

Mobile Phone-Free School Policy

Lacewood Primary School



Approved by: Kelly Webster
(Chair of Governors)

Last reviewed April 2026
on:

Next review due: April 2028

1. Rationale and aims

Our aim is to provide a calm, safe and distraction-free learning environment where children can focus on their learning and feel secure. The Department for Education (DfE) expects schools to operate mobile phone free environments throughout the school day, including lessons, corridors, breaktimes and lunchtimes.

In primary school, mobile phones are rarely needed. This policy explains how we keep everyone safe by limiting the use of mobile phones and similar devices.

We aim to:

- Keep children's learning focused and free from distraction.
- Reduce risks linked to online harm, bullying, and the taking or sharing of images.
- Ensure all adults model safe and professional behaviour, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

2. Legal and guidance framework

This policy reflects the following guidance:

DfE: Mobile phones in schools (updated 19 Feb 2026) – non-statutory guidance setting an expectation that schools are mobile phone free.

KCSIE 2026 (statutory) – expectations for staff conduct and safeguarding practice.

DfE: Searching, screening and confiscation (July 2022) – schools' powers to confiscate and examine devices.

3. Scope

This policy applies:

On school premises during the school day, including breakfast and after school clubs.

On school visits, sporting fixtures and residential trips (unless the risk assessment specifies supervised use of a school device).

To all pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

"Mobile phone" includes smartphones and any device capable of communication, taking images, recording audio/video, or receiving notifications (e.g., smartwatches).

4. Whole school expectations

4.1 Pupils

Primary pupils should not bring mobile phones to school.

If a child needs a phone for an exceptional safeguarding reason (e.g: travel arrangements), parents must request permission from the Headteacher in advance.

Parents must sign a permission letter for a child to bring a phone into school- this includes an acceptance that the parents/carers have responsibility for the phone and that school is not liable should the phone be lost or damaged

Approved devices must be switched off, handed in at the office in the morning, and handed back to children at the end of the day.

No pupil may use or show a mobile phone or smart device on the school site. Any breaches will lead to confiscation and consequences in line with our Behaviour Policy.

4.2 Staff (all roles)

Personal mobile phones must not be used in front of children, including in classrooms, corridors, playgrounds or the hall.

Staff should not make or receive personal calls/messages during teaching time. Any urgent messages should come via the school office.

Staff must not use personal devices to take photos, videos or recordings of pupils. Only school-owned devices may be used, following our Online Safety, Data Protection and Acceptable Use policies.

Smartwatch notifications must be turned off during the school day and must not be used for calls/messages around children.

4.3 Parents, visitors and contractors

Mobile phone use is not allowed in learning areas, corridors, playgrounds or any mobile-free zones (e.g., EYFS, toilets, changing areas).

At assemblies and events, the school will clearly state if photos are permitted. Parents must only photograph their own child and must not share images online that include other children.

5. Exceptions and reasonable adjustments

Where a child requires a device for medical, SEND, or specific safeguarding reasons, we will work with families to agree safe arrangements. These will be recorded in the child's plan or risk assessment.

6. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

EYFS areas are strictly mobile-free for all adults. Personal devices must be stored away and used only in staff areas during breaks.

Only school-owned devices may be used to capture learning observations in line with permissions and data protection procedures.

7. School visits, clubs and residential

Staff will take a mobile device on visits for emergency use.

Children must not bring mobile phones to day trips or clubs.

For residential visits, the risk assessment will explain whether any supervised, limited use is allowed.

8. Searching, screening and confiscation

If a pupil is suspected of breaching this policy, the school may confiscate the device and store it safely until collected by a parent. Searching and screening will follow DfE guidance and be carried out lawfully and proportionately. Parents will be informed when appropriate.

9. Pupil sanctions

Breaches will be dealt with using our Behaviour Policy. Consequences may include confiscation, or loss of privileges, alongside education about respectful and safe behaviour online. Repeated issues will involve parents.

10. Staff conduct

Any breach of staff expectations will be addressed under the Staff Code of Conduct and HR procedures. Serious breaches may be treated as disciplinary or safeguarding matters, in line with KCSIE.

11. Safeguarding, privacy and data protection

Only school-approved equipment may be used to capture or store images of pupils.

Any concerns involving images, online behaviour or possible harm will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

12. Communication

The school will explain this policy clearly to children, parents and staff. Information will be shared in newsletters, at induction, on the website and through school signage.

13. Monitoring and review

Leaders will monitor how consistently the policy is applied (e.g., through walk-throughs, incident logs and pupil voice). Findings will be shared with governors. The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if national guidance changes.

14. Roles and responsibilities

Governing Body: Approves policy; monitors effectiveness.

Headteacher/SLT: Ensures clear implementation and alignment with other policies.

DSL: Leads on training and responses to safeguarding concerns involving devices.

All staff: Model expectations and challenge inappropriate use.

15. Linked policies

- Behaviour
- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Online Safety/Acceptable Use
- Data Protection
- Educational Visits

Quick reference for staff

Staff must:

- Keep personal phones out of sight and not use them in any area where children are present.
- Route urgent personal messages via the office and make personal calls only in staff areas.
- Use only school devices for photos/videos of pupils.
- Politely remind visitors of our mobile-free expectations.

Pupils:

- No mobile phones in school unless agreed by the Headteacher for exceptional reasons.
- Approved devices must be handed in on arrival and collected at home time.
- Parents must sign a permission letter for a child to bring a phone into school.

Annexe 1- permission letter for parents

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Permission for Your Child to Bring a Mobile Phone into School

From May 2026 the Department for Education (DfE) expects schools to implement a policy whereby pupils do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the school day including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime. The guidance emphasises that schools must have clear expectations and systems in place regarding the management of mobile phones on site.

At Lacewood, children in Year 5 and 6 are allowed to bring their mobile phones for safety reasons as they are allowed to walk home alone.

If your child requires a mobile phone for such reasons, we ask that you complete and sign the permission section below. By granting permission, you acknowledge and agree to the following conditions:

School Requirements

- Your child must hand their mobile phone in at the school office at the beginning of every school day. This will be placed in a Y5 or Y6 box.
- The phone will be securely stored and must remain switched off while on school premises.
- Your child will be given their phone back at the end of the school day and it must remain switched off until they leave the school premises.
- The phone remains the responsibility of the parent/carers at all times. The school cannot accept liability for loss, theft, or damage.
- Any misuse of the mobile phone or breach of these conditions may result in permission being withdrawn.

Parent Permission Form

(To be returned to the school office)

Child's Name: _____

Class: _____

Reason for needing a mobile phone in school:

Parent/Carer Declaration

I give permission for my child to bring a mobile phone into school and agree to the conditions set out above.

Parent/Carer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Kind regards

K. Akeroyd
Headteacher