

Sunnyfields Primary School



Strong Roots, Bright Futures

Mobile Phone and Personal Device Policy

Document History	
Date created:	30 th January 2026
Reviewing officer:	Deputy Head Teacher
Review frequency:	Ongoing, update as needed
Review date:	29 th January 2027
Approved by:	Governing Body
Date approved:	11 th February 2026
Signed by Head Teacher, Kimberley Hutton:	
Signed by Chair of Governors, Tom Butterworth:	
Date Signed:	11 th February 2026

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Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to set clear expectations for the use of mobile phones in school in order to safeguard pupils, promote their welfare, and maintain an environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning. The policy reflects the school's commitment to ensuring that pupils feel safe, are protected from harm, and are able to focus fully on their education.

Scope

This policy applies to all pupils, parents/carers, and staff at the school.

This policy includes mobile phones, smartwatches and similar personal devices capable of messaging, receiving notifications, accessing the internet or recording audio, photographs or video. References to phones throughout this policy include these devices. Ordinary watches without these functions are not included. The same restrictions apply throughout the school day, including lessons, breaks and lunchtime, and on school trips and residential visits.

Rationale for Restricting Mobile Phone Use

Sunnyfields Primary School recognises its statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. In line with this duty, mobile phone use by pupils during the school day is not permitted for the following reasons:

- **Safeguarding:** Mobile phones can enable unsupervised access to online content, social media, and communication platforms, increasing the risk of exposure to inappropriate material or harmful contact.
- **Bullying and Peer-on-Peer Abuse:** The misuse of mobile phones can contribute to cyberbullying, harassment, or the sharing of images or messages without consent.
- **Learning and Behaviour:** Mobile phones can distract pupils from learning and reduce levels of attention, engagement, and productivity in lessons.
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing:** Limiting access to mobile phones during the school day supports pupils' emotional wellbeing and reduces anxiety linked to online interactions and social media.
- **Privacy and Dignity:** The use of cameras and recording features may compromise the privacy and dignity of pupils and staff.

For these reasons, mobile phone use by pupils during the school day is not permitted.

Permission to bring Mobile Phones to School

- Only children in **Year 5 and Year 6** are permitted to bring a mobile phone to school.
- This permission applies **only** to children who walk to school independently.
- Exceptions may be made only at the discretion of the head teacher in exceptional circumstances, e.g. medical reasons.

Reasonable adjustments and necessary access for disability or medical needs will be agreed with parents/carers and recorded in the pupil's support or healthcare plan. These legal duties will guide decisions about exceptions and sanctions.

Procedures for Mobile Phones in School

- Mobile phones must be **turned off at the school gates**.
- Phones must be placed securely in the child's school bag upon entering the school grounds.
- On entering the classroom, phones must be **handed to the class teacher** for safekeeping during the school day.

Permitted smartwatches and similar devices must also be switched off and handed in; they must not be worn or accessed during the school day unless an agreed adjustment applies.

Use of Mobile Phones by Staff and Visitors

- Staff and visitors are not permitted to use personal mobile phones in areas where children are present.
- Mobile phones may only be used in designated staff areas, such as staff rooms or senior leadership offices.
- Parents and carers visiting the school for special events, e.g. Sports Day, special mentions assembly, etc., will be permitted to take photographs in accordance with the filming and photography policy.
- Under no circumstances should mobile phones be used in front of children whilst on school premises.

Mobile Phone Use on School Trips

Staff may use mobile devices during school trips for school-related communication, including contacting the school or emergency services where necessary. Wherever possible, such use should be carried out discreetly and out of sight of pupils, to maintain appropriate supervision and professional boundaries.

Responsibility and Liability

- All responsibility and liability for mobile phones lies with the child and their parent/carer.
- Sunnyfields Primary School accepts **no responsibility** for mobile phones that are lost, stolen, or damaged.

Communicating the policy and contacting pupils

The policy will be published on the school website and shared with parents/carers on admission and following updates. Staff will be briefed on its implementation, and pupils will be reminded of the expectations and sanctions at the start of each school year and when needed.

Parents/carers who need to contact their child during the school day must telephone the school office rather than contact the child's device. Office staff will relay messages promptly and arrange contact where necessary. Pupils needing to contact home should ask a member of staff, who will arrange this through the office.

