



Mobile Phone Policy

2026-2027

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Electronic copies of this plan are available on the website Mereside Primary Academy Blackpool	Mereside Primary Academy
Date of next review	March 2027
Person responsible for review	J. McDonald



Primary School Policy

FCAT Primary Academies Mobile Phones and Devices Policy 2026/27

1. Preamble: National Context & Statutory Duty

In January 2026, the Secretary of State for Education, **Bridget Phillipson**, issued a directive establishing a "national reset" on mobile phones in schools. The Department for Education has explicitly stated that to improve behaviour, learning, and wellbeing, schools should be "phone-free environments" for the entire school day.

Ofsted Inspection Framework (Effective April 2026)

Ofsted will explicitly assess the implementation of this policy starting from the Summer Term 2026. Inspectors will evaluate not just the existence of the policy, but the rigour of its application to ensure a safe, distraction-free culture.

2. Introduction

At **Mereside Primary Academy**, our priority is to create a safe and focused environment for children. We recognise that mobile phones and smart technology are part of modern life, but they have no place in the primary school day. They can cause distraction, disrupt learning, and present safeguarding risks.

3. General Rule: Phone-Free Site

Pupils in Nursery to Year 4

Pupils in these year groups are **not permitted** to bring mobile phones to school. If a child is found with a phone, it will be taken to the school office for safe keeping and must be collected by a parent.

4. The "Walking Home" Exception (Year 5 & 6 Only)

We understand that some older children (Year 5 & 6) walk to and from school independently and may need a phone for personal safety during their journey.

The Protocol:

1. **Permission:** Parents must confirm in writing (or via the school app) that their child has permission to bring a phone for safety reasons.
2. **Hand-In Routine:** Upon entering the school grounds, the phone must be **switched off** and handed immediately to the class teacher or designated office staff.
3. **Secure Storage:** Phones will be stored in a secure, lockable box/cabinet in the classroom or office for the duration of the school day.
4. **Collection:** Phones will be returned to pupils at the end of the day, to be switched on only *after* they have left the school gates.



Note: Phones must not be kept in pupil's coat pockets or school bags, as this poses a risk of loss, damage, or temptation to use them in toilets/cloakrooms.

5. Smart Watches and Wearables

Smart watches (e.g., Apple Watch, VTech, Fitbit with messaging) that allow a child to send messages, take photos, or play games are **prohibited**.

- If a child needs a watch to tell the time, we recommend a simple analogue or digital watch with no "smart" features.
- If a smart watch is brought to school, it must be handed in alongside mobile phones.

6. Sanctions and Procedures

Our approach is one of **Safeguarding and Partnership**. We do not use mobile phone confiscation as a punishment, but as a necessary measure to maintain a safe environment.

If a pupil is found with a phone/device that has not been handed in:

1. **Safe Keeping:** The device will be taken by a member of staff and logged in the school office safe.
2. **Parental Contact:** The school office will contact the parent/carer to inform them.
3. **Collection:** The phone will **not** be returned to the child. The parent/carer must collect the device from the school office at the end of the day.
4. **Review:** If a child repeatedly breaks this rule, the Headteacher may revoke the permission for them to bring a phone to school, even if they walk home alone.

Liability:

The Academy accepts **no liability** for loss or damage to mobile phones or devices brought onto the premises, including those stored in school.

7. Staff and Visitors (Role Modelling)

To support our children, we ask all adults to model "phone-free" behaviour.

- **Parents/Carers:** Try not to use your mobile phone in the playground or corridors when dropping off or collecting children. We want to maximise the time for "hello" and "goodbye" smiles with your child.
- **Events/Assemblies:** We ask that phones are kept away during school performances unless specific permission is given for photos (which must not be shared on social media if other children are visible).
- **Staff:** Staff are prohibited from using personal phones for personal reasons in areas used by pupils.