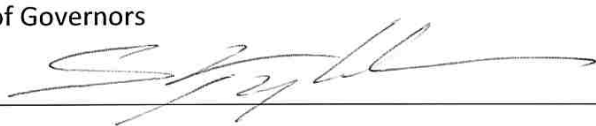


Foreland Fields School

Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy



Governing Body Approval and Categories

Date of Last Scrutiny	29 th September 2026
Date (Month/Year) of Next Scrutiny	29 th September 2027
Date of Last Ratification	7 th October 2026
Category of the Policy	Online Safety
Named Lead for Writing the Policy	Deputy Headteacher (Health)
Named Governor for Scrutiny	Chair of Resources
Approval Body	Full Governing Body
Display on Main Web Site	Yes
NOTE: IF THIS POLICY HAS BEEN SCRUTINISED BY A DIFFERENT LEAD GOVERNOR OR BEEN RATIFIED BY A DIFFERENT GOVERNING TEAM PLEASE STATE WHICH TEAM	To be scrutinised and ratified at full governing body meeting.
Signed – Chair of Governors 	7-10-26

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Foreland Fields School is a Rights Respecting School thereby this policy ensures that the following rights are acknowledged:



Article 3 (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 17 (access to information from the media) Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand. Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them.

Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect). Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 28 (right to education). Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights.

Foreland Fields School

Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy

This policy has been brought in due to the new statutory guidance which dictates that state-funded schools operate as "mobile phone-free environments by default". Students should have no access to mobile phones—or smart technology with similar functionality—throughout the entire school day, including lessons, break times, and lunchtime.

INTRODUCTION

At Foreland Fields School, our Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy aims to:

- Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones
- Provide 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.

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.

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 2026.

Use of Mobile Phones by Students

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that the use of mobile phones is prohibited throughout the school day. If a learner breaches this policy, the phone or device will be confiscated and will be held in a secure place.

Students must not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes or at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

On arrival at school, phones will be collected by classroom staff and be stored securely in the classroom. Phones will then be handed back to students at the end of the school day. If a phone is needed for a specific medical condition, e.g. for a diabetic child, this will be enabled on an individual risk assessment basis.

As appropriate, students will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Students will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

Students will be educated regarding the safe and appropriate use of mobile and smart technology including mobile phones, and will be made aware of behaviour expectations and consequences. Foreland Fields School wants to encourage greater active teaching of the use of mobile phones by students to support independent living for example; through specific apps which support with task sequencing, safe use of social media to support social integration, shopping online, navigating, messaging/talking with friends and family, as a means of leisure (gaming, music, exploring interests). This is likely to be part of the student's independence objectives, found in Explorers, Discovers and Pioneers Pathways. In line with the new DfE guidance, this will be achieved without the use of students or staff phones, but through pre-prepared screen shots, presentations and videos.

If a learner needs to contact his/her parents or carers they will be allowed to use a school phone. Parents are advised to contact their child via the setting office; exceptions may be permitted on a case-by-case basis, as approved by the Headteacher.

Mobile phones and personal devices must not be taken into examinations. Students found in possession of a mobile phone or personal device during an exam will be reported to the appropriate examining body. This may result in the withdrawal from either that examination or all examinations.

Staff may confiscate a learner's mobile phone or personal smart device if they believe it is being used to contravene our Positive Behaviour or Anti-Bullying Policies or could contain youth produced sexual imagery (sexting). Where a concern involves potentially indecent images/videos of children, including images/videos generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI), on a student's personal mobile or smart technology device, staff will respond in line with our Child Protection Policy; they will confiscate devices, avoid looking at any content and refer the incident to the DSL (or Deputy) urgently.

Where there are any concerns regarding students use of mobile or smart technology or policy breaches, they will be dealt with in accordance with our existing policies, including Anti-Bullying, Child Protection and Behaviour.

