

Fulwood and Cadley Primary School

“Wish it, Dream it, Do it. Be Unique.”



Mobile Devices Policy 2026-27

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Statement of intent

Mobile phones, tablets and other personal electronic devices have become widely available and accessible to pupils. This policy is designed to prohibit the use of mobile phones and similar smart technology throughout the school day, including break and lunch times.

Fulwood and Cadley accepts that personal mobile phones and tablets are often given to pupils by their parents to ensure their safety and personal security; however, such devices pose inherent risks and may jeopardise the learning environment.

As a school, we must strike a balance between personal safety and a suitable educational setting. We understand that parents may wish for their child to carry a mobile phone for their personal safety, whilst pupils may wish to bring additional devices to school for other reasons. This policy establishes how personal electronic devices should be used by pupils in school to ensure both personal safety and an appropriate learning environment.

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to the following items:

- Mobile phones
- Smartwatches
- Personal digital assistants (PDAs)
- Handheld entertainment systems
- Portable internet devices

Smartwatches capable of communication, internet access, photography, audio recording or messaging will be treated in the same manner as mobile phones under this policy.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory and good practice guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Mobile phones in schools'
- DfE 'Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents'
- DfE 'Behaviour in Schools'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
- DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school'
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Records Management Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- The implementation of the policy and procedures.

- Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and procedures.
- Ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Receiving assurance that filtering and monitoring systems are effective and reviewed regularly.
- Reviewing the policy annually.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- The day-to-day implementation and management of the policy.
- Informing parents and pupils of the Personal Electronic Devices Agreement.
- Communicating this policy to the relevant staff members and the wider school community.
- Communicating what devices can be brought to school and when they can and cannot be used.
- Deciding how best to achieve a mobile phone-free school environment.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Managing incidents of cyberbullying in conjunction with the headteacher, in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy.
- Applying this policy consistently and proportionately, including confiscating devices where appropriate.
- Any incident involving misuse of a personal device that may indicate abuse, exploitation, child-on-child abuse, online abuse, sexual harassment, sharing of indecent images, AI-generated content, coercion or other safeguarding concerns will be referred immediately to the DSL.
- Avoiding use of their mobile phones in front of pupils for any non-work related issues.
- Teaching pupils about the risks associated with mobile phones, other devices and social media, both in school and more broadly.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Initiating and managing responses to incidents of upskirting with relevant staff members and in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Liaising with and reporting the relevant information to children's social care and/or the police, when it is necessary to do so.

Pupils are responsible for adhering to the provisions outlined in this policy.

3. Ownership and responsibility

Pupils are responsible for their own belongings. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing property that is lost, stolen or damaged either on school premises or travelling to and from school, and at school events.

Staff will be protected against liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to personal devices that have been confiscated as an appropriate sanction, provided that they have acted lawfully.

Pupils are responsible for replacing school property they lose, damage or steal, including electronic devices.

Pupils and staff should enable a personal PIN or passcode on all the devices they bring to school to protect their personal data, images and videos in the event that the device is lost, stolen or accessed by an unauthorised person.

4. Acceptable use

Where pupils are bringing personal electronic devices into school, they will be expected to make their parents aware of this. Pupils will remain responsible for the safety and security of any personal devices brought into school and the school will not accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage.

Personal devices will not be used at any point during the school day, including during break and lunch times, unless an agreed exception applies. Where an agreed exception is in place, use of a personal device will be limited strictly to the specific purpose outlined within that exception and will be subject to any conditions set by the school.

Where a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) scheme is operated to facilitate the use of laptops or tablets for learning, such devices will be used in accordance with this policy. Pupils will sign a [Device and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement](#) to ensure that devices are only used for the educational purpose intended. BYOD arrangements will not include mobile phones.

5. Unacceptable use

Pupils will be encouraged to avoid bringing phones to school; however, if phones are brought to school they will be switched off and stored securely in the main office at the beginning of the school day, unless an agreed exception applies.

Unless express permission is granted by a member of staff, or an agreed adaptation or reasonable adjustment applies, pupils must not use, access, display or activate personal electronic devices at any time during the school day.

Any permitted use for specific pupils will be limited strictly to the specific purpose outlined in the agreed plan. All other use will be prohibited.

The school will consider the risks that may be posed to pupils who do not have access to their mobile phone when organising travel to and from school. Parents will be consulted with to consider ways to mitigate any concerns around the issue of travel to and from school. Pupils will be able to access their personal devices when travelling to and from school; however, they should not be used to arrange travel during the course of the school day.

Staff members will be required to model expectations surrounding the use of personal devices when they are in front of pupils throughout the school day, and only use their personal devices where required for work or safeguarding purposes.

Staff and pupils will adhere to the Social Media Policy at all times.

Personal electronic devices must remain switched off and securely stored throughout the school day unless an agreed exception applies.

If pupils fall ill during school hours, they will not use their mobile device to contact parents; they will use the agreed procedures.

Under no circumstances will personal electronic devices be taken into examinations. Devices will be kept in bags or lockers, or handed to a member of staff for safekeeping during the examination. Under no circumstances will mobile devices be used in changing rooms or toilets.

Personal electronic devices must be in good working order and used safely. Pupils must not charge personal devices on school premises without permission.

Staff will not give out their personal contact details to pupils. If correspondence is needed between staff members and pupils for homework or exams, staff should provide their school contact details.

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, the act known as “upskirting” is an offence. Any incidents will not be tolerated by the school. Despite the name, anyone (including both pupils and teachers) of any gender, can be a victim of upskirting.

