



Mobile Phone Policy

Alwyn Infant School and Courthouse Junior School Federation

Approved by: Governing board **Date:** May 2026

Last reviewed on: Summer 2024

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1. Introduction and aims

At Alwyn and Courthouse, 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, Staff Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of Technology.

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 Executive Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, 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.

3.2 Governors

This policy will be shared with Governors at a Federation Governing Board and will be reviewed every two years.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day.

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, while children are present/during contact time. 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
- Support in management of site and contractors
- Emergencies

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 schools office number as a point of emergency contact.

Alwyn Infant School: 01628 622477

Courthouse Junior School: 01628 626958

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).

For more information please read the schools Acceptable Use Policies and Data Protection policies.

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 which 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.

For more information please read the schools Acceptable Use Policies and GDPR policies.

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 aren't limited to:

- Access to password based cloud based systems (Emails/Teams/Google)
- To use multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

When supervising residential visits, consideration will be given to the contact details provided to parents, if staff need to contact parents this will be via the school and if it is an out of hours emergency whilst on a residential it will be from a withheld number.

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 which 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 Work phones

Where some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

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, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or 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

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.

Our current expectations around mobile phones are as follows:

- Year 6 pupils only are allowed to bring non smart 'brick' phones with them on school site
- They must not be taken out once on school property
- They must be handed in to the teacher on arrival
- They will be returned at end of the school day by the teacher
- They must be concealed until children are off the school site
- Pupils should not access the school wifi on personal devices (unless exempt as per section 5.2)
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- Section 5.2 highlights exceptions for special circumstances when pupils are allowed to bring in their mobile phone.

Since September 2025, Alwyn and Courthouse have become smartphone-free schools, promoting better mental health and academic focus. We want to empower parents to be able to take back control over the pressure to provide their children with a smart phone and encourage them (through collective action) delay giving them until children start year 9 or later in Secondary school. Over the summer term, help your children adjust by limiting smartphone use and exploring alternative activities. Practice walking to and from school without a smartphone (Airtags and similar devices are allowed). Parents can provide a non-smartphone alternative, which will be collected by the class teacher. We will also be encouraging parents to limit their use of a smartphone device on school grounds and will also be reviewing our online platforms and systems to help families tackle the digital demands of modern life.

Many schools in the local authority including Secondary schools are doing the same and the Local Authority will be looking to support with a Borough wide statement on the challenge of managing smartphones through childhood soon.

FAQ & Answers:

- **Can my child bring a smart watch?** No.
- **What happens if my child brings a smartphone to school?** It will be held in the office until the end of the week for parent collection.
- **Do schools have a right to confiscate a smartphone?** Yes, as per our behaviour policy and the Education Act, supported by DFE guidelines.
- **When can I collect the phone if it is confiscated?** Fridays between 2 and 3:45 pm from the office.
- **What about the risk of walking to school?** Consider sending a non-smartphone. We will contact families if a child does not arrive. Airtags or similar devices are allowed. Establishing a walking bus with other families is also an option.
- **What about online homework?** We are reviewing our online systems. We support supervised online access over unrestricted smartphone use.
- **My child doesn't have a smartphone but uses an iPad/video game. Is this okay?** Families should consider this carefully. These devices can pose similar risks as smartphones. We aim to support delaying smartphone use until Year 9. Extending this reflection to other digital access can be beneficial.

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.

The school actively discourages pupils from bringing in and wearing smart watches. These expectations are communicated to parents routinely. If a pupil is using a smartwatch that breaches the school expectations of behaviour this will be managed under the expectations outlined in the behaviour policy and in accordance with this policy.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

Consider:

Whether some pupils are allowed to bring a mobile phone to school (if you ban them from the premises) or use it in school, and in what circumstances. For instance:

- Pupils travelling to school by themselves
- Young carers who need to be contactable
- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar

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 the main school offices and ask to speak with the Head of School.

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

5.3 Sanctions

Any occurrences of mobile phone use that fall outside the permitted use in this policy will be dealt with either through a staff code of conduct or the schools behaviour policy.

For example:

- Mobile phones may be confiscated (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- If they are confiscated, they will be retained at the office and will be collected by a parent/guardian at the end of the school week. (Headteachers can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools)

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, 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 there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

For further details please read the schools behaviour policy.

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

Please refer to the School's online safety policy for more information on the risk for pupils that are online.

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

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
- Not to use their phone unless in the event of an emergency
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which 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/identifiable and are handed to the class teacher upon arrival.

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.

- To make sure pupils and parents/carers are aware of the disclaimer above, the School has provided a policy available on the school's website

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school's office in a secure location. Where they are stored and not collected the school is responsible for them until collection. If they are not collected after prompting by the end of the term/school year they have been confiscated in, the school will continue to secure the phone but accepts no further loss or liability for damage or theft.

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

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring 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 and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of the Head of Schools in a timely manner. If applicable, such concerns will be highlighted to the Governors during their review.

11. Appendix 1: Template mobile phone information script for visitors

Print out copies of this slip to give, read or display to visitors when they arrive at the school.

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 the main office or the staff room if you have access to the staff room.
- 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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