



Date: June 2025

# Mobile Phone Policy

Combe Pafford School



# 1 Introduction and Aims

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

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set 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
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

## 2 Relevant guidance

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This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [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

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### 3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy.

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 Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

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

### 3.2 Governors

School Governors will review any changes to this policy and ensure it is in keeping with school operating procedures.

## 4 Use of mobile phones by staff

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### 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 lessons or where pupils are present within the school day. 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).

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-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01803 327902 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 Class Charts and entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Gemini). Please refer to our School Data Protection Policy and our Code of Conduct for Responsible Computer and Internet Use by Staff.

### 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.

All communication with parents should be through Class Chart Announcements or a telephone call using the school landline telephones where possible. Staff should refrain from contacting parents by using their mobile phone. All telephone conversations with parents should be logged and recorded within Provision Maps.

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

School staff must not upload school communication Apps to their mobile phones due to the data contained.

### 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 aren't limited to:

- To access the staff WhatsApp at the end of the school day for transport purposes
- When supporting a pupil that has a risk-assessment
- To use multi-factor authentication

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

Trip Leaders are allowed to use their personal mobile phones when supervising residential visits or school trips to contact school as needed. Trip leaders should ensure that any communication with parents regarding the trip, is sent through Class Charts or alternatively, the school office by telephone call, Text to Parents or email. A back at base contact number should be shared with parents if a trip is outside of school hours or is a residential trip, a direct number to contact the Headteacher or in their absence, the Deputy Headteacher directly rather than the trip leader.

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 which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers during school hours. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

## 4.5 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 DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that pupils should not use mobile phones throughout the school day. Pupils should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at break times and at lunchtimes.

- Pupils are allowed to bring their mobile phones for use on their journey to school
- Class tutors collect mobile phones in on arrival at 8:55am
- Mobile phones are stored in a secure location, such as lockable classroom draw or cupboard
- Mobile phones are handed back to pupils at the end of the school day at 3:25pm
- During trips and residential visits, pupils and parents will be informed of the approach to mobile phone usage.

## 5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

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.

Pupils are not permitted to wear Smart Watches during the school day unless this is linked to a medical need such as diabetes or epilepsy.

- Pupils may be able to use a smartwatch to communicate via text, even if their phone is in their bag or pocket
- Smartwatches are often smaller than mobile phones and at a distance look similar to regular watches, so might be easier to conceal
- Smartwatches can be more fragile than mobile phones, so any confiscation / storage procedures may need to be modified to safely accommodate them

Smart watches are not to be brought into school by pupils. If they are worn in school, they should be removed and handed in along with mobile phones during morning registration and parents should be contacted to be reminded of the expectation.

## 5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances and for sixth-form pupils

Some pupils are allowed to access a mobile phone within the school day. For instance:

- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar
- Sixth-form pupils

The school may permit pupils 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, pupils or parents/carers should contact the relevant Phase Leader.

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

Sixth-form pupils 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 pupils. Therefore, they are only permitted to use their mobile phones out of sight of younger pupils and only whilst in the Sixth Form building. Misuse of mobile phones by pupils in the sixth form will lead to sanctions according to our behaviour policy.

## 5.3 Sanctions

The following school sanctions should be followed should a pupil breach this policy:

- Failure to hand in a mobile phone will lead to confiscation and must be reported to the Phase Leader or Designated Safeguarding Lead for action.
- If a mobile phone is confiscated, it must be held by a member of SLT until the end of the school day and parents must be informed.
- Should there be evidence of phone misuse, schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006:
  - Bullying through social media
  - The sharing of inappropriate messages or images of a sexual nature
  - Searching inappropriate material or websites
  - The taking of photos or videos of staff or other pupils
- School staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows staff to search a pupil'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).
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should collect confiscated mobile phones as soon as they are made aware of misuse. Parents will be notified and invited into school to collect the mobile phone and discuss the incident. Headteachers can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the [DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools](#)
- Depending on the seriousness of this incident, the pupil may be banned from bringing the phone in to school for an agreed period of time. This will be decided by the Headteacher.
- Sanctions for mobile phone use link with the Combe Pafford School Behaviour Policy.

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 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 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

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

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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 pupils, 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 pupils

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 pupils, their work, or anything else which 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

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Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are handed to class tutors to be stored securely throughout the day.

Pupils must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones. 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 pupils are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the Phase Leader or DSL office in a secure location/locked cabinet. Parents will be informed of the member of staff that has possession of the phone.

Lost phones should be returned to the Main School Office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

## 8 Monitoring and review

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The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of 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
- Amendments suggested by school governors

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead in a timely manner.

### 9. Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

#### Acceptable Use Agreement for pupils

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone to make calls, send messages or access Social Media during school hours.
2. Phones must be switched off and handed into class tutors when not required.
3. You may never use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
  - a. Email
  - b. Text/messaging app
  - c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. 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.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. 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.
13. 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.