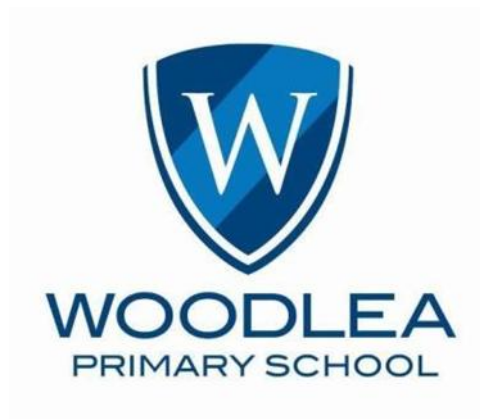




Woodlea Primary School Policy for use of Mobile Phones

Reviewed by	Headteacher
Reviewed in	Autumn Term 1 2026
Status & Review Cycle	Every 2 years
Next Review date	Autumn Term 2 2028

Introduction & Aims:

At Woodlea Primary School, our policy aims to:

- Ensure the learning environment for pupils 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
- 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.

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.

Roles and responsibilities

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 every 2 years (or in response to changing guidance), 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.

Use of mobile phones by staff

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while 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 staff room).

Personal mobile phones should not be used to contact parents or children.

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:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school

- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

Staff will need to inform the headteacher. 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 (01883 652358) 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 refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents 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 or pupils.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which 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.

For safeguarding security access, the use of the CPOMs Authenticator on personal mobile phone is permitted to grant access to CPOMs for those required.

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 aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips (where the school phone is inaccessible/unavailable)
- Supervising residential visits
- Authenticating their use of Office 365

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 which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office or on a school mobile. However, if it is an emergency and the school office is not available as staff are off-site and the school phone is inaccessible, then staff may use their personal phones, but enter 141 to hide their number from parents/carers.

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 all communication or 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 policy may face disciplinary action.
See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

Use of mobile phones by pupils

Creating a Safe, Calm and Focused School Environment

From September 2026, our school will become a smartphone free environment for pupils. This reflects national guidance (DfE, 2024 and Jan 2026) and growing evidence that smartphones can distract children, affect wellbeing, and create safeguarding concerns in schools (UNESCO, 2023). The Department for Education (DfE) has published revised guidance on the pupil use of mobile phones in schools which comes alongside the government's announcement that from April 2026, schools are 'expected to be mobile phone-free environments.' In addition, the DfE has launched a consultation aimed at mapping out next steps to 'boost children's wellbeing online' and ensure they develop a 'healthy relationship' with smartphones and social media.

Key points at a glance:

- Pupils are not allowed smartphones and smart watches in school.
- Only basic "brick phones" (calls and texts only) may be brought into school — and only by pupils who walk/travel via public transport to and from school without an adult.
- All phones must be switched off before entering the school site at the gate.
- Phones must be handed in on arrival and will be stored securely until home time in the school office.
- Any child using, showing, or turning on a phone during the school day will have it kept by the school until collected by a parent/carer.
- Exceptions will only apply to agreed medical or safeguarding plans.

Why are we doing this?

Our aim is to work together with families to encourage safer use of mobile phones and to consider the impact of screen time on children's sleep habits and to promote and support children's wellbeing.

National and international evidence shows that smartphones in schools can:

- Distract children from learning.
- Increase risks of online harm and cyberbullying.
- Affect children's wellbeing and social development.

Who may bring a phone?

Our pupils who:

- Are in Years 5 or 6 who travel to or from school independently, walking without an adult or via public transport. This does not include those who just walk to the gate.
- Those who have a medical condition which requires the use of a mobile phone to administer medicine.

What counts as a 'Brick Phone'?

A suitable phone:

- Can make calls
- Can send texts
- Cannot access the internet, apps, games, music, cameras, or social media.

How the system will work?

Morning arrival

- Phones must be switched off before entering the gate.
- Children hand their phone to staff at the designated collection point.
- Phones are stored in a secure area.

During the school day

- Children do not have access to phones at any time.

Home time

- Phones are returned to children at the end of the school day.
- Phones must remain switched off until they leave the school site.

Medical or Safeguarding needs

In some circumstances, supporting a pupil with their medical condition can involve the use of a mobile phone. For example, pupils with diabetes might use continuous glucose monitoring with a sensor linked to their mobile phone to monitor blood sugar levels. Where mobile phone use allows pupils to manage their medical condition effectively, arrangements will be made for children whose parents are able to evidence that they require specialist devices as part of a medical or safeguarding plan.

Misuse of phones

If a child uses or turns on their phone during the school day:

- The phone will be taken from them and kept in the school office.
- A parent or carer must collect it.

Use of mobile phones outside the school day

Mobile phones/electronic devices are not permitted by pupils on residential trips or trips outside of the normal school day. This is to ensure that pupils' educational experience on a school trip is not disrupted by the presence of mobile phones and safeguarding is upheld.

- Pupils are not allowed to have mobile phones with them on-site.
- Where there is agreement between class teacher and parents/carers for phones to be brought into school, it is the child's responsibility to hand the phone in and to pick it up at the end of the day. The phone should be labelled with name. The class teacher will send the phone to the school office where it will be kept safely until the end of the day. The school do not accept any liability for any damage or loss.
- If a phone is brought into school outside of these conditions is a serious breach of the rules; it will be confiscated and handed to the parent or carer at the end of the day and a consequence agreed.

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:

- Making of or sharing nudes and semi-nudes including images that are digitally altered or wholly generated using AI (such as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes')
- 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

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly.

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 smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

As a school we recognise that many smart watch fitness devices which record steps are increasingly popular. However, some devices can be set up to connect to the internet, take photographs or text, independent of a phone. These devices can also cause distractions.

Smart watches should not be worn in school.

If pupils are seen wearing a smart watch, they will be asked to remove it and it will be stored in the school office where it can be collected by the parent at an appropriate time.

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, unless it's 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
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which 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. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, and are stored securely when not in use [during the school day](#).

Pupils must secure their 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 (inc. smartwatches) 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.

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 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:

- 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.

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

“Brick” phones are only allowed at Woodlea, unless a pupil has a specific medical condition where a smartphone is needed.

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:
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

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones.

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 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Print out and cut copies of this slip to give to visitors when they arrive at your school.

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 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.

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