



Mobile Technology Policy

2026 27

Through consultation with pupils, staff and Governors, we have reviewed our school values and behaviour policy for the start of the new academic Year.

Our School values and behaviour system are based around our distinctively Christian vision. This is inspired by the parable of the sower Luke 8: 4-15.

“Through God’s love, we are the rich soil where roots grow and seeds flourish”

1. Introduction

At Staindrop CE Primary School, we recognise that mobile phones and wearable smart technology are a common part of daily life. In accordance with the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Mobile phones in schools, which became statutory on 29 June 2026 and should be followed by schools from 1 September 2026, Staindrop CE Primary School is a mobile phone-free environment by default. Mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality must not be used by pupils throughout the school day, except where an agreed individual exception or reasonable adjustment applies. This supports a calm, safe and supportive environment in which pupils can focus on teaching and learning without unnecessary digital distraction.

Schools have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to take such steps as are reasonable to avoid substantial disadvantage to a disabled pupil caused by the school's policies or practices. Allowing a disabled pupil access to their mobile phone during the school day, where this is necessary because of the nature of their disability, may constitute a reasonable adjustment.

Maintained schools and academies also have a duty under the Children and Families Act 2014 to have arrangements in place to support pupils with medical conditions. In some circumstances, this may involve the use of a mobile phone or smart technology. For example, a pupil with diabetes may use continuous glucose monitoring involving a sensor linked to a mobile phone. Where the use of a device enables a pupil to manage their medical condition effectively, access will be facilitated appropriately. Where appropriate, agreed arrangements will be recorded within the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body: The governing body is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place to meet the school's statutory duties and for monitoring the effective implementation of this policy.

School Leadership: School leaders are responsible for implementing, communicating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it remains effective and reflects current statutory guidance and safeguarding expectations.

Staff: All staff, including teachers, support staff and supply staff, are expected to consistently implement this policy, model responsible behaviour and address breaches by pupils.

Volunteers and Contractors: Volunteers and contractors are required to alert a member of staff if they witness a breach of this policy.

3. Staff Use of Mobile Phones

To set a positive example and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of pupils, all staff must adhere to the following expectations:

- **Personal use:** Personal mobile phones must not be used for personal reasons in the presence of pupils during the school day. Personal use should be restricted to non-contact time in private staff areas. Where a personal device is exceptionally required for an authorised professional purpose, such as multi-factor authentication, its use should

be brief, appropriate and consistent with the school's safeguarding and data protection arrangements. The DfE guidance recognises that legitimate professional uses of a phone may occasionally be appropriate.

- **Data protection:** Personal devices must not be used to store pupil personal data, confidential school information or photographs of pupils.
 - **Safeguarding:** Staff must not share personal contact details with pupils or communicate with pupils through personal social media accounts.
 - **School-issued devices:** Staff provided with a school-issued mobile phone or device must use it appropriately and professionally and in accordance with the school's safeguarding, data protection and acceptable-use arrangements.
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4. Use of Mobile Phones and Wearable Technology by Pupils

Pupils are prohibited from accessing or using mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtimes, except where an agreed individual exception or reasonable adjustment applies. This reflects the DfE expectation that pupils should not have access to their mobile phones throughout the school day.

4.1 Storage

Pupils who bring a mobile phone or applicable smart device to school must hand it to their class teacher on arrival. Devices will be stored securely and returned at the end of the school day.

4.2 Sanctions and Confiscation

Failure to comply with this policy, including unauthorised use of a mobile phone or smart device, may result in confiscation.

Any sanction or confiscation will be reasonable and proportionate and applied in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy, taking account of the individual circumstances of the pupil, including age and SEND where relevant. The DfE guidance expressly recognises confiscation and detention as possible sanctions for breaches of a school's mobile phone policy.

Repeated or serious breaches may result in further sanctions in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Where the use of a device raises a safeguarding concern or indicates that a pupil may be at risk of harm, staff will follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and refer the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy as appropriate.

4.3 Exceptions and Reasonable Adjustments

Staindrop CE Primary School recognises that some pupils may require access to a mobile phone or smart technology because of a disability, medical condition, caring responsibility or other exceptional individual circumstance.

Requests will be considered on their individual merits, and reasonable adjustments will be made where required. Any agreed access will normally be limited to the specific purpose, times and locations necessary.

