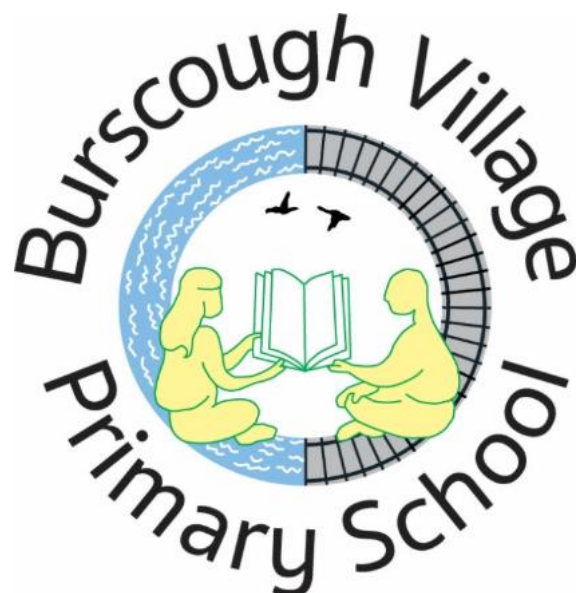




Mobile Phone Devices Policy

Reviewed by:	Anna Yates
Date reviewed:	1 st September 2026
Next review date:	1 September 2027
Version:	1
This policy is based on an original template produced by The National College. Burscough Village Primary School has reviewed, adapted and amended the content to ensure it reflects the school's own context, practice and statutory responsibilities.	

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Statement of intent

[Updated] Mobile phones, tablets and other personal electronic devices have become widely available and accessible to pupils. This policy is designed to prohibit the use of mobile phones and similar smart technology throughout the school day, including break and lunch times.

[Updated 15 July 2026]

Burscough Village Primary School accepts that personal mobile phones and tablets are often given to pupils by their parents to ensure their safety and personal security; however, such devices pose inherent risks and may jeopardise the learning environment. The school also recognises the safeguarding risks associated with pupils having unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile networks during the school day.

As a school, we must strike a balance between personal safety and a suitable educational setting. We understand that parents may wish for their child to carry a mobile phone for their personal safety, whilst pupils may wish to bring additional devices to school for other reasons. This policy establishes how personal electronic devices should be used by pupils in school to ensure both personal safety and an appropriate learning environment.

[Updated] Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to the following items:

- Mobile phones
- **[New]** Smart watches and other wearable technology
- **[New]** Tracking devices, such as Apple AirTags or similar Bluetooth/GPS trackers
- Personal digital assistants (PDAs)
- Handheld entertainment systems, e.g. video game consoles, iPods
- Portable internet devices, e.g. tablets, laptops
- Wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems, e.g. devices used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture and/or recording, sound recording, and information transmitting, receiving and/or storing

1. **[Updated]** Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory and good practice guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Mobile phones in schools'
- **[New]** DfE 'Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents'
- DfE 'Behaviour in Schools'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school'
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- **[New]** Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

- Records Management Policy

2. **[Updated]** Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- The implementation of the policy and procedures.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and procedures.
- Ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Reviewing the policy **annually**.

[Updated] The headteacher will be responsible for:

- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- The day-to-day implementation and management of the policy.
- Informing parents and pupils of the Personal Electronic Devices Agreement.
- Communicating this policy to the relevant staff members and the wider school community.
- Communicating what devices can be brought to school and when they can and cannot be used.
- **[New]** Deciding how best to achieve a mobile phone-free school environment.

[Updated] Staff members will be responsible for:

- Negotiating incidents of cyberbullying in conjunction with the headteacher, in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy.
- **[New]** Applying this policy consistently and proportionately, including confiscating devices where appropriate.
- **[New]** Reporting any safeguarding concerns to the DSL, or deputy, where misuse indicates risk of harm.
- **[New]** Avoiding use of their mobile phones in front of pupils for any non-work related issues.
- **[Updated 15 July 2026]** Teaching pupils about the risks associated with mobile phones, smart technology, social media and online activity in accordance with the school's Online Safety Policy.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Initiating and managing responses to incidents of upskirting with relevant staff members and in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Liaising with and reporting the relevant information to children's social care and/or the police, when it is necessary to do so.

Pupils are responsible for adhering to the provisions outlined in this policy.

3. Ownership and responsibility

Pupils are responsible for their own belongings. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing property that is lost, stolen or damaged either on school premises or travelling to and from school, and at school events.

