



THE DORMSTON SCHOOL

Mobile Phone Policy

Date	Review date	Lead	Nominated Governor or Committee
01.09.2026	01.09.2029	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Full Governors
			Ratified: Y
			Date: 01.09.2026
			Website: Yes

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1. Introduction and aims

Under the Children's Well Being and Schools Act all schools are legally required to operate a mobile free environment from 1st September 2026. Phone cannot be accessed during lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes or transitions between classes. This includes any device that can receive messages or access the internet.

At The Dormston School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, smart watches and smart glasses 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 in line with the Children's Well Being and Schools Act and the DFE Mobile Phones in Schools Guidance
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy, Anti Bullying Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement for pupils and staff.

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 such as smartphone, smart watches, smart glasses, including meta glasses.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's 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

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 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.

3.2 Governors

Governors will monitor this policy on an annual basis and review every three years.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are encouraged not to use their personal mobile phones in front of pupils. 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 01384 816395 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 Bard).

More detailed information can be found in the schools Data Protection Policy and Acceptable Use Policy for 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.

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. (Our Code of Conduct for Employees and Volunteers and Staff Acceptable Use Policy also outlines this.)

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 are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips (a school mobile will be used)
- Supervising residential visit (a school mobile will be used)

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 contact cannot be made via the school phone, it 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 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 **DfE's statutory** mobile phone guidance says that all schools should be phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only.

In line with the above The Dormston School operates a '**confiscated if seen**' policy throughout the school day to reduce distraction and disruption.

- During the school day pupils are expected to either hand their phone in to pupil reception or keep it powered off in their school bag. Phones can be handed in before 8.40am and then collected at 3.10pm.
- It is the responsibility of the pupil to keep their phone token safe. The school will not take responsibility for any circumstances resulting from the loss of this token; school will accept no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged items.
- If a pupil is **seen with a mobile phone/smart watch/air pods/smart glasses**, regardless of circumstance, (with the exception of authorised medical use), the device will be confiscated until the end of the school day.
- Refusal to hand over a phone will be recorded on the schools behaviour management system (Go4Schools).

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [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 as they can be used in a similar way to mobile phones in terms of distraction and disruption to learning.
- If a pupil is seen with a smart watch it will be confiscated until the end of the school day.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

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 Mrs Elliott.

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

5.3 Sanctions

If a pupil is **seen with a mobile phone** the following sanctions will apply:

- **Seen with a mobile phone, smart watch, airpods, smart glasses:**
Behaviour event (BEH): Confiscation of **mobile phone/electronic device (-1)** will be added onto Go4Schools and a detention issued.
- **Refusal to hand over a phone:**
Behaviour event (BEH): Refusal to hand in a **mobile phone/electronic device (-1)** will be added onto Go4Schools. Pastoral staff will collect the pupil, confiscate the phone and contact home. A detention will be issued.

- **Repeat incidents / Safeguarding concerns:**

When any incident of mobile phone use interferes with teaching and learning or is used to video incidents involving our pupils, further sanctions and the schools Secondary Intervention and Prevention Officers (SIPO) will be involved at the discretion of the school. Devices may be confiscated and a parent/carer meeting

will be triggered to check for inappropriate material involving the school and/or to safeguard the child/children. The phone will only be returned to the parent/carer with parental responsibility on our school system.

- ✓ Parents/carers and pupils should be aware that any mobile phone or electronic device used during an exam situation will disqualify the candidate from that exam and could jeopardise future exams;
- ✓ JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) considers mobile phone/smart watch/smart glasses/airpod use in examinations an 'offence' that could cause 'disqualification from the whole qualification or from all qualifications taken in that series'

School are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under section 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2026.

School staff do 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 schools to search a phone if there is a good reason to do so, however, school will try and work with parents / carers on such matters as much as possible.

In each case, the sanction given will 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:

- 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/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 contact 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

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. Our Home School Agreement clearly states this.

Confiscated phones will be placed in named envelopes and stored in Reception in a secure location. Phones will only be returned to the owner or parent / carer with parental responsibility.

Lost phones should be returned to pupil reception. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

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

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

Acceptable Use Agreement

You have been permitted to have your phone out of your bag within school hours and must therefore agree to the following rules

1. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
2. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
3. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
4. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
5. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
6. 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
7. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
8. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
9. 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.
10. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
11. 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.
12. 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.

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

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

The school has agreed to allow _____ to bring their mobile phone to school because they:

- Need the phone to support their medical needs
- Anything deemed by the school to be an exceptional circumstance:

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its 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: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

11. Appendix 3: Mobile phone information poster for visitors – Displayed in school reception

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 staff room.
- 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.
