



MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Priestley Smith Specialist VI School

July 2026

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Policy status: Non Statutory

Responsible member of SLT: Joanna Garvey Headteacher

Priestley Smith School is committed to the rights of the child as outlined in the UN Convention and is working towards Rights Respecting Schools Gold award. This belief influences everything the school does and impacts upon all our policies.

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 23 (children with a disability) A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

At Priestley Smith 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 including smart watches.

2. RELEVANT GUIDANCE

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Department for Education's statutory guidance 'Mobile phones in schools', which became statutory on 29 June 2026 and should be followed by schools from 1 September 2026. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools> 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](#).

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.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every year, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation. The Headteacher will ensure that all staff, pupils and parents/carers are familiar with this policy, how it is implemented and the consequences of breaching it.

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

Pupils will be reminded of the policy, including the consequences and sanctions for breaching it, at the start of each school year and again at appropriate intervals during the year.

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 children 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 0121 325 3900 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 Gemini).

See the school's data protection policy, e-safety policy and AI Policy.

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 should not be connecting with parents/carers or pupils over messaging apps or social media (See E-Safety ICT and communications policies)

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.

Classroom apps or programmes that may require the use of a member of staff's mobile phone (eg DOJO), staff are encouraged to use computers and mobile phones should not be out in classrooms.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

Exceptionally, staff may use a personal mobile phone for an authorised work purpose where this is necessary and there is no practical school-device alternative. 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:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

Staff are permitted to use personal mobile phones when supervising residential visits or school trips for personal use, however the school phone's contact details will be available to pupils and parents/carers. 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

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 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

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 is prohibited throughout the school day.

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

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school should hand them into the school office at the start of the school day

The school will make reasonable adjustments to this policy where required by law and will consider adaptations for individual pupils where exceptional circumstances make access to a mobile phone necessary. This may include pupils with disabilities, medical conditions or other particular individual circumstances. Any adjustment will be considered on a case-by-case basis and, wherever possible, will limit use to the specific purpose, time and location for which access is required. For pupils with specific medical needs (for example, for diabetic pupils who use continuous glucose monitoring systems that connect to a smart device) a neoprene lockable pouch will be provided that allows the phone to communicate with their medical device and can be unlocked easily by a member of staff should the alarm go off. Any agreed adjustment will be recorded and communicated to relevant staff so that the pupil is not sanctioned for authorised use.

Pupils 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. 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 [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. Some smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

Smartwatches should be handed in at the school office in the same way as a mobile phone.

5.2 Travelling to and from school

Pupils are allowed to bring a mobile phone to be used on their journey to and from school but should be handed in at the start of the school day. The school recognises that parents/carers may wish pupils to have access to a mobile phone while travelling independently to and from school. This does not affect the requirement for the device to be handed in on arrival.

The school has considered the position of pupils in the sixth form/post-16 provision. Given the school's context, the mobile phone-free expectations in this policy apply equally to post-16 pupils unless an individual adjustment has been agreed.

5.3 Sanctions

Pupils in breach of this policy.

- Mobile phones may be confiscated and parents/carers may be required to collect them. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) If they are confiscated, Confiscated devices will be stored securely in a locked cabinet in the school office until a meeting can be held with parents. (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](#))
- The Headteacher, and members of staff authorised by the Headteacher, may exercise statutory powers of search in accordance with the Department for Education's [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). guidance. Mobile phones and similar devices are identified in the school's behaviour policy as items that may be searched for where the legal requirements for a search are met. The DfE guidance allows staff to search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so Any examination of data or files on a confiscated device, and any deletion or retention of data, will only take place where permitted by law and in accordance with the current DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance.
- Any sanction, including confiscation, will be reasonable and proportionate and will take account of the pupil's individual circumstances, including age, SEND, disability and any other relevant circumstances.

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

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

Parents 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, 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, when working with pupils or while children are present

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 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. School staff will facilitate urgent communication between parents/carers and pupils where appropriate.

7. LOSS, THEFT OR DAMAGE

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that their phones are appropriately labelled, ready to be stored away securely in the school office when not in use during the school 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, 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.

This policy will be circulated to pupils and parents/carers so that they are aware of the school's disclaimer

Confiscated devices will be stored securely in a locked cabinet in the school office until they are returned.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. 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

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

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

- E-safety
- Communication
- Code of conduct
- Safeguarding
- Positive Behaviour policy
- GDPR
- AI

Code of conduct for pupils

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone or any other similar device (eg smart watches) to school:

1. Phones must be handed into reception at the start of the school day and maybe collected at the end of the school day
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. If you require your phone for medical purpose you must place your phone in a lockable neoprene bag. This is because:
 - a. The volume should be on full so that alarms can be heard
 - b. You may **not** use your mobile phone throughout the school day, including lesson times, in between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, or at the beginning or end of the school day, unless a teacher specifically allows you to.
 - c. You may **not** use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
 - d. You **cannot** take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils.
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 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
7. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence. 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.
13. Pupils who need their phone for medical devices will lock their device in a neoprene pouch (provided by the school) so that they can keep their device on them during the school day

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 switched off or stored away while pupils are present. If you need to make or receive an urgent call, please use the school office
- 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.