Staff will be protected against liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to personal devices that have been confiscated as an appropriate sanction, provided that they have acted lawfully.

Pupils are responsible for replacing school property they lose, damage or steal, including electronic devices.

Pupils and staff should enable a personal PIN or passcode on all the devices they bring to school to protect their personal data, images and videos in the event that the device is lost, stolen or accessed by an unauthorised person.

4. **[Updated]** Acceptable use

[Updated] Where pupils are bringing personal electronic devices into school, they will be expected to make their parents aware of this. Pupils will remain responsible for the safety and security of any personal devices brought into school and the school will not accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage.

[New] Personal devices will not be used at any point during the school day, including during break and lunch times, unless an agreed exception applies. Where an agreed exception is in place, use of a personal device will be limited strictly to the specific purpose outlined within that exception and will be subject to any conditions set by the school.

Pupils will be encouraged to avoid bringing phones to school; however, at Burscough Village Primary School, only pupils in Year 6 who walk home independently may bring a mobile phone into school. Permission from the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team must be sought in advance for any other child. When pupils enter the school premises, phones must be switched off and placed into pupils' school bags. As soon as pupils enter the school building, mobile phones must be handed in and locked away securely in the cabinet in the Year 6 classroom for the duration of the school day.

[New] Pupils must not wear or bring smart watches or other wearable technology into school. Many of these devices can take photographs, record sound, send or receive messages, access the internet, track activity, or connect to a mobile phone. This can create safeguarding, privacy and distraction concerns. If a device is needed for a medical reason, SEND need or other exceptional circumstance, this must be agreed in advance by the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team and recorded in an agreed plan.

[New] Pupils must not bring tracking devices, such as Apple AirTags or similar Bluetooth/GPS trackers, into school unless this has been agreed in advance by the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. These devices can raise safeguarding, privacy and data protection concerns because they may be used to track a child's location or movement on or near the school site. Any agreed exception will be recorded and managed through an agreed plan.

Use of mobile devices by parents and carers on school premises

[New] Parents and carers are kindly asked to refrain from using mobile phones and other personal devices on the school premises unless it is essential. This helps to support clear communication with school staff and ensures that adults are able to keep their attention on children during busy times, particularly when bringing children onto the school site and collecting them at the end of the day. Parents and carers should not take photographs or videos of other children on the school premises without permission.

5. [Updated] Unacceptable use

[Updated] Unless express permission is granted by a member of staff or [adaptations and reasonable adjustments](#) apply, mobile devices will not be seen, heard, or accessed at any time during the school day.

[Updated] Any permitted use for specific pupils will be limited strictly to the specific purpose outlined in the agreed plan. All other use will be prohibited.

[Updated] The school will consider the risks that may be posed to pupils who do not have access to their mobile phone when organising travel to and from school. Parents will be consulted with to consider ways to mitigate any concerns around the issue of travel to and from school. Pupils will be able to access their personal devices when travelling to and from school; however, they should not be used to arrange travel during the course of the school day and any contact with pupils should be arranged through the school office.

[Updated] Staff members will be required to model expectations surrounding the use of personal devices when they are in front of pupils throughout the school day, and only use their personal devices where required for work or safeguarding purposes.

Staff and pupils will adhere to the Social Media Policy at all times.

Files will not be sent between mobile devices, and Bluetooth and Wi-Fi functions will be disabled while on school premises.

Under no circumstances will personal electronic devices be taken into tests. Devices will be kept in lockers. Under no circumstances will mobile devices be used in changing rooms or toilets.

Personal electronic devices will not be plugged into outlets on the school premises without the express permission of the headteacher, and they will have an up-to-date portable appliance test (PAT).

Staff will not give out their personal contact details to pupils.

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, the act known as “upskirting” is an offence. Any incidents will not be tolerated by the school. Despite the name, anyone (including both pupils and teachers) of any gender, can be a victim of upskirting.

A “specified purpose” is namely:

- Obtaining sexual gratification (either for themselves or for the person they are enabling to view the victim’s genitals, buttocks or underwear)
- To humiliate, distress or alarm the victim

Any incidents of upskirting will be reported to the DSL and handled in accordance with the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

6. **[New]** Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

The school will comply with its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments with regard to this policy where necessary. Adaptations may be made in exceptional circumstances and in response to a pupil’s specific needs.

If it is deemed necessary due to the nature of a pupil’s SEND, reasonable adjustments will be made to allow that pupil to use their mobile phone or similar device during the school day.

