



ENGLEFIELD CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mobile Phone Procedure

Sowing the seeds for a flourishing future

1. Purpose

This procedure sets out how Englefield CE Primary School will implement its mobile-phone-free approach.

It should be read alongside the school's:

- Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Practice Guide
- Acceptable Use / Online Safety arrangements
- Physical Intervention Policy, where relevant.

The procedure supports the school's Christian vision that every child should achieve, belong and thrive in a safe, respectful and purposeful environment.

The procedure is intended to ensure that mobile phones and similar personal interactive communication devices do not undermine learning, relationships, wellbeing or safeguarding.

From 1 September 2026, the school will operate a mobile-phone-free approach in accordance with the Department for Education's statutory Mobile Phones in Schools guidance. The guidance expects schools to prevent pupils from having access to mobile phones throughout the school day, including lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime, except where an appropriate exception applies.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to:

- all registered pupils;
- mobile phones brought onto school premises;
- smart watches and other personal interactive communication devices where they have comparable functionality, including messaging, notifications, recording, communication or internet access;
- devices brought to school for travel, communication or other personal reasons; and
- mobile-phone use during the school day, including educational activities taking place away from the classroom.

For the purposes of this procedure, "mobile phone" includes a smartphone or other mobile communication device capable of sending or receiving messages, accessing the internet, taking photographs or recording audio or video.

The school may apply the same restrictions to other personal smart devices where they have comparable functionality, such as smart watches.

Devices provided by or on behalf of the school for educational purposes are not covered by this procedure where they are being used in accordance with school arrangements.

3. The School's Expectation

Englefield CE Primary School is a mobile-phone-free school during the school day.

Pupils should not have access to or use a mobile phone during any part of the school day, including during and between lessons, assemblies, breaktimes, lunchtimes, on trips or visits and during any before or after school clubs.

The school considers the school day to run from the start of the first school session (8.45am) until the end of the last school session (3.30pm).

This approach supports our school's three expectations: **Be Safe. Be Respectful. Be Ready to Learn.**

It reduces distraction and supports pupils' learning, relationships, wellbeing and safeguarding. The DfE identifies risks associated with mobile-phone use in school including loss of focus, classroom disruption and increased bullying.

4. Bringing a Mobile Phone to School

The school does not normally require pupils to bring a mobile phone to school. Parents and carers remain responsible for deciding whether their child needs to bring a mobile phone to school, and this must be agreed with the headteacher.

Where a pupil has an agreed reason for bringing a mobile phone to school, the device must be switched off before entering the school premises or immediately on arrival and handed to the designated member of staff (headteacher, class teacher or school secretary). They will ensure it is placed in a secure box in the school office, and remains inaccessible to the pupil throughout the school day.

The device must not be used, checked, accessed or removed during the school day unless an agreed exception applies.

The school accepts no responsibility for personal devices brought to school other than where the school has expressly agreed to take responsibility for their secure storage.

5. Start-of-Day Procedure

Where a pupil is permitted to bring a mobile phone to school, the following procedure will apply.

The pupil must:

- switch the phone off;
- hand it to the designated member of staff or place it in the designated secure storage;
- ensure the phone is clearly identifiable where required; and
- not attempt to retrieve or access the device during the school day.

The designated member of staff will:

- receive or supervise the secure storage of the device;
- follow the school's agreed storage arrangements;
- maintain appropriate security and confidentiality;
- ensure devices are not accessible to pupils during the school day; and
- return devices at the agreed end-of-day time.

The school should maintain an appropriate system for recording devices where phones are collected by staff.

6. End-of-Day Procedure

At the end of the school day, permitted devices may be returned to pupils in accordance with the school's agreed arrangements.

A pupil must not access their phone until they are off school premises, or are permitted to do so under the school's arrangements with that individual.

Where a device has been retained because of misuse, the school will follow the procedure in Section 9 rather than automatically returning it at the normal collection time.

7. Exceptions and Reasonable Adjustments

The school's mobile-phone-free approach applies by default. However, the school recognises that individual exceptions may be necessary.

