

Esher Church School



Mobile phone policy

Approved by:	Ollie May	Date: 01/09/2026
Last reviewed on:	01/09/2026	
Next review due by:	01/09/2027	

Contents

1. Introduction and aims	2
2. Relevant guidance	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	2
4. Use of mobile phones by staff	3
5. Use of mobile phones by pupils.....	4
7. Loss, theft or damage	7
8. Monitoring and review.....	8
9. Appendix 1: Code of conduct for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances.....	10
10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school	12
11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors	14

1. Introduction and aims

At Esher Church School our policy aims to:

- Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones, where applicable
- Provide 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
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes

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

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of section 36 of the [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026](#), and the Department for Education (DfE)'s [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 required to actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or is responsible for monitoring the policy and are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The DSL and Inclusion Lead is responsible for reviewing it every year, 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

Ed Fielding – Safeguarding link trustee - is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and followed by all staff.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The Department for Education (DfE) guidance is clear that schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default. Staff should not use their personal mobile phones for personal reasons in the presence of pupils during the school day, except in exceptional circumstances where there is a clear and justifiable need.

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 during the school day, 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 01372463139 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 Gemini). See the schools acceptable use of ICT policy for further details.

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 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.

Where a mobile phone is required for school business, its use must be limited to the specific approved purpose. For example, staff may need to access the Microsoft Authenticator app to generate a security code for CPOMS or other school systems. In these circumstances, staff should use their mobile phone discreetly and, wherever possible, during times when pupils are not present, such as before or after school, at break times or during lunch. Personal use of mobile phones during the school day and in the presence of pupils remains prohibited.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones or a similar device during the school day in front of pupils 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
- CPOMS.

For educational visits, off-site activities and residential visits, staff should refer to the Educational Visits Policy for further guidance. A school mobile phone will be carried by the trip leader and used as the primary means of communication with parents, carers and pupils. The contact details of the school mobile phone will be provided to parents and pupils where appropriate. Staff should not routinely share personal mobile phone numbers for educational visits unless specifically authorised by the Headteacher.

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

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 school 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 must not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

Pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones to school. Mobile phones are only permitted for pupils in Upper Key Stage 2 who have parental permission to walk home independently.

Any pupil who brings a mobile phone to school must hand it to their class teacher on arrival. The phone will be stored securely in a locked box throughout the school day and returned to the pupil at the end of the school day. Mobile phones must remain switched off while on school premises and must not be used during the school day.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are brought to school contrary to this policy.

The school recognises that some pupils may require access to a mobile phone or smart device for specific medical needs, such as continuous glucose monitoring systems. In such cases, appropriate arrangements will be agreed with parents/carers and relevant staff to ensure the pupil's medical needs are met while maintaining the school's mobile phone expectations and will form part of their IHCP.

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Pupils will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

Smartwatches are not permitted in school. This includes any device with the capability to send or receive messages, make calls, access the internet, take photographs, record audio or otherwise communicate electronically.

If a pupil wears a smartwatch to school, it will be removed by a member of staff and stored securely. The smartwatch will not be returned to the pupil and must be collected by a parent or carer at the end of the school day.

The school recognises that some pupils may require a smartwatch or similar device to support a specific medical need. In such circumstances, arrangements will be agreed on an individual basis with parents/carers and relevant school staff.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

The school may permit a pupil to possess or use a mobile phone or smart device in school due to exceptional medical circumstances. Permission will only be granted where there is a documented medical necessity, such as the use of a mobile phone to monitor a medical condition in accordance with an agreed Individual Healthcare Plan.

Requests for permission must be made through the school's Inclusion Lead and approved by both the Inclusion Lead and the Headteacher.

Where permission is granted, the device must only be used in the manner specified within the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan and for the agreed medical purpose. Any use outside of these agreed arrangements will be considered a breach of this policy and may result in the permission being reviewed or withdrawn.

5.3 Sanctions

Where a pupil breaches this policy by bringing or using a mobile phone or smart device inappropriately, the device will be confiscated and removed by a member of staff.

The pupil will be referred to the Headteacher to discuss the incident and the reasons for the breach of the policy. Appropriate sanctions may then be applied in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. These may include:

- Loss of break and/or lunchtime privileges
- Working out of class for a period of time.

Parents/carers will be informed of the incident and contacted to discuss the breach of the policy. Arrangements will be made for the device to be returned and in most cases it will need to be collected by a parent or carer.

