



Doing our best to achieve our best

Clarendon Primary School and Nursery

Mobile Phone Policy

1. Introduction and Aims

At Clarendon Primary School and Nursery, the maintenance of a focused, distraction-free learning environment is a strategic priority. This policy is central to fulfilling our mission, "**Doing our best to achieve our best**," by ensuring that digital technologies do not undermine the academic focus or emotional wellbeing of our pupils. By defining clear boundaries for pupils, staff, and visitors, we fulfil our fundamental duty of care and ensure that the school remains a focused, secure environment dedicated to learning.

The primary aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- 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

To safeguard the community, Clarendon Primary School and Nursery is a **mobile phone-free environment by default**.

The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and visitors.

Please note that for the purposes of this policy, the term 'mobile phone' also covers any electronic device with the capacity to be used as a form of communication, either through the device itself or any applications stored on the device (e.g. Smartwatches).

2. Relevant Guidance and Statutory Framework

Strict adherence to national guidance is a non-negotiable requirement for school compliance and the preservation of pupil safety. This policy has been written using the most recent statutory developments to ensure Clarendon remains at the forefront of educational safeguarding.

The regulatory foundations of this policy include:

- **Section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026:** Providing the specific legal basis for the regulation of digital devices within the state education sector.
- **DfE Mobile Phone and Behaviour Guidance (effective Sept 2026):** Mandating that schools operate as mobile phone-free environments throughout the duration of the school day.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE):** Establishing the requirement for schools to manage technology-related risks, including covert recording and online harm.

These statutory instruments inform the specific roles and responsibilities assigned to every individual on the school site.

3. Use of Personal Mobile Phones by Staff

To maintain professional authority and safeguard the community, staff must model the behaviour expected of pupils. This applies to all areas of the school, including the Nursery setting.

Devices **must remain switched off or on silent and be stored in locked cupboards during contact time**. Personal communication is restricted to non-contact periods in areas where pupils are not present (e.g., the staffroom).

- Staff must not carry personal mobile phones while working. This protects staff from being distracted from their work and from allegations of inappropriate use. Phones must be safely stored out of sight of children.
- If staff have a break time during their working hours, they may use their mobile phones during these times in the staff room or an office where children are not present.
- In an emergency, staff needing to make a personal call during a lesson or whilst on duty should first obtain agreement from a member of SLT, and then should make the call in an area not used by children.
- Staff must give the school telephone number to their next of kin in case it is necessary for the staff member to be contacted, in an emergency, during working hours.
- A personal mobile phone may be taken on school trips in accordance with guidance – see ‘The Use of Mobile Phones on Trips’ section below.
- Camera or video functions on personal mobile phones must not be used by staff to take images of children under any circumstances.
- Staff are not required to make work calls on their own phones, either mobile or landline, however, in exceptional circumstances, if this should be necessary then they are advised to use the prefix 141 before dialling the recipient’s number to ensure their own number is protected.
- Staff must never store parents’, carers or children’s telephone numbers on their mobile phones and staff must never give their private mobile number to parents, carers or children.
- It is recognised that sometimes staff need to use phones to carry out specific work-related tasks, e.g. to gain two-factor authentication. On these occasions, this should be done discretely and when children are not in the room.
- Senior leaders are sometimes expected to use phones for school-related communication and work, it is expected that this is done in offices where children are not present.
- Staff with medical conditions—such as those requiring continuous glucose monitors linked to a mobile device—will be supported to do this with permission.
- Processing pupil data on personal devices or inputting school-related information into generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT or Google Gemini) constitutes a significant data breach. Such actions are strictly prohibited and will be treated as a disciplinary matter under the school's Data Protection Policy.
- Failure by staff to comply with the mobile phone policy guidelines could result in disciplinary action.

4. Use of Mobile Devices by Pupils

Only children in Year 6 who walk to and from school without an accompanying adult may carry a mobile phone to school. As the expectation is that all children in other year groups are collected by a parent/carers or other responsible adult, it is not permitted for children in any other year groups to bring a phone into school without permission from the Headteacher (this would only be granted in exceptional circumstances, for example, to meet medical needs).

Parents and carers need to be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to pupils having a mobile phone in terms of personal safety there are also some associated risks such as potential for theft, bullying and inappropriate contact, including grooming by unsuitable persons. We would also like to alert parents and carers to the risks that using a mobile phone has while walking to and from school. Children who are concentrating on using their phone can have reduced general safety awareness which may result in road accidents and/or injury if a child is not paying attention to their surroundings and we therefore urge parents to have these conversations with children before allowing them to bring their phone into school.

- Children permitted to bring their mobile phone into school **must deposit it with a member of staff at the school gate before entering school at the start of the day**. For children who arrive to school late, any mobile phones should be handed into a member of the office team upon arrival.
- Upon arrival to the school site, **phones should be switched off** (not just turned to silent).
- Mobile phones will be kept safely in a locked cupboard. Whilst the school will take every reasonable care, it accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure mobile phones are properly insured and protected. It is recommended that pupil's phones are security marked and password protected.
- Any mobile phones discovered to have been brought into the school and not handed in will be confiscated immediately. Parents or carers will be asked to collect the mobile phone from the school office.
- Children are not allowed to carry mobile phones or similar devices on any school trips.
- If a member of the staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone brought into school by a pupil has unsuitable material stored on it, the pupil will be required to hand over the phone immediately to a member of staff and parents or carers will be asked to collect it from a member of the senior leadership team. In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile phone may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the mobile phone will be handed over to the school's safeguarding lead or to the Headteacher for further investigation and the parent or carer asked to collect it from them (see Section 6: Sanctions, Confiscation, and Search Powers).
- At the end of the day, the distribution of devices from the storage box occurs **under the direct supervision of a teacher** to ensure correct ownership and mitigate the risk of loss or theft. Children are not permitted to turn on their devices until they have left the school grounds.
- Children in all year groups are not permitted to wear smartwatches to school. Failure to follow this will result in the device being confiscated and returned to parents.
- Under the Equality Act 2010, the school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils whose condition necessitates the use of a smart device. Furthermore, in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, pupils with medical conditions—such as those requiring continuous glucose monitors linked to a mobile device—will be supported.