If there is suspicion that data or files on a student's personal mobile or smart technology device may be illegal, or may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the device will be confiscated and handed over to the police for further investigation.

Searches of mobile phone or personal smart devices will only be carried out in accordance with our policy, which is in line with the DfE Searching, screening and confiscation advice.

Student's mobile phones or personal smart devices may be searched by a member of the leadership team, with the consent of the learner or a parent/ carer. Content may be deleted or requested to be deleted, if it contravenes our policies. See www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation.

Mobile phones and devices that have been confiscated will be released to parents or carers at the completion of any investigation.

Where there is a concern that a child is at risk of harm, we will respond in line with our Child Protection Policy.

In exceptional circumstances, and in accordance with our behaviour policy and the DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' guidance, the headteacher or authorised members of staff may examine or erase data or files if there is a good reason to do so. DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' guidance states;

- In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to examine images, data or files, the Headteacher or an authorised member of staff will need to reasonably suspect that the images, data or files on the device has been, or could be used, to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.
- In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to erase any images, data or files from the device, the member of staff should consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence. In those instances, the data or files should not be deleted, and the device must be handed to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.
- If the data or files are not suspected to be evidence in relation to an offence, the Headteacher or an authorised member of staff may delete the images, data or files if the continued existence of the data or file is likely to continue to cause harm to any person and the student and/or the parent refuses to delete the data or files themselves.
- If the Headteacher or a member of staff finds any data or files that they suspect might constitute a specified offence, they will be delivered to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Use of Smartwatches by Students

The DfE's statutory mobile phones 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. They are therefore, included in the school's approach to mobile phones and, as such, are prohibited for student use across the school day.

Should a student wear a smartwatch to school, this will be collected from them and stored for the duration of the day in the same way as mobile phones.

Loss, Theft or Damage

Students bringing mobile phones or smart devices to school must ensure that their phones are appropriately labelled, ready to be stored away securely when not in use during the school day.

Students must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions.

Once collected from students, the school becomes responsible for the phone/smartwatch and can be held responsible for loss, theft or damage.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while students are travelling to and from school.

Use of Mobile Phones by Staff

Staff should also refer to and follow the Staff Behaviour Policy and the DfE guidance on use of mobile phones in schools. Within the DfE guidance, it states that staff should *'not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of students throughout the school day. This will empower staff to better challenge students to meet the school expectations and effectively enforce the prohibition of mobile phones throughout the school day'*. The DfE expectation is about modelling of behavior and as such Foreland Fields School expects staff who wear smart watches or similar to have turned off their Bluetooth functionality throughout the day and not use their device to send or receive messages or complete other active functions.

Staff members must ensure that use of mobile phones and devices takes place in accordance with the law, as well as relevant policy and procedures, such as: Confidentiality, Child Protection, Data Security and Acceptable Use.

Staff must not carry portable digital equipment such as mobile phones with them whilst working with students unless they are supporting students during an off-site activity (see below).

Mobile phones may not be used by staff during lessons or allocated school time. They must not be carried by staff (on their person) but must be kept in a locker or secure location away from children. Phones may be left on, in lockers, as long as they are silenced or switched to vibrate. Phones may be used by staff working after school hours, as long as this is not in the

vicinity of students attending after school clubs. Any staff supporting students during after-school clubs must not use their phones until students have left the school premises.

Staff may not use personal devices during teaching periods, unless permission has been given by the Headteacher or Deputy DSL responsible for Online Safety, such as in emergency circumstances.

Staff not working directly with students may keep their mobile phones in their office or working area, however must ensure they do not carry them on their person when walking around the school. This rule applies to any staff who are not required to be escorted around the building, including members of the Governing Body.

Members of staff are not permitted to use their own personal phones or devices for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside of the setting in a professional capacity, other than after having sought permission from a member of the school's leadership team. Any pre-existing relationships which could compromise this must be discussed with leaders/managers.