Repeated breaches of this policy may result in further sanctions and a review of any permission previously granted for a pupil to bring a mobile phone or smart device onto the school site.

Where there is reason to believe that a mobile phone or smart device contains inappropriate content, has been used to commit an offence or has caused or is likely to cause harm to another person, the school reserves the right to take further action in line with the Department for Education's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation, safeguarding procedures and the school's Behaviour and Safeguarding Policies. Relevant agencies may be contacted where appropriate.

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 (SEN), 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 [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). This will include speaking with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy, who will consider if pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care, is appropriate.

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

We recognise that mobile phones are an important part of everyday life and that parents, carers, visitors and volunteers may need to carry them whilst on the school site. However, in order to safeguard children and maintain a positive environment, the school operates a **Mobile Phone No Use Zone**.

The Mobile Phone No Use Zone begins at each entrance gate to the school site. We ask all parents, carers, visitors and volunteers to ensure that mobile phones are not used once they enter this zone.

If you need to make or receive a call, please remain outside the school grounds, complete the call and then enter the site when you have finished.

Collect your child with a smile, not a phone.

Parents, carers, visitors and volunteers must:

- Keep mobile phones out of sight and not use them whilst children are present
- Refrain from making or receiving calls on the school site unless in an emergency and away from children
- Never use mobile phones to take photographs, videos or audio recordings of pupils unless specifically authorised by the school for a particular event
- Use any authorised photographs or recordings for personal use only and not share images of other children on social media or other online platforms without appropriate consent
- Follow all instructions given by school staff regarding the use of mobile phones on the school site.

Volunteers working within school must keep mobile phones out of sight and must not use, check or access them in the presence of children. Mobile phones must never be used to photograph, film or record pupils.

Parents, carers and visitors will be reminded of these expectations through school communications, visitor information and signage displayed around the school site.

Parents are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

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, when working with pupils or while children are present.

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.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils who are permitted to bring a mobile phone to school must ensure that the device is clearly labelled with their name and handed to their class teacher immediately upon arrival at school. Phones will be stored securely in a locked storage box throughout the school day and returned to pupils at the end of the school day.

Pupils must ensure that any mobile phone brought to school is protected by an appropriate password, PIN code or other security feature. Staff are also expected to protect personal and work mobile devices with suitable security measures to reduce the risk of unauthorised access and data breaches.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises, during educational visits, on school transport or whilst pupils are travelling to and from school. Parents and carers are reminded that pupils bring mobile phones to school at their own risk.

This disclaimer will be communicated through:

- This Mobile Phone Policy
- Information shared with parents/carers when permission is granted for a pupil to bring a mobile phone to school
- Relevant school communications and parent information updates.

Any mobile phone or smart device confiscated due to a breach of this policy will be stored securely in the school office. Confiscated devices will be placed in a locked cupboard or secure location until they are returned to a parent or carer in accordance with this policy.

Any mobile phone found on school premises should be handed to the school office immediately. The school will make reasonable efforts to identify and contact the owner so that the device can be returned safely.

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.

Any concerns, questions or complaints relating to the implementation of this policy should be raised with the **Headteacher** in the first instance. Concerns should be brought to the school's attention as soon as possible so that they can be addressed appropriately and in a timely manner.

Acting Headteacher Contact Details:

Ollie May

01372463139

ollie.may@esherchurchschool.org.uk

The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy and for ensuring that staff, pupils, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers understand and follow its requirements.

The Governing Board has a strategic responsibility for supporting the school's safeguarding and behaviour arrangements and may review the effectiveness of this policy as part of its wider monitoring of school policies and procedures. Responsibility for the operational implementation of this policy remains with the Headteacher. The policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective, practical and in line with current guidance and the needs of the school community

Linked policies:

- Staff code of conduct
- Acceptable use of ICT policy
- Safeguarding and welfare policy
- Behaviour policy
- Trips and residential policy

9. Appendix 1: Code of Conduct for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Pupils who have permission to bring a mobile phone to school for exceptional circumstances must follow the rules below at all times.

