young carer
- Need the phone to support their medical needs
- Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed
- Attend a before- or after-school activity where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its Acceptable use agreement.

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	



12. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

- 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 to the school office area
- 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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- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
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