For the purposes of the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, a specified purpose includes:

- Obtaining sexual gratification (either for themselves or for the person they are enabling to view the victim’s genitals, buttocks or underwear)
- To humiliate, distress or alarm the victim

Any suspected incidents of upskirting will be reported to the DSL and handled in accordance with the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

6. Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

The school will comply with its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments with regard to this policy where necessary. Adaptations may be made in exceptional circumstances and in response to a pupil’s specific needs.

If it is deemed necessary due to the nature of a pupil’s SEND, reasonable adjustments will be made to allow that pupil to use their mobile phone or similar device during the school day.

The school will not prevent pupils from using their mobile phones in order to manage their medical condition effectively, e.g. if a pupil is using a monitoring app on their phone to manage their diabetes.

Beyond these specific duties, the school recognises that a need for mobile phone access for some pupils may depend on their individual circumstances. The school will allow limited flexibility for these pupils where an agreed exception is required in the best interests of the pupil’s safety and welfare, for example where a pupil is a young carer.

Where a pupil has an agreed adaptation or reasonable adjustment that requires access to a mobile device, this will be permitted only for the specific purpose and within the limits set out in the agreed plan.

7. Cyberbullying

All personal electronic devices will be used in line with our Online Safety Policy.

Incidents of cyberbullying will be dealt with and reported in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy.

As part of the school's ongoing commitment to the prevention of cyberbullying, regular teaching and discussion about online safety will take place as part of PSHE lessons.

8. AI, Deepfakes and Image-Based Abuse

The school will educate pupils about the safe, responsible and ethical use of generative artificial intelligence technologies as part of its online safety curriculum. The school recognises the safeguarding risks associated with generative artificial intelligence (AI), including AI-generated images, deepfakes and image manipulation applications. Any use of technology to create, possess, share or threaten to share manipulated images of another person will be treated as a serious safeguarding concern and will be dealt with in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Child-on-Child Abuse Policy and Behaviour Policy.

9. Misogyny, Sexual Harassment and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

The school recognises that personal electronic devices may be used to facilitate misogynistic behaviour, sexual harassment, image-based abuse, harmful sexual behaviour or violence against women and girls. Any such incidents will be treated as safeguarding concerns and managed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Child-on-Child Abuse Policy.

10. Filtering & Monitoring Oversight

The governing board will receive termly assurance regarding the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems. The effectiveness of these arrangements will be formally reviewed at least annually.

11. Attendance and Safeguarding

KCSIE 2026 reinforces that absence from education can be an indicator of safeguarding risk.

Repeated breaches of this policy, including attempts to circumvent school procedures through unauthorised device use, may contribute to a wider assessment of a pupil's welfare and safeguarding needs.

12. Searching pupils

School pupils have a right for their private life to be respected under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). This right is not absolute, and the school can interfere with this right as long as it is justified, proportionate, and aligns with the powers to search in the Education Act 1996.

All searches will be conducted in line with the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.

The headteacher, and other authorised staff members, will have the power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item. Mobile phones

and similar devices are items banned under this policy and may be searched for in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance.

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In all cases the authorised member of staff will always:

- Seek the co-operation of the pupil before conducting a search.
- Ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted.
- Give the pupil the opportunity to ask any questions so that their agreement is informed.
- Have due regard to the DfE's '[Searching, screening and confiscation](#)' guidance.

Staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers. Staff conducting a search must not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing - outer clothing means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear and includes hats, shoes, boots or scarves. Possessions means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control - this includes desks, lockers and bags.

A staff member may ask a pupil to show them what they are doing on their mobile phone or tablet if they reasonably believe that the pupil is using the device to cause harm. If it is judged reasonable, the staff member may inspect the files or data on a pupil's electronic device and delete them if necessary.

Staff members will ensure they have a good reason to examine and delete data on a pupil's electronic device. When determining a good reason to examine data, staff members will ensure they reasonably suspect that the data has been, or could be, used to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.

When determining a good reason to delete data, staff members will consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence and if so, choose not to delete the data. The data may be deleted if it is found likely to cause harm to any person, and the pupil and/or parent refuses to delete the data themselves.

If a search uncovers a device that contains, or is suspected to contain, Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), staff will not view, copy, print, share or delete the material. The device will be secured and the matter referred immediately to the DSL, who will follow safeguarding procedures and liaise with the police as required.

The staff member conducting the search must be the same sex as the pupil being searched. A witness to the search must be present; this should also be a staff member of the same sex as the pupil being searched.

Pupils are required to comply with any request to check their electronic device.

Where a lawful search is undertaken in accordance with DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance, pupils may be required to provide access to a device where there are reasonable grounds to suspect misuse or safeguarding concerns. Any pupil who refuses to comply with these requests will be disciplined in line with the Behaviour Policy.

13. Consequences

The school will apply sanctions for breaches of this policy in a consistent and proportionate manner, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Where this policy is clearly breached, for example where a device is used, seen, or heard ringing, staff will feel confident to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty. Confiscated devices may be retained for a proportionate length of time, as determined by the Headteacher and in consideration of the circumstances, including the pupil's age, SEND, and any agreed exceptions or reasonable adjustments.

Additional sanctions may include detentions or other disciplinary measures in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Where a breach gives cause to suspect a pupil may be suffering, or may be at risk of, harm, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the DSL.

Confiscated personal electronic devices will be locked away securely in the main office.

Bullying via personal electronic devices will be dealt with in line with the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

14. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the headteacher and DSL.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed as part of the school's annual online safety and safeguarding review.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to members of staff, parents and pupils by the headteacher.

The scheduled review date for this policy is Sep 2027.