During emergencies, effective and regular communication between school and home is imperative. Teachers may be required to contact parents/carers by email or phone, and owing to the logistics of home working, it may become necessary for teachers to use their own devices to maintain this contact. When phoning from personal devices, teachers must dial 141 before the number in order to ensure the teacher's own number is kept anonymous. Personal devices can only be used when given permission by a member of the school leadership team. On no account should staff share their personal phone number (home or mobile) with parents/carers.

Staff will not use any personal devices directly with children and will only use work-provided equipment during lessons/educational activities.

Staff may only use their phones at break and lunchtimes within allocated staff rooms. The Bluetooth functionality of a mobile phone must be switched off at all times and may not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones.

On no account should mobile phones and personal devices be used in certain areas within the school site such as changing rooms and toilets.

Group leaders accompanying students during an off-site activity must ensure they take a phone with them, for emergencies, and list the number on the journey plans. These phones must only be used in an emergency and, should the leader assist students with intimate care needs, or be separated from the main group, they must hand them over to another responsible adult.

Drivers of minibuses must ensure they hand their mobile phone to another member of staff whilst driving the minibus.

Staff must ensure that any content brought on site via mobile phones and personal devices are compatible with their professional role and expectations.

If a member of staff is thought to have illegal content saved or stored on a mobile phone or personal device or have committed a criminal offence, then the police will be contacted and allegations will be responded to following the allegations management policy.

Mobile phones and personally owned mobile devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner. Foreland Fields school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

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 students 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 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.

If a member of staff breaches the school mobile phone policy, disciplinary action may be taken.

Work Phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

School leaders have mobile phones. These phones do not have the capability for taking photographs. The photo function has been removed. All staff should feel free to challenge school leaders, if they have reason to believe the phone they are using is not a school-owned device.

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.

Members of staff will be issued with a work phone number and email address, where contact with students or parents/ carers is required. Setting mobile phones and devices will be suitably protected via a passcode/password/pin and must only be accessed or used by members of staff.

Setting mobile phones and devices will always be used in accordance with the staff code of conduct/behaviour policy, acceptable use policy and other relevant policies.

Where staff and/or students are using school/setting provided mobile phones and/or devices, they will be informed prior to use via our Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that activity may be monitored for safeguarding reasons and to ensure policy compliance.

GPS Trackers

The school is aware that a small number of its students, due to their needs (SLD/ASD), and despite full supervision, behaviour planning and robust risk assessments, may still be at risk of absconson. Whilst the strategies above are non-negotiable and will always be in place, the advent of GPS trackers designed to support vulnerable students gives schools and parents the possibility of adding a further layer of protection.

Due to reasons relating to data protection the school will provide its own GPS trackers.

Staff/parents and carers should refer to and follow the procedure document, 'supporting students with complex needs at risk of absconson'. This takes into account issues such as consent, risk assessment, data protection and coordination of response in the event of absconson.

Visitors (including Parents) use of Mobile Phones

Parents/carers and visitors (including volunteers and contractors) must use their mobile and smart technology in accordance with our acceptable use policy and other associated policies, such as: Anti-Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Child Protection and Image Use Policies.

We will ensure appropriate signage and information is displayed and provided to inform parents, carers and visitors of expectations of use.

Visitors, including volunteers and contractors, who are on site for regular or extended periods of time are expected to use their mobile phones and personal smart devices in

accordance with our acceptable use of technology policy and other associated policies, including but not limited to Anti-Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Child Protection and Image Use Policies.

If visitors require access to mobile and smart technology, for example when working with students as part of multi-agency activity, this will be discussed with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteachers prior to use being permitted.

Any arrangements regarding agreed visitor access to mobile/smart technology will be documented and recorded by the school/setting. This may include undertaking appropriate risk assessments.

Members of staff are expected to challenge visitors if they have concerns and will always inform the DSL (or Deputy) or Headteacher of any breaches our policy.

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.

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