

Mobile phone policy



September 2026

Approved by:	Kate Hall (Chair of Governors)	Date: 01.09.2026
Last reviewed on:	01.09.2026	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

Contents

1. Introduction and aims	2
2. Relevant guidance	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	3
4. Use of mobile phones by staff	3
5. Use of mobile phones by pupils.....	5
7. Loss, theft or damage	7
8. Monitoring and review.....	8
9. Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances	9
10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school	10
11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors	11

1. Introduction and aims

At Finchale Primary 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 safeguarding, 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 is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

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.

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

The governing board will take overall responsibility for monitoring this policy and holding the Headteacher to account for its implementation. They will ensure the Headteacher is appropriately supported to make informed decisions regarding the effective use of mobile phones in the school

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 not permitted to use their personal mobile phone during the school day, while in the presence of children. 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 3865187) 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). More detailed guidance can be found in our Data Protection policy, AI Policy and Acceptable Use policies.

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.

More information can be found in our Acceptable Use 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, or with the express permission of the Headteacher, following which any personal data must be immediately uploaded to a secure cloud location and deleted from person devices.

School staff may use personal devices to access the school internet and classroom apps such as Class Dojo. However, measures such as the use of passwords, 2-factor authentication and signing out following use will be put in place to ensure security. Staff use of the school's internet and apps will be monitored. For more information, please see our staff Acceptable Use policy.

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:

- 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 store 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. In exceptional circumstances, if this should be necessary, then they are advised to use the prefix 141 before dialling the recipient's number to ensure their own number is protected.

4.5 Work phones

Only authorised staff are permitted to use any 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

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

Pupils who walk to and from school without an accompanying adult may carry a mobile phone for safety. In these cases, children may bring a mobile phone to school but must deposit it with the school office at the start of the day and collect it from the office at the end of the school day.

Parents and carers need to be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to pupils having a mobile phone in terms of personal safety there are also some associated risks such as potential for theft, bullying and inappropriate contact, including grooming by unsuitable persons.

We would also like to alert parents and carers to the risks that using a mobile phone has while walking to and from school. Children who are concentrating on using their phone can have reduced general safety awareness which may result in road accidents and/or injury if a child is not paying attention to their surroundings.

Mobile phones deposited in the office by children will be kept safely in a locked drawer. Whilst the school will take every reasonable care, it accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure mobile phones are properly insured. It is recommended that pupil's phones are security marked and password protected.

Pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones into any other areas of the school. Any mobile phones discovered to have been brought into the school and not handed in to the office will be confiscated immediately and can be collected from the school office at the end of the day.

Pupils are not allowed to carry mobile phones on any school trips.

If a member of the staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone brought into school by a pupil has unsuitable material stored on it, the pupil will be required to hand over the phone immediately to a member of staff and parents or carers will be asked to collect it from a member of the senior leadership team. In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile phone may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the phone will be handed over to the school's Headteacher for further investigation and the parent or carer asked to collect it from them.

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.

The school will treat smartwatches in the same way as mobile phones and so they should be handed in at the main office at the beginning of the day and collected when the pupil leaves. We advise that parents/carers provide watches for children that do not incorporate smart technology.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, 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 Natalie Ward (Headteacher).

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

Where pupils breach this policy, the school/setting will respond proportionately and appropriately.

Any mobile phones discovered to have been brought into the school will be confiscated immediately and can be collected from the school office at the end of the day.

Appropriate sanctions and/or pastoral/welfare support will be implemented in line with our school behaviour policy and parents/carers will be informed of concerns or breaches as appropriate. In each case, any 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

Where incidents are investigated, leadership staff will review the circumstances, identify any lessons learned and implement changes to policy, procedures or curriculum provision where required.

Finchale Primary School expects staff, parents/carers and pupils to work in partnership to resolve concerns and support positive outcomes.

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

Parents/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, unless it is of their own child or they have express permission from the child's parent/carer
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones 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.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that their phones are appropriately labelled and ready to be stored away securely in the main 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.

Notices are displayed in the main entrance of the school to let visitors, parents and carers know our policies and procedures around the use of mobile phones.

Visitors and supply staff are not allowed to use mobile phones in front of children and phones must be kept in their bags. Mobile phones can be used in the staff room.

If a visitor, parent or carer is seen using their mobile phone, they will be asked politely to turn it off/desist from using it/remove it from children's view.

Lost phones should be returned to the main 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 Natalie Ward (Headteacher) or Kate Hall (Chair of Governors) in a timely manner.

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

Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement (Mobile Phone)

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone throughout the school day, including lesson times, in between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, unless a 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.
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 other pupils.
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.
7. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence.
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 inappropriate language while on the phone. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
10. Don't use your phone to view or share 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

MOBILE PHONE OR PERSONAL DEVICE PERMISSION FORM

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

The school has agreed to allow the above pupil to bring their mobile phone or personal device to school because they:

List the appropriate reasons here. We've listed some common reasons below (you can delete as required):

- > 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 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:	

11. Appendix 3: Template 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 staff room.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone 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.

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 staff room.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone 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.

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 staff room.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone 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.
