



Derby Diocesan Academy Trust

The Acorn Partnership

Mobile phone policy

May 2026

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1. Introduction and aims

At The Acorn partnership we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, 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 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
- 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 the Department for Education's non-statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

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 annually, 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.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including the central team, volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while children 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
- If awaiting a medical call

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 01332 824339 OR 01889 590373 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 Bard).

4.3 Safeguarding

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

Access to some internet systems, e.g. CPOMS requires Microsoft Authenticator for some staff. Where staff need to use their phone to access school systems this must be done during non-contact time and in the staff room / office.

Due to the remote location of the schools staff access the Wi-fi but all use of mobile phones is restricted to the staff room / office.

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 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

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that pupils should not use mobile phones throughout the school day.

Pupils should not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. On the rare occasion that pupils bring their mobile phone into school it is stored in the school office all day and returned to them at the end of the day.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [non-statutory mobile phone guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their 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 smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

Pupils do not wear smart watches to school. If they do they are stored in the office all day and returned to them at the end of the day.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact Mrs Teresa Bosley via email – tbosley@acorn.derbyshire.sch.uk

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

5.3 Sanctions

Mobile phones found in school will be confiscated and returned to the pupil's parents at the end of the school day.

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, 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 Part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

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:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- 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 / carers, visitors and volunteers (including the central team, LTC members 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. The rules will be shared verbally at the beginning of the event.

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, 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 ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled. They will be stored in an envelope with their name on in the school office.

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 and from school. This policy will be shared with parents / carers and available on the school websites.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the staff room / office. They will be stored in the locked cupboards.

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

7.1 AirTags / 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

Pupils do not take mobile devices on school trips, therefore AirTags / location trackers are allowed.

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

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of Mrs Teresa Bosley, tbosley@acorn.derbyshire.sch.uk in a timely manner.

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

Acceptable use Agreement

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You must hand your phone in so that it can be stored safely in the office / staff room.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
4. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
5. Don't use your mobile phone to bully or upset anyone. This includes bullying or upsetting pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
6. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be against the law.
7. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you are at home.
8. Don't use language you would not use in school while on your phone or when using social media. This language is not allowed under the school's behaviour policy.
9. Don't use your phone to view or share upsetting content.
10. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.

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

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carers(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
- 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

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/carers signature: _____

Date: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Print out and cut copies of this slip to give to visitors when they arrive at your school. Adapt the template to reflect section 6 of this policy.

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

- 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 [insert location]
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils

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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- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
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The Acorn Partnership - Mobile Phone & Device Guidance for Visitors

To help us maintain a safe and secure environment for all pupils, we ask all visitors, volunteers and contractors to follow the guidance below while on site.

Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

- ✓ Please keep mobile phone use to a minimum while pupils are present.
- ✓ If you need to make or receive a call, please do so away from pupils and learning areas.
- Do not use mobile phones while working with or supervising pupils.

Photography, Video & Audio Recording

- Do not take photographs, videos or audio recordings of pupils.
- ✓ Photography is only permitted:
 - At public school events (for example, fairs and celebrations), or
 - Of your own child
- ✓ Any photographs or recordings must be for personal use only.
- Do not post images or recordings of pupils, staff or school activities on social media without appropriate consent.

Safeguarding and Confidentiality

- Protect the privacy and welfare of all pupils.
- Do not share information about pupils, families or staff obtained during your visit.
- Do not use personal devices to store or share confidential school information.

School Trips and Activities

Visitors and volunteers helping on trips or activities must:

- Not take photographs or recordings of pupils.
- Not contact parents/carers directly regarding pupils.
- ✓ Refer any concerns or incidents to a member of school staff immediately.

Contacting Pupils

Parents / carers should contact the school office if they need to get a message to their child during the school day. Please do not contact pupils directly on personal devices.

Failure to Follow These Requirements

Any breach of the school's mobile phone and safeguarding expectations may result in:

- Removal from the school site
- Termination of volunteer or visitor access
- Further action where safeguarding concerns arise

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe, secure and focused learning environment for all children. If you have any questions, please speak to a member of staff or reception.