Failure to follow the Policy

- If a mobile phone is **not handed in** and is found on a child during the school day, it will be **confiscated by a member of staff** and taken to the school office, where it will be held until the end of the school day.
- Sunnyfields Primary School office will inform parents/carers that the phone has been confiscated.
- Parents/carers must collect the phone **in person** from the school office.
- The child will **not** be permitted to collect the phone themselves.
- If a child is found to have not handed in their phone on **two or more separate occasions**, they will **no longer be permitted** to bring a mobile phone into school.

Confiscation must be reasonable and proportionate, taking account of age, SEND, medical needs and agreed adjustments. Confiscated devices will be labelled, stored securely in the office and returned as set out above, unless safeguarding concerns or police involvement require longer retention. Parents/carers will be told the reason and collection arrangements.

Searching for devices

Mobile phones, smartwatches and similar personal devices held in breach of this policy are identified in the school rules as items for which a search may be made. The headteacher or authorised staff may search without consent where there are reasonable grounds to suspect possession. Staff will first explain the search and seek cooperation.

Searches must respect privacy and individual needs. A pupil search requires a staff member of the same sex and a staff witness. Possessions must be searched with the pupil and a staff witness present. Staff may search outer clothing, pockets and possessions, but cannot require removal of more than outer clothing or conduct strip searches. The narrow urgent serious-harm exceptions in DfE guidance apply.

Force must not be used solely to search for devices banned by school rules. Refusal will be referred to the headteacher. All searches will be recorded on CPOMS, with reasons, staff present, findings and follow-up; parents/carers will be informed promptly. Safeguarding concerns will be referred to the DSL.

Confiscation does not authorise routine inspection of messages or files. Examination requires a lawful basis and good reason under DfE guidance. Staff must not intentionally view or copy suspected indecent images of children; refer to the DSL. Preserve suspected evidence and follow guidance on police referral.

Mobile Phones on School Trips and Residential Visits

- Mobile phones are **not permitted** on school trips or residential stays.
- Phones should be **left at home** on these occasions.
- If a phone is brought to school on a trip or residential day, it will **not be allowed** to be taken on the trip or visit and will remain in school.
- Sunnyfields Primary School accepts **no liability** for loss, theft, or damage to phones left in school during trips or residential visits.

Parent/Carer Agreement

Parents and carers are asked to support the school by ensuring that their child understands and follows this mobile phone policy. By allowing their child to bring a mobile phone to school, parents/carers agree that:

- Their child will comply fully with the school's mobile phone procedures.
- The mobile phone is brought to school at their own risk.
- Sunnyfields Primary School accepts no responsibility for loss, theft, or damage to the device.
- They will collect confiscated phones in person from the school office when required.

Parents/carers should also discuss safe and responsible phone use with their child, including online behaviour and safeguarding expectations.

Alignment with UK Safeguarding and Online Safety Guidance

This policy is informed by and aligned with UK safeguarding and online safety guidance, including:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*, which emphasises the importance of protecting children from online risks, including inappropriate content, contact, and conduct.
- *The Education Act 2002*, which places a duty on schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- *UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance*, which highlights the need for clear boundaries around device use to support children's safety and wellbeing.

Department for Education statutory guidance on mobile phones in schools, which the school must have regard to, and guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

[DfE Mobile phones in schools](#)

[DfE Searching screening and confiscation in schools](#)

[DfE Behaviour in schools](#)

By restricting mobile phone use during the school day, the school aims to reduce safeguarding risks, prevent bullying and misuse of technology, and promote positive mental health, focus, and engagement in learning.

Equality Impact Statement

Sunnyfields Primary School is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils. This policy has been reviewed with due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and is intended to be applied fairly and consistently to all pupils. The policy does not discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics and supports the school's duty to foster good relations and eliminate discrimination. Reasonable adjustments will be considered where appropriate to ensure individual needs are met.

Linked Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety (E-Safety) Policy
- Photography & Filming Policy

Together, these policies support Sunnyfields Primary School's commitment to safeguarding pupils, promoting positive behaviour, and ensuring safe and responsible use of technology.

Policy Approval, Monitoring and Review

This policy has been approved by the Governing Body.

The policy will be reviewed regularly, or sooner if required, to ensure it remains compliant with statutory guidance and reflects best practice in safeguarding and pupil wellbeing.