Fordbridge Community Primary School

Achieving excellence together

Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy

Approved by Mrs H Simcox: Date: September 2026

Date: September 2026

Reviewed by: Ms Sam Spencer: Chair of Governors

Review date: September 2027

Fordbridge Community Primary School Mobile Phone and Device Policy

This policy reflects the requirements of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, the DfE Mobile Phones in Schools statutory guidance, Behaviour in Schools guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

AIMS AND PURPOSES

Fordbridge Community Primary School is a mobile phone-free environment during the school day. Any exceptions are permitted only where authorised by the Headteacher. However, we recognise that for older pupils (Year 5 & 6) mobile phones may have a part to play in securing pupils' personal safety before and after school and on journeys to and from school. Moreover, a ban would be difficult to enforce and would not be consistent with the aim of developing a culture of responsible use of mobile phone and other digital devices by pupils. Our expectation is that in all other year groups pupils will be collected by an adult or responsible person. If a pupil needs to contact his/her Parents/Carers they will be allowed to use a school phone. If parents need to contact children urgently they should phone the school office and a message will be relayed promptly.

Under no circumstances will pupils be allowed to take mobile phones on school excursions.

PROCEDURES

Parents of older pupils (Year 5 & 6) will need to make a request for children to bring a mobile phone and explain the circumstances (walking home alone etc..). With consideration to this, it is to be made clear to parents that where they have been given permission for their child to bring a mobile phone to school they do so entirely at their own risk. The school accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage whilst the device is on school premises. Mobile phones will be secured safety away from the child during the school day.

Pupils

Where a pupil does bring a mobile phone to school, which has been agreed by the Headteacher or member of SLT, 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 phone should be clearly labelled with their name and taken to the School Office at 08:45 and collected at 3:15. Year 6 pupils are to hand the phone in to their teacher, who will store this in a locked locker. Under no circumstances should there be access to phones during the school day or be left in pupils' bags, coats or lockers.

Smartwatch expectations for pupils

The DfE's statutory mobile phones guidance includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in its 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 smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

Pupils may not wear smartwatches capable of sending messages, making calls, recording audio/video or accessing the internet.

Medical Needs and Exceptional Circumstances

No pupil will be disadvantaged as a result of a medical need that requires the use of technology. The school will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals to ensure appropriate and reasonable adjustments are in place while maintaining the safety and wellbeing of all pupils.

Some pupils may require access to a mobile phone, smartwatch or smart device to support a medical condition, safeguarding need or other exceptional circumstance. Examples may include the use of devices for monitoring diabetes, communication linked to a medical condition, or where a pupil is subject to an agreed safeguarding plan.

Requests for exemptions must be made to the Headteacher and supported by appropriate evidence from a medical professional or other relevant agency where necessary. Any approved arrangements will be risk assessed and recorded in writing.

Where a device is required for medical purposes, it should be used only for its agreed function. Wherever possible, all other communication, messaging, internet and recording functions should be disabled during the school day.

Pupils with approved devices must continue to follow all other expectations regarding privacy, safeguarding, photography, recording and responsible use of technology

Staff and Governors

Staff should have phones off or on silent when in the vicinity of pupils. Staff are not permitted to use mobile phones / SMART watches, or any personal device to take a photo of pupils on the school premises.

Any staff who are part of intimate care are not to carry or wear any mobile phones / SMART watches, or any personal device that has access to a camera of recording device.

EYFS / School Launch Pad Setting

All devices with imaging and sharing capabilities, not just mobile phones and cameras, will not be used. SMART watches or any device capable of taking / storing images and photos graphs will be turned off. Please read along side the intimate care policy.

Staff are not permitted to use devices for personal calls, text messages during directed teaching time, assemblies, on playground duty or while supervising children – with the exception of trips, visits, emergency procedures or when supporting challenging behaviour in the wider school areas (forest school, playground) where their use is permitted to facilitate the health and safety of the members of the party. If photographs of pupils are required for display or curriculum evidence these may only be taken on a school

device (camera, tablet or school phone) and not a personal mobile phone or tablet, this would also apply to those attending sports events.

To support workload, staff are permitted to take photographs of children's work / outcomes to share on the school social media on personal devices, before 8.30am and after 3.15pm, when children are not present or part of the photo / image.

Staff wishing to use their mobile telephones or check for messages during the school day should do so during a break period and take into consideration the location of where they are making the call – for example if a class is outside at break time and the classroom empty, this would be acceptable.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The headteacher / Senior Leader will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

Where pupils with high needs / challenging behaviour staff will carry their mobile phone as a safety procedure incase they need to contact school whilst outside for support. This should be agreed prior with a member of SLT.

The above applies to all aspects of the school, including out of hours provision (e.g. After School Club and clubs run by staff and outside providers).

Inappropriate use of a mobile phone

If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) should be involved from the outset. If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been deleted. The parent/carer will be contacted by a member of the SLT. If this is not possible, then a letter will be sent notifying them of the seriousness of this action.

In the rare circumstance that there is evidence of harassment and/or bullying, the phone or digital device should be confiscated, retained in a secure place by an appropriate member of staff, taking care not to delete any images or recordings which could be used as evidence. Accurate records of any incidents should be given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to be logged in an appropriate file.

AI-Generated and Manipulated Images (Deepfakes)

The creation, possession, sharing or distribution of AI-generated, altered or manipulated images, audio recordings or videos of pupils, staff or visitors is prohibited.

This includes the use of artificial intelligence tools to create "deepfake" content, impersonate individuals, alter photographs, create misleading audio or video recordings, or generate inappropriate or harmful images.

Any incident involving AI-generated content that may cause harm, distress, bullying, harassment, reputational damage or safeguarding concerns will be treated as a serious breach of this policy and may be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy, Online Safety procedures, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and, where appropriate, reported to external agencies.

Where AI-generated content is suspected to involve indecent imagery, harassment, malicious communications or other unlawful activity, the school will follow statutory safeguarding procedures and seek advice from the police and other relevant agencies as appropriate

Parents and Visitors

Parents and visitors will be asked to turn phones off when volunteering in classrooms and attending assemblies so that there is no disruption to the school's activities. We accept that some parents/carers may wish to use their mobile phone camera or video facility to take photographs/videos of their own child during special assemblies or events. This will be kept under review and guidance will be communicated to parents/carers before any performance or event.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers must not audio record, video record or photograph meetings, conversations or discussions with staff members without the prior permission of all those present. Unauthorised recording of meetings may be treated as a breach of this policy.

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it is a public event (such as a school fair) or a photograph/video of their own child.
- Not audio recording, video recording or photographing meetings, discussions or conversations with staff without prior permission from the staff member(s) involved.
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only and not posting them on social media or sharing them publicly without appropriate consent.
- Not using phones during lessons or whilst working with pupils.

Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal school 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).

Please refer to the school’s data protection policy or ICT acceptable use policy.

Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving 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 mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which 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.

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.

Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.
See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

Pupil Sanctions

Breaches of this policy may result in a device being confiscated and securely stored until it can be returned to a parent/carer or released at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Repeated breaches will be managed in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Serious incidents involving photography, recording, bullying, harassment, safeguarding concerns or inappropriate AI-generated content will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may involve external agencies where appropriate.