



Gosforth Park First School

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GPFS Mobile Phone Policy

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Mobile Phone Policy

1. Introduction and aims

At Gosforth Park First 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.

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 includes [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), which sets out the expectation that all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default.

3. Roles and responsibilities

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply 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, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

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

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 pupils are present or during contact time. 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 0191 2851957 as a point of emergency contact.

Staff are permitted to wear smartwatches provided they **do not have a camera feature** and are placed in **flight mode**, with access to Wi-Fi, email, WhatsApp, text messages, Messenger, and similar communication applications disabled.

No staff member should have their phone on their person or be checking messages (phone or smart watch) etc during teaching time.

Social media must not be used during the school day unless it is for educational purposes. We must ensure that privacy settings are at their highest on any of our social media.

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 by 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:

- 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. If a personal device needs to be used in an emergency, dial 141 before entering the contact phone number to maintain privacy of your personal number.

4.5 Work phones

Some members of staff may be 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
- Make sure that all communication and conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use the school phone to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil

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 DfE's mobile phone guidance says that the use of mobile phones should be prohibited throughout the school day.

Pupils of Gosforth Park First School are not permitted to have mobile phones with them during the school



day. If a mobile phone is brought into school, staff will collect this and store it safely in the school office. School will contact the parents/carers and make them aware that a phone has been stored securely and that they will need to collect this at the end of the school day.

School will support pupils with specific medical needs who require access to a mobile phone (for example, for diabetic pupils who use continuous glucose monitoring systems that connect to a smart device). In such instances, the mobile phone should be handed to a staff member at the start of the school day who will oversee this during the day. A staff member will hand the device back to a parent/carer at the end of the day. With the exception of the applicable application, all other uses of the phone should be disabled before it is handed to school. The device will not be permitted to connect to the school internet.

In the case of permission due to exceptional circumstances, permission will only be granted where there is a documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the headteacher via the school office.

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's code of conduct / acceptable use agreement] for mobile phone use (Appendix 1).

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to make sure 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. Pupils will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

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 its 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 smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

Pupils are not permitted to wear any type of smartwatch to school. If a smartwatch is brought into school, staff will collect this and store it safely in the school office. School will contact the parents/carers and make them aware that the smartwatch has been stored securely and that they will need to collect this at the end of the school day.

School will support pupils with specific medical needs who require access to a smartwatch (for example, for diabetic pupils who use continuous glucose monitoring systems that connect to a smart device). With the exception of the applicable application, all other uses of the smartwatch should be disabled before it is handed



to school. The device will not be permitted to connect to the school internet.

In the case of permission due to exceptional circumstances, permission will only be granted where there is a documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the headteacher via the school office.

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's code of conduct / acceptable use agreement] for mobile phone use (Appendix 1).

5.3 Sanctions

Should a mobile phone or smartwatch be collected in; it will be stored securely in the school office until the end of the school day.

In specific circumstances, staff do have the power to search pupils' phones 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).

If inappropriate content is found on a phone, or if inappropriate behaviour is suspected, 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 whether pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care is appropriate

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

Parents and carers 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:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils on the school site at anytime
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present



Phones should not be used after accessing the school unless agreed with the Headteacher (See Appendix 3)

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 must not:

- Use their phone during the visit at any point
- 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, but must refer any proposed 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.

7. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to making sure that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account of relevant advice from the DfE, the local authority and any other relevant organisations.



Appendix 1: Pupil Code of Conduct / Acceptable Use Agreement

You must adhere to the following rules if you bring your mobile phone/smart device to school:

- You may not use your mobile phone/smart device throughout the school day with exception of the specific medical use it is needed for
- Phones/smart devices must be switched off (not just put on 'silent') when not required
- You may not use your mobile phone/smart device in the toilets. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
- You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils.
- Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
- Don't share your phone's/smart device's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
- Don't use your mobile phone/smart device to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the school's behaviour policy. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - Email
 - Text/messaging app
 - Social media
- Don't use your phone/smart device to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence.
- Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone/smart device even when you aren't in school.
- You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone/smart device. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy.



Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow [pupil name] to bring [their] mobile phone to school because they:

List the appropriate reasons here:

- Travel to and from school alone
- Are a young carer
- Need the phone to support their medical needs
- Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed
- 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/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	



Appendix 3: Mobile Phone Information Slip For Visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- 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 main office area, community room or interview room. Visitors engaged in work in a professional capacity may use the staffroom.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child) or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

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.