Exceptions may be considered where a pupil:

- has a medical need requiring use of a mobile phone or connected health technology;
- has a disability or SEND-related need requiring use of a device;
- requires assistive technology;
- has an individual safeguarding or welfare reason;
- has another significant individual circumstance where an exception is considered necessary and proportionate.

The DfE guidance recognises that exceptions may be required for children with specific SEND, disabilities or medical conditions and allows school leaders to determine appropriate individual arrangements.

Any exception should be:

- agreed by the Headteacher or delegated senior leader;
- recorded where appropriate;
- clearly communicated to relevant staff;
- limited to what is reasonably necessary; and
- reviewed periodically.

An exception does not give unrestricted access to a device. The school will agree the circumstances, purpose, timing and method of use.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where required by law.

8. Smart Watches and Similar Devices

Smart watches and other personal interactive communication devices with functionality comparable to a mobile phone are subject to the same principle and the same procedures for storage, access and reasonable adjustments apply.

This includes devices which can:

- send or receive messages;
- receive notifications;
- make or receive calls;
- access the internet;
- record audio or video;
- take photographs; or
- otherwise provide comparable communication functionality.

9. If a Pupil Uses or Has Access to a Mobile Phone or Comparable Device

If a pupil is found using, checking, displaying or otherwise accessing a mobile phone or comparable device, contrary to this procedure, staff should respond calmly and consistently.

The normal response is:

Remind → instruct → secure device → record where required → apply proportionate consequence → restore

First occurrence

The member of staff will:

- remind the pupil of the expectation;
- give a clear instruction to hand over or secure the device;
- secure the device in accordance with the school's arrangements; and
- record the incident where required by the Behaviour Practice Guide.

A proportionate consequence may be applied in accordance with the Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy.

Repeated or deliberate misuse

Where misuse is repeated, deliberate or involves refusal to follow a reasonable instruction, the school will apply a proportionate behaviour consequence, require a parent or carer to collect the device after a meeting with the headteacher, review whether additional support is required and consider whether the behaviour indicates a wider safeguarding, wellbeing or SEND concern.

The response will take account of the pupil's age, circumstances, SEND, disability, reasonable adjustments and the seriousness of the behaviour.

The DfE guidance confirms that confiscation may be an appropriate disciplinary response, but schools should consider proportionality and the individual circumstances of the pupil.

10. Refusal to Hand Over a Device

If a pupil refuses a reasonable instruction concerning a mobile phone or comparable device, staff should:

- remain calm;
- restate the expectation and instruction;
- provide an appropriate opportunity for compliance;
- avoid confrontation or unnecessary escalation;
- seek support from a senior member of staff where required; and
- record and respond to the refusal in accordance with the Behaviour Practice Guide.

Persistent refusal may constitute a separate behaviour concern.

Staff should not physically attempt to remove a phone from a pupil's person unless this is lawful, necessary and proportionate and falls within the school's legal powers and relevant procedures.

Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a prohibited item is present, authorised staff may use the school's searching powers in accordance with legislation, DfE guidance and the Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy.

11. Searching

Searching pupils or their possessions will only be undertaken in accordance with the school's legal powers and relevant DfE guidance.

Staff should not routinely search pupils simply because they believe a pupil may have a mobile phone.

Where a search is considered necessary, staff must:

- have appropriate authority;
- have reasonable grounds where required;
- follow the school's searching procedures;
- protect the pupil's dignity and welfare;
- ensure appropriate recording; and
- refer safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy.

12. Safeguarding Concerns

Mobile-phone incidents may be behaviour matters, safeguarding matters, or both.

Staff must consider whether mobile-phone use indicates or creates a safeguarding concern.

Examples include:

- bullying or harassment;
- threats or intimidation;
- discriminatory abuse;
- sexual harassment;
- sexual violence;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- recording another child without consent;
- sharing images or videos of another child;
- coercion or exploitation;
- inappropriate online contact;
- sharing harmful content;
- grooming or suspected exploitation;
- self-harm or suicide-related content;
- extremist or radicalising content; or
- the creation, possession or sharing of nude or semi-nude images involving children.

