



Mobile phone policy

Written: January 2026

To be reviewed: January 2029

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Introduction and aims

At Chatsworth Infant 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.

Relevant guidance

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](#).

Roles and responsibilities

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 Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every three 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.

Use of mobile phones by staff

Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted 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 **020 8300 9295** as a point of emergency contact.

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 detailed guidance on data protection can be found within the GDPR manual.

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.

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 evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

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

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

Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

As an infant school, pupils are **not expected to bring mobile phones or other personal communication devices to school.**

If, in exceptional circumstances, a parent/carer believes their child needs to bring a mobile phone to school, this must be agreed in advance with the Headteacher.

Any authorised mobile phone must:

- be switched off before entering the school site;
- be handed to the school office immediately on arrival;
- be clearly labelled with the pupil's name and class;
- be stored securely in the school office throughout the school day; and
- be collected from the school office at the end of the school day by the pupil or parent/carer, as agreed.

Mobile phones must not be used anywhere on the school premises.

Exceptions

The school may permit a pupil to bring a mobile phone to school in exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Examples may include pupils with specific medical needs, safeguarding requirements or other exceptional circumstances.

Parents/carers should contact the Headteacher to request permission before a mobile phone is brought onto the school site.

Loss, theft or damage

Where the school has agreed to a pupil bringing a mobile phone in exceptional circumstances, the device will be stored securely in the school office during the school day.

All authorised devices must be clearly labelled with the pupil's name and recorded when handed in and collected. The school will take reasonable care to ensure that devices are stored securely while in its possession.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones brought onto the school site without prior authorisation. Where a device is authorised, the school will take all reasonable steps to safeguard it while it is in its care.

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.

In line with the school's approach to mobile phones, pupils are not permitted to wear or bring smartwatches to school if they have the capability to:

- make or receive calls or messages;
- access the internet;
- take photographs or record video or audio; or
- otherwise communicate with others.

This is to safeguard pupils and staff, protect privacy, minimise distraction and ensure consistency with the school's mobile phone policy.

If, in exceptional circumstances, a pupil has permission from the Headteacher to bring a smartwatch to school, it must be switched off before entering the school site and handed to the school office on arrival, where it will be stored securely until the end of the school day.

Watches that are solely used to tell the time and do not have communication, internet or recording capabilities are permitted.

Sanctions

If a pupil brings a mobile phone or prohibited smartwatch to school without prior authorisation, or uses such a device on the school premises, the device will be confiscated by a member of staff and taken to the school office for safekeeping.

The device will only be returned to a parent or carer, who will be asked to collect it from the school office.

Any breach of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy. The school will take into account the age of the pupil, any additional needs or disabilities, and any safeguarding concerns when determining an appropriate response.

Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a mobile phone or smartwatch contains evidence of behaviour that may place a child or others at risk of harm, or where a criminal offence may have been committed, the school will act in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation, and may involve external agencies, including the police, where appropriate.

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

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 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 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 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.

Loss, theft or damage

Pupils who have prior permission to bring a mobile phone to school must ensure that the device is clearly labelled with the pupil's full name and class. The phone must be switched off before entering the school site and handed to the school office immediately on arrival, where it will be stored securely until the end of the school day. The phone must not be used on the school premises.

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, 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 pupils are travelling to and from school.

Parents/carers will be made aware of this policy through publication on the school website. Where permission is granted for a pupil to bring a mobile phone to school in exceptional circumstances, parents/carers will be informed of the school's procedures, including the requirement for the device to be handed into the school office on arrival and the school's arrangements for its safekeeping.

Confiscated mobile phones and smartwatches will be stored securely in a locked cupboard within the school office. The device will be clearly labelled with the pupil's name and a record will be kept of when it was confiscated and when it was returned.

The device will only be returned to a parent or carer, who will be required to collect it from the school office.

The school will take reasonable care to ensure that confiscated devices are stored securely whilst in its possession. Lost property, including mobile phones or smartwatches, should be handed to the school office, which will make reasonable efforts to identify and contact the owner.

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 Cathy Kinsley (Headteacher – 020 8300 8295) in a timely manner.

Appendix 1: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carers(s) name(s):	

- The school has agreed to allow [pupil name] to bring [their] mobile phone to school because they:
- Need the phone to support their medical needs
- Attend a before- or after-school activity where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers
- Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its [code of conduct / acceptable use agreement].

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carers signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

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/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to The Bungalow
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils

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.

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