The school will not prevent pupils from using their mobile phones in order to manage their medical condition effectively, e.g. if a pupil is using a monitoring app on their phone to manage their diabetes.

Beyond these specific duties, the school recognises that a need for mobile phone access for some pupils may depend on their individual circumstances. The school will allow limited flexibility for these pupils where an agreed exception is required in the best interests of the pupil’s safety and welfare, for example where a pupil is a young carer.

Where a pupil has an agreed adaptation or reasonable adjustment that requires access to a mobile device, this will be permitted only for the specific purpose and within the limits set out in the agreed plan.

7. Cyberbullying

All personal electronic devices will be used in line with our Online Safety Policy.

Incidents of cyberbullying will be dealt with and reported in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy.

[Updated] As part of the school's ongoing commitment to keeping children safe online, pupils will be taught how to use devices safely, kindly and responsibly through PSHE, Computing, Online Safety teaching and everyday safeguarding conversations. This will include age-appropriate learning about respectful communication, not sharing images or information without permission, knowing when to ask for help, and understanding that online actions can affect others in real life.

i. 8. Searching pupils

School pupils have a right for their private life to be respected under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). This right is not absolute, and the school can interfere with this right as long as it is justified, proportionate, and aligns with the powers to search in the Education Act 1996.

All searches will be conducted in line with the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.

The headteacher, and other authorised staff members, will have the power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item. Mobile phones and similar devices will be deemed as prohibited items that may be searched for in line with the Behaviour Policy.

In all cases the authorised member of staff will always:

- Seek the co-operation of the pupil before conducting a search.
- Ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted.
- Give the pupil the opportunity to ask any questions so that their agreement is informed.
- Have due regard to the DfE's '[Searching, screening and confiscation](#)' guidance.

Staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers. Staff conducting a search must not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing - outer clothing means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear and includes hats, shoes, boots or scarves. Possessions means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control - this includes desks, lockers and bags.

A staff member may ask a pupil to show them what they are doing on their mobile phone or tablet if they reasonably believe that the pupil is using the device to cause harm. If it is judged reasonable, the staff member may inspect the files or data on a pupil's electronic device and delete them if necessary.

Staff members will ensure they have a good reason to examine and delete data on a pupil's electronic device. When determining a good reason to examine data, staff members will ensure they reasonably suspect that the data has been, or could be, used to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.

When determining a good reason to delete data, staff members will consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence and if so, choose not to delete the data. The data may be deleted if it is found likely to cause harm to any person, and the pupil and/or parent refuses to delete the data themselves.

If a mobile phone or other device has been used in a way that may upset, embarrass, threaten or harm another child, staff may confiscate the device and follow the school's safeguarding and behaviour procedures. This includes, for example, taking or sharing photographs or videos of other pupils without permission, using group chats such as WhatsApp to send unkind or upsetting messages, or creating, editing or sharing AI-generated or altered images. Where staff are concerned that images, messages or other content may place a child at risk of harm, or may be evidence of an offence, the device and content will be handled in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and, where appropriate, advice will be sought from the DSL, children's social care or the police before anything is deleted.

The staff member conducting the search must be the same sex as the pupil being searched. A witness to the search must be present; this should also be a staff member of the same sex as the pupil being searched.

Pupils are required to comply with any request to check their electronic device.

Pupils are required to comply with any request to disable the screen lock function of their electronic device and show any staff member what they are doing. Any pupil who refuses to comply with these requests will be disciplined in line with the Behaviour Policy.

9. Sanctions

[Updated] The school will apply sanctions for breaches of this policy in a consistent and proportionate manner, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

[Updated] Where this policy is clearly breached, for example where a device is used, seen, or heard ringing, staff will feel confident to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty. Confiscated devices may be retained for a proportionate length of time, as determined by the Headteacher and in consideration of the circumstances, including the pupil's age, SEND, and

any agreed exceptions or reasonable adjustments. Where a device is confiscated, a parent or carer will usually be required to collect it from school.

[Updated] Additional sanctions may include reflection sheets, missed play times and restorative work, in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

[Updated] Where a breach gives cause to suspect a pupil may be suffering, or may be at risk of, harm, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the DSL.

Confiscated personal electronic devices will be locked away securely.

Bullying via personal electronic devices will be dealt with in line with the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the headteacher.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to members of staff, parents and pupils by the headteacher.

The policy will be shared with parents and carers at the start of each school year and whenever significant changes are made.

The scheduled review date for this policy is 1st September 2027.