

Outwood Primary School
Mobile and Smart Technology Policy 2026

Version	Author	Policy approved by	Approval date	Review date
V2	J Maude	Full Governing Body	1st October 2026	October 2027

1. Introduction and aims

At Outwood Primary School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones / smart devices, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupil, 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.

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 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

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy.

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 two years, 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.

3.2 Governors

Governors will review and ratify this policy 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, while the children are present in school. 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 staffroom).

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 (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 use the school office number 0161 4371715 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)

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found in the school's data protection policy and acceptable use policy.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps regarding school matters. However, if a staff member has a pre-existing personal relationship with a parent (e.g., as a friend or family member outside of school), clear professional boundaries must be maintained while on site. School business or pupil information must never be discussed via personal channels. Staff should ensure that school-related communication with parent-friends does not cross over into professional duties. Official school business must go through official school channels (school email, office phone).

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 for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- 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

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 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 appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct

4.6 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

Pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones whilst on the school premises or on residential trips.

If a pupil needs to bring a mobile phone to school they must have signed consent from their parents/ carers giving permission for the child to have a mobile and agreeing that they will stored securely by staff and be switched off whilst in the setting.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils & staff

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 smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

Pupils are not permitted to wear a smartwatch that has smart technology in them as stated above.

Staff are allowed to use smartwatches, but they follow the same policy as mobile phones:

- Staff are not to use their watch to send messages, photos, make phone calls or transfer any other kind of data whilst working with children. Any communications using their smartwatch must be during their own lunch/break time and away from children.
- Staff are not permitted to take or store images of pupils on their smartwatch.
- Personal information about staff, pupils or the school is not to be taken on a smartwatch.

- Smartwatches are not allowed to join the school WiFi.
- Notifications must be turned off whilst using your smartwatch at school.

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

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 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, or when working with pupils

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 contact 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/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 make sure that their phones are appropriately labelled, ready to be stored away securely in the teacher's or Headteacher's locked cupboard 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 or from school.

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

7.1 Air Tags / Location Trackers

What are location trackers?

AirTags are small, remote tracking devices which are often used to keep track of the location of luggage and personal items such as keys and wallets. Some other devices, such as watches and smartphones, may also offer this functionality. Although often not designed for this purpose, tracking devices are sometimes used by parents and carers to track their child's location.

Our policy on the use of trackers

We understand that location trackers such as AirTags can provide reassurance to parents and carers, particularly those whose children travel a long distance to and from school or who are going on a school trip.

However, we're concerned about:

Unauthorised tracking: where a pupil is tracked without their knowledge, or by a person who has no legal access to them. Trackers can also indicate the location of anyone travelling with the pupil who has not consented to be tracked in this way.

Additional functions: alarms, two-way communication, remote listening capability and other functions that some trackers provide can be disruptive and raise data protection and legal concerns Increasing anxiety: disruptions to expected location data – due to unavoidable changes of route or plan (e.g. on a school trip), or to device loss or malfunction – can cause anxiety to both parents/carers and to pupils and staff who are aware of potential parent/carer worry.

For these reasons we have decided not to allow location tracking devices on school grounds, on school trips or at off-site events.

If we do find that a pupil is carrying or using a tracking device, we will confiscate it until the end of the school day.

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 organisations