Mobile Phone Rules

1. Mobile phones may only be brought to school by pupils who have permission to do so in accordance with this policy.
2. Mobile phones must be clearly labelled with the pupil's name and handed to the class teacher immediately upon arrival at school for secure storage.
3. You may not use your mobile phone at any time during the school day, including:
 - Before registration
 - Lesson times
 - Between lessons
 - Breaktime
 - Lunchtime
 - Any school activity or event
4. You may not use your mobile phone in toilets, changing areas or any other area where privacy is expected.
5. You must not take photographs, videos or audio recordings of pupils, staff, volunteers or visitors.
6. You should avoid sharing your contact details with people you do not know and must not share another person's contact details without their permission.
7. You must keep your phone secure and protect it with a password, PIN or other security feature.
8. You must not use your phone to bully, intimidate, harass or upset another person. This includes through:
 - Text messages
 - Messaging applications
 - Email
 - Social media
 - Online gaming platforms
 - Any other form of electronic communication
9. You must not use vulgar, obscene, offensive or derogatory language when communicating by phone or through social media. Such behaviour is not permitted under the school's Behaviour Policy.
10. You must not use your phone to access, view, create, store or share pornography or any other inappropriate, harmful or illegal content.
11. You must not use your phone to send or receive material that could constitute a criminal offence.
12. The school's expectations regarding bullying, harassment, intimidation and inappropriate online behaviour apply both in and out of school.
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external examination or test environment. If you bring a phone into school on a test or examination day, you must hand it over as directed by staff before entering the room. Failure to do so may result in the assessment being declared invalid.
14. Failure to follow these rules may result in the phone being confiscated, parents/carers being contacted and sanctions being applied in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Agreement

I have read and understood the school's Mobile Phone Policy and agree to follow all of the rules outlined above.

Pupil Name: _____

Class: _____

Pupil Signature: _____

Date: _____

As the parent/carer of the above pupil, I have read and understood the school's Mobile Phone Policy. I understand the school's expectations and agree to support my child in following them.

Parent/Carer Name: _____

Parent/Carer Signature: _____

Date: _____

10. 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):	

Permission to bring a mobile phone to school will only be granted where there is a clear and recognised need. This may include:

- Travelling to and from school independently (Upper Key Stage 2 pupils only, with parental permission)
- Supporting an agreed medical need in accordance with an Individual Healthcare Plan
- Other exceptional circumstances approved by the Headteacher and Inclusion Lead

All requests will be considered on an individual basis and must be approved by the school before a mobile phone is brought onto the school site.

Pupils who are granted permission to bring a mobile phone to school must follow the Mobile Phone Code of Conduct below. The school reserves the right to withdraw permission at any time if the policy is not followed.

Mobile Phone Code of Conduct

If I bring a mobile phone to school, I agree to:

- Bring the phone to school only because permission has been granted by the school.
- Ensure the phone is clearly labelled with my name.
- Switch the phone off before entering the school grounds.
- Not use the phone whilst entering the school premises.
- Hand the phone directly to my class teacher immediately upon arrival at school.
- Ensure the phone is stored by school staff for the duration of the school day.
- Not use the phone at any time during the school day, including before school, breaktimes, lunchtimes, lessons, clubs or whilst on the school site.
- Never use the phone in toilets, changing areas or other private spaces.
- Never take photographs, videos or audio recordings of pupils, staff, volunteers or visitors.
- Follow the school's Behaviour Policy and Online Safety expectations when using technology.
- Hand the phone over immediately if requested by a member of staff.
- Accept that failure to follow these rules may result in the phone being confiscated, sanctions being applied and permission to bring a phone to school being withdrawn.

Agreement

I have read and understood the school's Mobile Phone Policy and Code of Conduct and agree to follow the expectations outlined above.

Reason permission is requested:

☐ Travelling to and from school independently

- ☐ Medical need (supported by an Individual Healthcare Plan)
☐ Other exceptional circumstance (please specify)

Parent/Carer Declaration

I give permission for my child to bring a mobile phone to school and understand that it must be handed to the class teacher immediately upon arrival and will be stored securely until the end of the school day.

Parent/Carer Name: _____

Parent/Carer Signature: _____

Date: _____

Pupil Declaration

I understand the school's expectations regarding mobile phones and agree to follow the Mobile Phone Code of Conduct.

Pupil Name: _____

Pupil Signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

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

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- 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 staff room or step out of the school building through the main entrance.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present.

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.

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- 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 staff room or step out of the school building through the main entrance.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present.

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.

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- 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 staff room or step out of the school building through the main entrance.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present.

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.