Where a safeguarding concern arises, staff must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy.

Behaviour management must never delay, replace or obscure safeguarding action.

Concerns involving nude or semi-nude images of children must be treated as safeguarding concerns and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and relevant DfE guidance.

The DfE specifically advises schools to consider whether mobile-phone misbehaviour gives cause to suspect that a pupil may be suffering, or may be at risk of, harm and, where appropriate, to follow child protection procedures and speak to the DSL or deputy.

13. Communication with Parents and Carers

The school will communicate the mobile-phone procedure clearly to parents and carers before implementation and thereafter through appropriate school communications.

Parents and carers will be informed:

- that the school operates a mobile-phone-free approach during the school day;
- what arrangements apply where a child needs to bring a device;
- how exceptions are agreed;
- what happens if a pupil breaches the procedure;
- how safeguarding concerns will be managed; and
- how parents and carers can contact the school during the school day.

Parents and carers should not normally contact pupils directly via their mobile phone during the school day.

Where parents need to contact their child urgently, they should contact the school office and use the normal route for communication during the school day.

14. Staff Use of Mobile Phones

Staff are expected to model the school's approach. Staff personal mobile phones should not be used in front of pupils except where there is a legitimate professional, safeguarding or emergency reason.

Personal devices should not normally be used to:

- photograph or record pupils;
- communicate directly with pupils;
- access or store pupil information; or
- conduct school business where an approved school system or device should be used.

Staff must follow the school's safeguarding, data protection, acceptable-use and professional conduct arrangements. Any exception for an emergency or safeguarding purpose must be reasonable and proportionate.

15. Recording and Monitoring

The school will monitor implementation of this procedure as part of its wider behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and wellbeing monitoring.

Where patterns of usage, incidents or behaviour emerge, leaders will consider whether they indicate a need for further teaching, inconsistent implementation, additional reasonable-adjustment needs, wellbeing or safeguarding concerns, a need to review the procedure or a need for additional parental engagement.

16. Review of Exceptions and Individual Arrangements

Where an individual exception is agreed, the school will review it periodically.

The review will consider:

- whether the exception remains necessary;
- whether it remains proportionate;
- whether the agreed arrangements are working;
- whether safeguarding risks have changed;
- whether SEND or medical needs have changed; and
- whether an alternative arrangement could better support the pupil.

Individual arrangements will be documented by the headteacher where appropriate and shared only with staff who need the information to implement them safely.

22. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- approving and implementing this procedure;
- ensuring consistency with the Behaviour Policy;
- considering individual exceptions;
- ensuring staff understand their responsibilities; and
- monitoring the effectiveness of the procedure.

Senior leaders are responsible for:

- supporting staff with implementation;
- responding to repeated or significant breaches;
- ensuring safeguarding concerns are escalated appropriately;
- monitoring patterns and consistency; and
- supporting reasonable adjustments.

Designated Safeguarding Leads

The DSL or deputy is responsible for considering safeguarding concerns arising from mobile-phone use and ensuring that appropriate safeguarding procedures are followed.

All staff are expected to:

- model appropriate device use;
- know and apply this procedure;
- respond calmly and consistently;
- record significant incidents appropriately;
- remain professionally curious about concerning behaviour; and
- refer safeguarding concerns promptly.

Pupils are expected to:

- follow the mobile-phone-free approach;
- hand over or securely store permitted devices;
- follow reasonable instructions;
- respect the privacy and dignity of others; and
- seek help if they experience an online or mobile-phone-related concern.

Parents and carers are expected to:

- support the school's approach;
- avoid contacting pupils directly on their mobile phones during the school day;
- discuss safe and responsible technology use with their child; and
- work constructively with the school where concerns arise.

Management of Procedure

Procedure Lead: Headteacher

Implementation: Headteacher and all school staff

Approved by: Governing Body / appropriate governing committee

Reviewed: Summer 2026

Next Review: Summer 2027