



Longridge School

Mobile Phone Policy

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1. Introduction and aims

At Longridge 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, positive behaviour, anti-bullying and data protection

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

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 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 Head Teacher is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it annually (or before if legislation changes), and holding staff and students 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.

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 during the school day when working with the students. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where students 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 01785 556710 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).

The school's Data Protection Policy and ICT Acceptable Use policy contain additional information about this.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including by connecting through social media and messaging apps. Each class has a work issued mobile phone which is to be used in the event of needing to contact parents or carers.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or students.

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.

At Longridge School we use an online system to evidence learning using photos or videos. All classes have a work issued mobile phone to be used to capture this evidence.

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

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Communicating a need for additional support or resources (if radios are unavailable)
- Communicating leaving the school grounds (if the class has gone out in more than one vehicle)
- 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 student
- 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. Each class also has a work issued mobile phone for use to capture evidence of learning, and for use when on off-site activities and trips.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation. The phones must not be given to students to use.

Staff must:

- Only use school phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Make sure that all communication and 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

Unless agreed and risk assessed by the head teacher, students are not permitted to bring mobile phones into school.

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recognises that in some instances, our students may rely on some features of mobile phones for regulation or communication needs (for example, use of communication apps or photos, or music to support self-regulation). Where this is the case, this will be discussed with parents/carers and a risk assessment and a signed acceptable use agreement will be put in place.

Students 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. Students will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

5.1 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.

Unless agreed and risk assessed by the head teacher, students are not permitted to wear smartwatches in school.

Any exceptions to this will be based on individual need, including risk to other students. This will be discussed with parents/carers and a risk assessment and signed acceptable use agreement will be put in place.

5.3 Sanctions

Sanctions for breaching this policy will be considered on an individual basis, taking into account the developmental levels and understanding of the student involved. For most of our students following our formal pathway, the sanction will involve missing the next 'Golden Time' session (these occur weekly) and completing a classroom-based activity instead of a chosen offsite activity.

The phone will be confiscated (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) and kept in the School Administrators office until the end of the school day. Parents/carers will be informed of the situation and any sanctions implemented as a result. The phone will be returned to the parents/carers at the end of the school day.

For some students, the breach of the policy may be due to a lack of understanding, or an impulsive action related to their diagnoses and developmental levels (for example, seeing a mobile phone at home and taking it because it is in their immediate environment and they like to press the buttons). In these cases, sanctions would not be appropriate as there would be no deliberate intent to breach the policy.

In the event of staff suspecting a phone has inappropriate content on it, or has been used for inappropriate behaviour, staff have the power to search students' phones (as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)). Staff are permitted to search a student's phone if there is good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe that the phone contains pornographic images, or if it being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

If staff feel that a student's mobile phone may contain inappropriate content, they must raise this with the DSL and/or head teacher. If the decision is made that the phone needs to be searched, this will be carried out by the DSL or head teacher in the presence of another senior member of staff. If inappropriate content is found, or inappropriate behaviour is suspected, the DSL or head teacher will follow either the child protection processes in the Child Protection Policy, or the Anti-bullying Policy.

In some rare instances, the content may result in suspension whilst strategies are put in place to support students effectively.

Staff also recognize that the student'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), who will consider whether pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

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

6. 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 proprietors 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
- Not using their mobile phones in front of the students
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, when working with students or while children are present
- Keeping phones on vibrate or silent when on the school grounds

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. This policy will be published on the school website for parents/carers, visitors and volunteers to access. Where appropriate to the developmental levels of their child, parents/carers will also receive a acceptable use agreement to sign regarding mobile phone use for their child.

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 students 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.

7. Loss, theft or damage

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 students are travelling to or from school. As students are not permitted to bring phones into the school (unless it has been agreed and risk assessed by the head teacher and parents/carers) the risk of loss, theft or damage is low.

All parents/carers will receive a copy of the Mobile phone policy when their child starts the school, and the policy is also available on the school website.

If a student brings an unauthorized mobile phone into school, this will be confiscated and stored in the Admin Office until the end of the school day. The phone will then be returned to the student to take home. Parents will be notified of the phone being confiscated and reminded that students bringing mobile phones into school is not permitted.

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

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to making sure 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 DfE, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of Carol Harvey, Head Teacher (carol.harvey@longridgeschool.org.uk) in a timely manner.

9. Appendix 1: Acceptable Use Agreement for students allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Due to the additional needs and developmental levels of our students, Acceptable use agreements will be individually written, using a range of communication aids including (but not limited to):

- Symbols
- Photos
- Simplified sentences
- Key words
- Word mats
- A visual set of rules

For some of our students it would not be appropriate for them to sign an acceptable use agreement due to their developmental levels of understanding. In these cases parents/carers will sign on their behalf.

If it is deemed necessary for a student at Longridge school to have a mobile phone during the school day, this will be authorized by their parents/carers and monitored throughout the day by supporting staff. Some of our students may need access to elements of a mobile phone (for example, a communication aid, or music to support regulation), but not all features of a mobile phone. Where possible, other features of the mobile phone will be disabled to reduce the risk of the phone being used for other purposes.

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a student to bring their phone to school

STUDENTDETAILS	
Student name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carers(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow [student 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
- > Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed
- > Attend a before- or after-school activity where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers
- > Need the phone to support communication or regulation in line with their communication and/or sensory profiles and needs

Students 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 student does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carers signature: _____

Student signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	