



HIDELOW GRANGE SCHOOL

Mobile Phone Policy

Approved by:	Benjamin Neasom, Headteacher
Approved by:	Rob McConomy, Regional Lead
Date approved:	June 2026
Last reviewed:	n/a
Next review due:	June 2027

1. Introduction and aims

At Hidelow Grange School, this 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 by pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school's child protection, behaviour and online safety policies

This policy also aims to address the following challenges posed by mobile phones in school:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Risk of theft, loss or damage
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes

Throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar smart devices, including smartwatches.

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 guidance on mobile phones in schools and behaviour in schools. It should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) and the school's child protection and online safety policies.

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 and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school must alert a member of staff if they witness or become aware of a breach of this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring this policy, reviewing it annually, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation. Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents and carers promptly and communicate clearly the reasons for the school's approach.

3.2 Governing body

The governing body receives this policy for approval and will be notified of any significant review. The Headteacher will report on the policy's effectiveness as part of routine reporting to governors.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's guidance makes clear that staff should not use their personal mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. Hidelow Grange School operates as a mobile phone-free environment by default; any exceptions are by arrangement only.

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff, including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, are not permitted to use personal mobile phones during the school day while pupils are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time in areas where pupils are not present, such as the staffroom.

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have access to their phone during contact time for personal reasons, for example:

- Emergency contact by their child or their child's school
- In cases involving an acutely ill dependent or family member

The Headteacher will decide on a case-by-case basis whether special arrangements are appropriate. Where they are not, staff may use the school office telephone as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use personal mobile phones to process personal data or any other confidential school information. This includes entering such information into generative AI tools such as ChatGPT or Google Gemini. Further guidance is set out in the school's data protection policy.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give personal contact details to parents, carers or pupils, including connecting with them through social media or messaging applications.

Staff must not use personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil. Where photographs or recordings are necessary as part of a lesson, school trip or activity, school equipment must be used.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In certain circumstances, staff may use a personal mobile phone during the school day in front of pupils for work-related purposes. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions via school-approved platforms

- Multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips or residential visits

Staff supervising off-site trips will be issued with a school mobile phone and SIM card for that purpose. In all permitted circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phone in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with the staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to photograph or record pupils, their work, or anything that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents or carers directly; all such contact must be made via the school office

4.5 Work phones

Where a member of staff is provided with a school mobile phone for their role, that phone must be used for work purposes only. Only authorised staff may access school phones, and access must not be shared without authorisation. All communication linked to the device must be appropriate and professional at all times, in line with the staff code of conduct.

4.6 Sanctions

Staff who fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action in accordance with the school's staff disciplinary policy.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils at Hidelow Grange School do not bring mobile phones to school. In some instances, a pupil may be issued a smartphone by agreement as part of their care placement. These devices must remain at the care home and must not be brought into school for any purpose.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

Smartwatches and similar wearable technology fall within the scope of this policy. Pupils must not bring smartwatches to school unless prior written consent has been given by the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for a specific, time-limited activity, such as monitoring heart rate or timing during a science experiment. This must remain an exception only.

5.2 Exceptions

Where a device is approved for a specific activity, consent must be obtained in writing from the Headteacher or DSL in advance. The device must be handed in at the school entrance, stored securely during the school day, and used only for the approved purpose.

5.3 Sanctions

Any mobile device brought onto the school site must be handed in at the door and stored securely for the duration of the school day. Any device brought in without prior arrangement will be confiscated.

All sanctions must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will consider any relevant special circumstances, including age, religious requirements, special educational needs or disability.

If a pupil's behaviour gives cause to suspect they may be suffering or at risk of harm, staff will follow the procedure set out in KCSiE, including consulting the DSL or deputy, who will determine whether pastoral support, early intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

Certain conduct involving mobile phones may constitute a criminal offence. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, messages or social media posts directed at someone on the basis of their ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents, carers, visitors, volunteers, including governors and contractors, must adhere to this policy when on the school site during the school day. Personal mobile devices must only be used in non-contact areas such as the staffroom.

This means:

- Not taking photographs or recordings of pupils, unless 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

All 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 contact other parents or take photographs or recordings of pupils. They are responsible for supporting the school's mobile phone policy for pupils in these settings but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not hold the authority to search or confiscate devices.

Parents and carers must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to communicate with their child during the school day. They must not attempt to contact their child directly on a personal mobile device.

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

7. Loss, theft or damage

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones or similar devices 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 securely in the Headteacher's office until the end of the school day. Lost phones should be handed to reception, where the school will 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

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, or sooner if there is a change in legislation or guidance.

Appendix 1: Code of conduct for pupils in exceptional circumstances

This agreement applies to any pupil granted exceptional permission to bring a mobile phone to school. The following rules apply:

- Mobile phones must not be used throughout the school day, including during lessons, between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, unless a teacher specifically permits it
- Phones must be switched off, not merely set to silent
- Phones must not be used in toilets or changing rooms, to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils
- Photographs or recordings of staff or pupils must not be taken
- Personal contact details must not be shared with people you do not know, and other people’s details must not be shared without their consent
- Phone passwords or access codes must not be shared with anyone
- Phones must not be used to bully, intimidate or harass anyone, including via email, messaging apps or social media
- Phones must not be used to send or receive anything that may constitute a criminal offence, including sexting
- Vulgar, obscene or derogatory language must not be used while on the phone or on social media
- Phones must not be used to view or share pornography or other harmful content
- Any instruction by a member of staff to switch off or hand over a phone must be complied with immediately. Refusal is a breach of the school’s behaviour policy
- Mobile phones are not permitted in any exam or test environment. Bringing a phone into an exam room may result in the exam being declared invalid

Pupil name: _____

Pupil signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2: Permission form — pupil bringing a phone to school

To be completed by the Headteacher and signed by the parent or carer before any exception is granted.

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

The school has agreed to allow the above pupil to bring a mobile phone to school because they:

- Travel to and from school alone
- Are a young carer
- Require the phone to support a medical need

- Are attending a school trip or residential visit where phone use is permitted
- Other (please specify): _____

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's mobile phone policy and the code of conduct in Appendix 1. The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not comply.

Parent/carer signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Authorised by: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 3: Visitor mobile phone information slip

Print and cut the slip below to give to visitors on arrival. Three copies are provided per page.

Use of mobile phones at Hidelow Grange School

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your phone on silent while on school grounds
- Please do not use your phone where pupils are present. If you need to make a call, please use the reception area
- Do not take photographs or recordings of pupils (unless they are your own child)
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils, or while children are present

The school accepts no responsibility for phones lost, damaged or stolen on school premises. A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

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