5. Use of Mobile Devices by Visitors, Parents and Carers

- Notices are around the school advise visitors, parents and carers that mobile phones are not to be used.
- Visitors and supply staff are not allowed to use mobile phones on the school site (see Section 3: Use of Personal Mobile Phones by Staff). Phones must be kept in bags and either turned off or placed in silent mode.
- If a visitor, parent or carer is seen using their mobile phone, they will be asked politely to turn it off and remove it from children's view.
- It is recognised that many parents and carers use their mobile phone as a camera/video device to record their child at special performances e.g. class assemblies, concerts, etc. During such events, the use of mobile devices for photography or videoing is permitted under strict conditions:
 - Images should only be taken by parents and carers if they include their own child and are for their own personal use.
 - Under the **Data Protection Act**, there is an absolute ban on uploading images including other pupils to social media or any public platform without explicit parental consent of that child. The placing of any photographs of children on social media is dangerous and parents may be in breach of the Data Protection Act.
 - Failure to follow these conditions could result in a future ban.

6. Sanctions, Confiscation, and Search Powers

Sanctions are employed as a strategic deterrent to maintain the integrity of the learning environment. Clarendon Primary School and Nursery operates under clear legal authority to manage prohibited items.

Lawful Power to Search and Confiscate: Under **Section 550ZA of the Education Act 1996** and **The Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012**, the Headteacher and authorised staff have the statutory power to search pupils and their possessions if there are reasonable grounds to suspect the possession of a prohibited item.

- **Confiscation:** Any device used in breach of this policy will be confiscated and stored in a secure, locked cabinet in the school office.
- **Collection:** Confiscated devices will only be released to a parent or carer; they will not be returned directly to the pupil.
- **Legal Protection:** Staff are legally protected from liability for loss or damage to items during lawful confiscation, provided the action was proportionate and lawful.

The school reserves the right to involve the police and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in matters of criminal conduct. This includes, but is not limited to:

- The creation or distribution of AI-generated "deepfakes" or "deep nudes."
- "Upskirting" or the taking of any indecent images.
- Harassment, cyberbullying, or threats of violence.

Compliance expectations extend beyond pupils to encompass the professional conduct of all staff and volunteers.

7. The Use of Mobile Phones on School Trips

Volunteers on school trips must act as professional role models. Carrying phones can help to ensure safety for all members of the school but should be used only for emergency contact with the party leader. Volunteers are strictly prohibited from taking personal photos of pupils. Any breaches of pupil conduct regarding phones must be referred immediately to a staff member.

Members of staff and volunteers may carry their own, personal mobile phones within the following guidelines:

- Personal phones should only be used to contact staff members or volunteers on the trip, the school or emergency services. Where possible, these calls should be made away from children.
- Personal phones should not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of a trip. This means that personal calls or texts should not be made or accepted. On residential trips this will apply while the member of staff or volunteer is on duty.
- If it becomes necessary for a member of staff or volunteer to make a personal call or text, then the party leader or another member of staff should be informed and take responsibility for the pupils in the group while the call or text is made away from sight and sound of any pupils.
- Personal mobile phones must not be used under any circumstances to take photographs or videos of pupils. Volunteers are acting role models for the duration of the trip and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including their own child, using a mobile phone or any other mobile device, e.g. camera or tablet, without the express permission of the party leader. Volunteers may be asked to take photographs of their group using a school or centre device – this must be passed back to the party leader at the end of the trip.
- The party leader may ask volunteers to provide them with their mobile phone number for the duration of the trip so that they can be contacted in case of emergency. The party leader undertakes to ensure that these numbers are not held on any mobile device or in any written form after the end of the trip.
- It is advised that if the party leader is using his or her own mobile phone, then if they need to contact anyone during the trip they do so by pre-dialling 141 (some mobile providers use a different prefix – staff are advised to check this with their provider) before the number so that their own number remains protected.

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10. Appendices

These summaries are designed to be given to trip volunteers, Year 6 pupils and visitors/volunteers to the school site.

Appendix 1: Volunteer Trip Code of Conduct

- **Visibility:** Keep personal phones away from the sight and sound of pupils at all times.
- **Communication:** No personal calls or texts are permitted for the duration of a day trip. Use is restricted to emergency contact with the party leader or emergency services.
- **No Photos:** Do not use personal devices to take images of any pupils, including your own child.
- **Privacy:** Use the "141" prefix for any necessary external calls.

Please read the school Mobile Phone Policy for further details.

Appendix 2: Pupil Code of Conduct & Acceptable Use Agreement

1. **Switch Off:** My phone must be turned OFF before I enter the school grounds.
2. **Storage:** I will hand my phone to an adult at the school gate or an adult in the school office upon arrival for storage in the office.
3. **Safety:** I will follow all the rules set out in the Mobile Phone Policy so that I can safely bring my phone into school.
4. **Sanctions:** I understand that if I break these rules, my phone will be confiscated and only returned to my parent.

Appendix 4: Visitor/Volunteer Information Slip

Welcome to Clarendon Primary School and Nursery

- This is a mobile-free environment. Please keep your phone on silent and stored away.
- Bluetooth must be switched off while on school premises.
- Do not take photos or recordings of any pupils or staff.
- If you must make a call, please use the designated school office area.
- The school accepts no liability for personal devices brought on-site.