Where appropriate, arrangements relating to a medical condition will be recorded within the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan.

Parents and carers should contact the school office to discuss any necessary adaptations or reasonable adjustments.

This approach reflects the statutory guidance's requirement to consider reasonable adjustments and flexibility for particular pupils according to their individual circumstances.

4.4 Education

Through the curriculum and wider school life, pupils will be taught about the risks associated with mobile phones and smart technology, including online safety, distraction, disruption and inappropriate use.

Pupils will also be helped to understand the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment and how responsible use of technology can contribute to their own safety and the wellbeing of others. The statutory guidance specifically recommends educating pupils about both the risks of mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

4.5 Searching

The headteacher and staff authorised by the headteacher may search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil possesses a prohibited item specified in legislation, or an item identified in the school rules as an item for which a search may be undertaken.

In accordance with DfE guidance, Staindrop CE Primary School identifies mobile phones and similar smart devices as items that may be searched for. This will also be reflected within the school's Behaviour Policy.

Any search will be undertaken in accordance with current DfE Searching, screening and confiscation guidance and the school's Behaviour Policy. The DfE specifically states that headteachers can and should identify mobile phones and similar devices as items that may be searched for within their behaviour policy.

4.6 Online Safety and Safeguarding

Nothing within this policy prevents a pupil from being supported to access their device where this is necessary to report, evidence or discuss an online safety or safeguarding concern with an appropriate member of staff.

Any safeguarding concerns arising from the use of a device will be managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Online Safety Policy.

The statutory guidance states that schools should ensure pupils are able to access their mobile phone where necessary when raising concerns with teachers about issues that have occurred online.

4.7 Residential Visits and School Trips

At Staindrop CE Primary School, we recognise that residential visits and educational trips are valuable opportunities for pupils to develop independence, build relationships and enjoy learning beyond the classroom.

Pupils should not normally bring mobile phones on school trips or residential visits unless specific permission has been given by the school. Where phones are permitted for a particular visit, clear expectations for their use will be communicated to pupils and parents in advance.

This ensures that mobile phones do not distract from pupils' learning, participation, safety or enjoyment of the experience. This approach is consistent with the statutory guidance, which allows schools to determine arrangements for residential visits and trips outside the normal school day while ensuring that pupils' educational experiences are not disrupted by mobile phones.

5. Use of Phones by Parents, Volunteers and Visitors

Visitors, parents and volunteers must comply with the following expectations while on school premises:

- Mobile phones should be kept on silent or vibrate and should not normally be used where pupils are present.
- Photography, video or audio recording of pupils is not permitted while on the school site or during school activities unless specific permission has been given by the school.
- The school office is the primary point of contact for parents and carers who need to contact their child during the school day.

Directing parents to the school office where they need to contact their child is specifically supported by the statutory DfE guidance.

6. Communication of the Policy

This policy will be published and made available to parents and carers. The school's expectations regarding mobile phones and smart technology will be communicated clearly to pupils, parents, staff, volunteers and visitors.

Pupils will be reminded of the school's expectations and the consequences of breaching the policy at the beginning of each academic year and at appropriate points throughout the year.

Parents and carers are expected to support the school's mobile phone-free approach and reinforce these expectations with their children.

The DfE guidance states that schools should publish details of their mobile phone policy and ensure staff, pupils and parents are familiar with its expectations, implementation and sanctions. It also states that pupils should be reminded of the policy at the start of each school year and subsequently where appropriate.

7. Loss, Theft or Damage

Pupils who bring mobile phones or smart devices onto school premises do so at their own risk.

The school will take reasonable steps to store devices handed in or lawfully confiscated securely but cannot guarantee against loss, theft or damage.

The school and its staff will act in accordance with the relevant legal framework when confiscating and retaining a device. The DfE guidance confirms statutory protection from liability for loss or damage to items confiscated as a disciplinary penalty where staff have acted lawfully.

8. Monitoring and Review

The headteacher and governing body will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy.

The policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that its impact on education, behaviour, safeguarding and pupil welfare remains positive. Reviews will take account of appropriate feedback from staff, pupils and parents and will reflect any changes to legislation, statutory guidance or Department for Education expectations.

Related School Policies and Guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- SEND Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- DfE Mobile phones in schools' statutory guidance
- DfE Searching, screening and confiscation guidance