

Mobile Phone Protocol



Pride
Passion
Partnership
Professionalism
Positivity

Mobile Phone Protocol

1. Introduction and aim

At Pooles Park our protocol 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 protocol 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

Throughout this protocol, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones, tablets, smart watches and similar devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This protocol 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 protocol 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 protocol and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

Volunteers (and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) must alert a member of staff if they witness or are aware of a breach of this protocol.

The Executive Headteacher and Heads of School are responsible for monitoring the protocol 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 communicating the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors, and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone for personal reasons during the school day while pupils are present. Use of mobile phones for personal reasons must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present.

Staff may only use their personal phones for urgent messaging on the school Teams channel. Communication in this group is for urgent messaging only and children's names or photos should NOT be displayed in this group.

Staff may not use their phones for taking photos or videos of children. iPads are provided for this purpose.

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:

- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members
- The staff member needing their phone for medical reasons such as the use of a continuous glucose monitor.

The school SLT 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 as a point of emergency contact.

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).

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.

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:

- Sending and accessing urgent messages via the school Teams channel
- 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

Work phones

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, and 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

Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this protocol may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary protocol for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils are not permitted to bring phones to school unless by prior agreement with the Executive Headteacher or Head of School, for example, for a specific medical reason such as the use of a continuous glucose monitor.

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.

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 protocol.

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. Pupil's smart watches and any similar technology must also be handed in to the school office on entering the school premises and be collected at the end of the day.

Sanctions

If a pupil brings their phone into class without permission, the phone will be held in the school office until a parent or carer is able to collect it. The school will ask the parent to check for any media that has been recorded during the school day and permanently delete this from the phone.

Parents and pupils should be aware that 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.

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

Parents and carers are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this protocol 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 protocol 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 protocol 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. They must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the school day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

If a pupil is given permission to bring their phone to school, they must ensure that it is locked and stored securely.

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 or from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office.

Lost phones should be returned to the school admin team. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to making sure that this protocol has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the protocol, 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 DfE, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

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