



Highwood Primary School

Mobile Phone Policy

Approved by:	Bindu Rai	Date: 19/06/2026
Last reviewed on:	19/06/2026	
Next review due by:	18/06/2028	

Contents

Contents	2
1. Introduction and aims	2
2. Relevant guidance	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	2
4. Use of mobile phones by staff	3
5. Use of mobile phones by pupils	4
7. Loss, theft or damage	6
8. Monitoring and review	6
Appendix 1: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors	7

1. Introduction and aims

At Highwood 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 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 two years 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

This policy will be submitted to the governing body every two years for review and ratification every two 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 not permitted to use their personal mobile phone during the school day, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to designated areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it is 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 give the school office number (01923 256210) 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). For further details, please see our Data Protection policy and Online Safety Policy which can be found on our website.

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.

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:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips

- Supervising residential visits – the school has a mobile phone and the number is shared with parents before departure.

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 during school hours, and the school mobile phone outside of school hours.

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 always appropriate and professional, in line with our staff code of conduct

4.6 Zello App for Inclusion Team

To support the Inclusion Team with the care of our children with SEND, the school has undertaken use of the Zello app to aid swift communication between team members.

Use is limited to operational support requests only, for example asking for assistance, requesting cover, or locating a colleague. It is not to be used to discuss pupils by name, share SEND details, behaviour information, safeguarding concerns, or anything that could identify a child. No pupil names or personal data are to be transmitted. Anything sensitive will be discussed face to face or via existing secure systems.

The app must be used during school working hours only. Phones must be locked, not shared and messages are not to be recorded or saved.

The app must be disabled outside working hours.

Staff with access to this app are aware that it is to be used solely to communicate with their colleagues within their team. Under no circumstances should they access other functions present on their phone (e.g. messaging, social media, emails) unless they are without children and in one of the designated phone-use areas. Use of the phone whilst children are present for any other reason than to communicate with colleagues on Zello will be treated as a breach of this policy and could result in disciplinary action.

4.7 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

Only children in Year 6 are permitted to bring mobile phones to school. These must be handed in at morning registration and not used during the school day, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff. The phones are brought to the school office by two responsible children from each class and kept out of class.

One exception to this rule is for children with diabetes who have glucose monitoring systems on a smart device.

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

Children at Highwood are not permitted to wear smartwatches. 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.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

In exceptional circumstances, the school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school. Permission will only be granted where there is documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission from the headteacher, parents/carers should email admin@highwood.herts.sch.uk.

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's Online Safety Policy which contains the Code for Acceptable Use of IT.

5.3 Sanctions

If a pupil is found to be in breach of this policy, the phone will be confiscated and the child's parent/s will need to come to the school office to collect the phone. The school reserves the right to search a pupil's phone if they have reason to believe that the phone contains inappropriate content or has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person. The school will ensure that at least two members of the Senior Leadership Team are present before the phone is accessed.

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 (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 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 and 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, ready to be stored 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.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school safe to prevent loss, damage or theft.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office team who 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 organisation.

Appendix 1: 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 switched to silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. To use your phone you should go to the staff room/staff hub or the main reception area
- 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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