Iver Heath Junior School

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Date of Implementation:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2028
Approved By:	Governors

DEFINITIONS

For ease of reading, in this policy the term mobile phone, will be used to represent all personal communication devices that have access to make calls and/or send messages either through the cellular system or using the internet. This includes but is not limited to mobile phones, smart watches, tablets etc.

INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

At Iver Heath Junior 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

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.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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 2 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.

Governors

Governors will formally renew and approve the policy every 2 years, ensuring it is aligned with statutory guidance.

USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY STAFF

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 pupils are present. 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 01753 651 382 as a point of emergency contact.

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).

Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including by 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.

Staff members who are also parents/carers of pupils at the school must take particular care to maintain clear and appropriate boundaries between their personal role as a parent/carer and their professional role as a member of staff.

If specific events occur which might only be possible by using personal technology and/or cellular data, special permissions will be sought and all data captured will be deleted as soon as possible. One example is using staff mobile phones and/or cellular data to upload photos of the residential activities where the holiday park does not have Wi-Fi available.

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

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

Work phones

Iver Heath Junior School has 2 school phones, which can be used by staff if required. This may include but is not limited to: on a school trip, to make calls home when the school phone lines are busy/ not working, during an emergency.

Staff who are planning to use a school phone must request it from the headteacher at least 24 hours before it is needed so that it can be prepared.

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.
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY PUPILS

Pupils must not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

For other events related to the school but not led by the school, such as PTA events and holiday camps, the provider of the event will have their own procedures/guidance/policy related to mobile phone use by children in their care.

As a general rule, pupils should not bring mobile phones onto the school site, unless by specific agreement.

As a school, we recognise there may be occasions where it may be supportive to families to allow a child to bring a phone to school, such as when a child who lives in more than one parental home is dropped off and collected by different parents or when Year 5 or 6 children are permitted to walk home alone with parental permission, or for medical reasons. In these circumstances, children and parents must have a meeting with the Headteacher regarding the reasons for the pupils to require a mobile phone in school and complete a mobile phone agreement, which will be kept on file and followed at all times.

In these circumstances, identified pupils are permitted to bring a phone to school but not use it on the school grounds. The child must bring their phone to the school office immediately on arrival at school and turn it off. It will then be stored in a sealed box until the child leaves the school building.

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to make sure 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.

Use of smartwatches by pupils

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 or carry smartwatches on the school premises.

Sanctions

If the mobile phone agreement is broken in any way, the school has the right to not permit a pupil to bring their phone to school for a set period or permanently.

If a pupil is found to have a phone in school but not in the school office, it will be confiscated and not returned to the child. A parent or other family member will be contacted and the phone will only be returned to them. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

In each case, the sanction given must 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 whether pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

If the school has reason to believe that a pupil has used their phone to commit any behaviours that are in conflict with our school vision or values or our behaviour policy, we reserve the right to search the pupil's phone. Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a pupil's phone if you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

In the first instance, where appropriate, we will discuss the situation with the child. If we feel it is appropriate, ask them to unlock their phone so we can look through it with the child.

If we find anything of concern we will contact a parent/carer and discuss what we have seen.

We may also take screen grabs and/or copies of what is found, if that is appropriate and legal to do so.

If we find anything of an illegal nature, we will refer it to the Police.

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:

- Making of or sharing nudes and semi-nudes including images that are digitally altered or wholly generated using AI (such as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes')
- 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
- Online bullying

USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY PARENTS/CARERS, VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

Parents and carers 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 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 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, but must refer any proposed 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.

LOSS, THEFT OR DAMAGE

Any pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, ready to be stored away securely in the school office throughout the school day.

Pupils must secure their 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.

This is clearly explained in the Mobile Phone Agreement.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked cabinet.

Lost phones should be returned to Mrs O'Donoghue in the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The school is committed to making sure that this policy has a positive impact of 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 or other relevant organisations

GOVERNORS

Governors have the overall responsibility for agreeing this policy. Through the full GB they are responsible for ensuring that the school complies with all statutory guidance.

Appendix 1: Mobile Phone Agreement for Pupils

Mobile Phone Agreement

The following are the expectations of a pupil within Iver Heath Junior School, which need to be adhered to, to allow you to bring a mobile phone to school.

You must agree to all of the statements and sign to indicate you understand that if you break any of them, you forfeit your ability to bring a phone to school for as long as is decided by the school, possibly permanently.

Pupil:

- I will bring my phone directly to the school office upon arriving at school.
- I will turn my phone off (not just put it on 'silent') when I hand it in.
- I will not turn my phone back on until I am off the school premises.
- I will never have my phone on me or in my bag, drawer etc when I am at school.
- I will not use my phone at school to contact anyone at home, in school or anywhere else.
- I will travel to and from school safely with my phone, ensuring that I pay full attention when crossing any roads.
- I understand that I am legally too young to use social media sites and to do so is not being safe online.
- I will not use my phone to be unkind or aggressive to anyone.
- I will not use my phone to take or share any inappropriate images, audio file or films.
- I will not share my phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
- I will not use my phone to access any website that I am not old enough to access.
- I will not share my personal details with anyone online if I do not know them or have my parent's permission to do so.

Parent:

- I will do all I can to ensure my child acts in accordance to the above statements.
- I understand that in school there are safeguards to accessing the internet but, on their phone, these are not as secure.
- I will be responsible for supporting my child to be safe online.

Signed_____ Child

Signed_____ Parent

Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow _____ [pupil name] to bring their mobile phone to school because they:

- Travel to and from school alone
- Are a young carer
- Need the phone to support their medical needs

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its code of conduct / acceptable use agreement.

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/Carer signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Appendix 3: 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 on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staff room.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils or staff, unless a specific event is taking place and you are invited to by a senior member of 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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