

Title and Description	Mobile Phone Policy
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Policy written	May 2026
Approved by	Trust Board
To be reviewed by	Trust Board
Responsibility	Headteacher
Review period	Biannually
Date of next review	May 2028

Below is an AI generated summary of this policy:

Overall Purpose

The policy sets strict rules for mobile phone use in school to:

- Promote **safety, safeguarding, and wellbeing**
 - Prevent **disruption to learning**
 - Protect **data and privacy**
 - Ensure **responsible and appropriate use** by all members of the school community
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Key Rules by Group

1. Students (Years 7–11)

- **Phones are completely banned during the school day** (on site at any time).
 - Phones must **not be seen or heard**.
 - Includes **smartphones and smartwatches (not allowed at all)**.
 - If used:
 - Phone will be **confiscated**
 - **Parent/carer must collect it** from school
 - Refusal to hand over a phone leads to **further sanctions**.
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2. Sixth Form Students

- Allowed phones **only in designated sixth form areas** (out of sight of younger students).
 - Must use devices **appropriately and safely**.
 - Misuse results in **sanctions**.
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3. Staff

- Must **not use personal phones in view of students**.
- Can only use phones:
 - When students are **not present**, or
 - In **exceptional circumstances** (e.g., emergencies).
- Must **not**:
 - Take photos/videos of students on personal devices
 - Share personal contact details with students/parents
 - Use phones for **confidential data or AI tools**

- Work phones (if provided) must be used **professionally and only for work**.
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4. Parents, Visitors, Volunteers

- Must follow rules similar to staff:
 - No phone use **around students**
 - No photos/videos (except of their own child at public events)
 - Must **contact children via the school office**, not directly.
 - Must help **enforce student phone rules on trips**.
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Safeguarding & Behaviour

- Phones may be **searched** or confiscated if there is a safeguarding concern.
 - Serious misuse (e.g., bullying, harmful content, illegal activity) may involve **police or external agencies**.
 - Policy aligns with safeguarding laws and DfE guidance.
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Loss, Theft, and Responsibility

- Students bring phones **at their own risk**.
 - School **accepts no liability** for loss or damage.
 - Confiscated phones are stored safely in the school office.
 - It is parent and carer's responsibility to monitor mobile phone misuse.
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Exceptions

- Limited exceptions (e.g., medical or safeguarding needs):
 - Approved **case-by-case by the Headteacher**
 - Users must follow a strict **acceptable use agreement**.
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Policy Governance

- Enforced by **all staff**.
 - Overseen by the **Headteacher**.
 - Reviewed **every two years** by the Trust Board.
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Core Message

This is a **strict “no mobile phones during the school day” policy** for most students, designed to prioritise **learning, safety, and wellbeing**, with tightly controlled exceptions.

Values and Ethos

Like all good schools, we’re driven by our values above all else. We define these as:

Excellence - Everyone in our community will know and experience success

The most for those that need the most - We will meet the needs of all our learners

Known and valued - Everyone here will be celebrated for who they are and what they do

Collective endeavour - We will achieve success together

Joy - Everyone will know and create joy

These five values determine all that we do, and every part of the school flows from them. They set the direction and act as a compass to ensure we continue to grow and develop as a school in the way that we feel best supports all our students.

1. Introduction and aims

At Framwellgate School Durham we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our students, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Fully align with the staff code of conduct
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school’s other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour such as our child protection & safeguarding policy, the Online Safety policy which covers issues around BYOD and Artificial Intelligence (AI) policy.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection, safeguarding and wellbeing
- Data protection and GDPR issues
- Potential for disruption to learning
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology on the school site.

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 statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). The mobile phone guidance becomes statutory from September 2026. 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.

All visitors, 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 two years, reviewing it, and holding staff and students accountable for its implementation. The Headteacher also has the authority to make exceptions due to exceptional circumstances on a case by case basis.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of students throughout the school day.

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including visitors, volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while children are present or when they are in eyeline of children on the school site. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to times when no students are present.

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone 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 0191 386 6628 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). More information can be found in our data protection policy.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or students, 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 students.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

Staff are permitted to use their mobile phones at work, for example for multi-factor authentication, but should never do this in the eyeline of students.

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 situations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Dealing and management of safeguarding issues.

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 students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office except for in circumstances deemed an emergency.

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 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 students

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that students must not use mobile phones throughout the school day.

Students should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, during breaktimes and at lunchtimes. This applies from the moment they are onsite until they leave the school site. Mobile phones should never be seen or heard on the school site at any time. This is applicable to all students in Years 7 to 11.

5.1 Use of smartwatches or other smartwear technology by students

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 are prohibited to be worn by students during any public examinations. As they can be used to communicate by students, we also do not allow them in school.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances and for sixth-form students

The school may permit students to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, students or parents/carers should contact the Headteacher via the main school office.

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

5.3 Sixth Form Students

Sixth-form students are allowed access to their mobile phones during the school day, to reflect their increased independence and responsibility, but must not compromise our policy on the use of mobile phones for other students. Therefore, they are only permitted to use their mobile phones out of sight of younger students in the 6th Form study area and 6th Form common room, not around the school site. When using their own devices 6th Form students are still required to do so in a safe and appropriate way. Misuse of mobile phones by students in the sixth form will lead to sanctions according to our behaviour policy.

5.4 Sanctions

A student seen using a mobile phone will have the phone confiscated. Failure to follow this instruction will be seen as defiance and then the appropriate sanctions will be issued under the school's behaviour policy.

Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from students under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

If phones are confiscated a parent or carer, not the student, will be asked to collect them from the school office between 3.30-4.00pm during term time only. The school will only allow those parents or carers identified on the school system to collect a mobile phone unless the parent gives written permission for another adult to collect the phone.

Staff have the power to search students' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows us to search a student's phone if there is a good reason to do so, such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person.

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 student'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](#)

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
- Any other inappropriate conduct as determined at the Headteacher's discretion.

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 students, 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 students

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 students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for students 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

Students bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use.

Students must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Phones should be kept in an appropriate school bag throughout the day. 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 students are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the main school office.

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 students' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and students
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

9. Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for students 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:

You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.

Only use your phone for the agreed purpose, for example in monitoring your blood sugar levels if you are diabetic.

You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other students.

You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other students without their consent.

Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.

Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.

Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating students or staff via:

- Email
- Text/messaging app
- Social media

Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting' or asking for or to send nude images.

Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.

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.

Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.

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.

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.

10. Appendix 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where students are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staff room or similar office – phones should not be used in eyeline of any student.
- Do not take photos or recordings of students or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with students
- 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.