



The Winns Primary School

Mobile Phone Policy for Children, Staff and Visitors

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1. Introduction and aims

At The Winns Primary School our 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 for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

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

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

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices such as smart watches.

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 [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). 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 visiting staff) are required to actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness the use of a mobile phone in areas other than the staff room or school offices.

3.2 Governors

Governors will ensure that the policy is reviewed and updated in line with Government expectations.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default: anything other than this should be by exception only.

4.1 Personal mobile phones

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

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time 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-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 020 8523 7913 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 Gemini).

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give 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 personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work or anything else that 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.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones or a similar device during the school day in front of pupils for work. Such circumstances may include but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits – the school mobile phone can be used for year 6 residential
- Senior Leadership Team members may need to use their phones for swift communication with each other and office staff on an occasional basis. 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 pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil
 - Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office.

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 school 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 pupils

The school is committed to providing a safe, calm and focused environment in which all pupils can learn and thrive. In line with Department for Education guidance, **The Winns Primary School is a mobile-phone-free school**. Pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones onto the school premises.

This expectation also applies to school residential trips and other school-organised activities, where pupils should not bring or use mobile phones.

We recognise that there may be very exceptional circumstances where a pupil may need to bring a mobile phone to school. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the individual circumstances and any safeguarding, medical or other relevant needs. Where permission is granted, the phone must be handed to the school office on arrival and stored securely for the duration of the school day. It will be returned at the appropriate time.

As part of our safeguarding responsibilities, we regularly remind pupils about the risks associated with mobile phones, smartphones and social media. This includes discussion of online safety, inappropriate or harmful content, cyberbullying, loss of privacy, contact with strangers, and the potential impact of excessive or inappropriate phone and social media use on wellbeing, relationships and learning. Pupils are taught how to recognise risks, make safe choices and seek help when they encounter something that concerns them online.

Our priority is to ensure that pupils experience school as a safe, focused and distraction-free environment. We therefore ask parents and carers to support the school by reinforcing these expectations at home.

Any agreed exception to this policy will be managed in accordance with the individual pupil's circumstances and the school's safeguarding, behaviour and other relevant policies.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

Smartwatches are treated in the same way as mobile phones. If a pupil brings one onto the school site, it will be confiscated and stored securely in the school office until it is collected by a parent/carers or returned in accordance with the school's behaviour procedures.

5.2 Sanctions

If a pupil refuses to hand over a mobile phone or smartwatch, parents/carers will be contacted. Repeated breaches may result in a meeting with parents/carers.

The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs (SEN), disability)
- The pupil'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 [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). This will include speaking with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy, who will consider if pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care, is appropriate

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.

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

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

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:

- Parents/carers may take photographs or recordings only of their own child during public school events, and these images are for personal use only. Images of other children must not be shared on social media without consent.
- Not using phones in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

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 (see notices in Reception area).

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 pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil

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

Where permission has been granted for a pupil to bring a mobile phone in exceptional circumstances, the device must be clearly labelled and handed to the school office immediately upon arrival for secure storage.

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

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of a member of the Senior Leadership Team in a timely manner.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies such as the school's Behaviour Policy, Acceptable Use Agreement, Volunteer Policy and Safeguarding Policy.