

EATON HOUSE SCHOOLS MOBILE PHONE POLICY

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1. Introduction and aims

At Eaton House Schools, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in our care. We recognise that mobile phones and other personal electronic devices are important communication tools. However, their inappropriate or unnecessary use on School premises may present risks to the safety, privacy, and wellbeing of children, staff, volunteers, and visitors.

Our policy aims to:

- Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones, where applicable
- 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

For the purposes of this policy, the term "mobile phone" includes any personal electronic device that can be used for communication, photography, audio or video recording, internet access, or messaging, either through the device itself or via installed applications. This includes, but is not limited to, smartphones, tablets, smart glasses, and similar devices.

Smart Watches

- Pupils are not permitted to wear smart watches while at school.
- Staff may wear smart watches provided that they are not connected or paired with a mobile phone while on school premises.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets requirements of section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, and the Department for Education (DfE)'s mobile phone guidance and behaviour guidance. Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy includes Keeping

Children Safe in Education, which sets out the expectation that all Schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default.

3. Staff Responsibility

All staff are responsible for promoting and consistently enforcing the School's Mobile Phone Use Policy. Staff must act as positive role models and support the School's aim of maintaining a mobile phone-free learning environment.

Staff are expected to:

- Consistently implement and enforce the School's Mobile Phone Use Policy.
- Ensure that pupils comply with the School's expectations regarding mobile phone use throughout the School day.
- Not use personal mobile phones for personal reasons in the presence of pupils during the School day.
- Keep personal mobile phones out of sight and on silent mode while supervising or teaching pupils, unless their use has been authorised for School business.
- Never use a personal mobile phone to photograph, film or record pupils.
- Only use School-authorised devices to capture images, video or audio recordings of pupils where there is a legitimate educational or School purpose and the appropriate consent has been obtained.
- Ensure that all images and recordings are stored securely in accordance with the School's Data Protection and Safeguarding policies.
- Never share or store pupil information, images or recordings on personal devices or personal social media accounts.
- Avoid 'reposting' school social media (Instagram, Facebook etc..) posts, to avoid drawing attention to personal accounts.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries when communicating with pupils and parents by using only School-approved communication systems.

- Report any concerns regarding the misuse of mobile phones or unauthorised photography, filming or recording to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Head immediately.
- Comply with the School's safeguarding, behaviour, acceptable use, and data protection policies when using any mobile device.
- Cooperate with any investigation relating to the misuse of mobile phones or other smart devices.

3.1 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones or a similar device during the School day in front of pupils for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations and lockdown alerts
- 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. Any other images must be uploaded to the Eaton House Schools server as soon as possible and permanently deleted from the personal device
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the School office

3.2 Work phones

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 School phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Make sure that all communication and conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct

Staff in shared office space are expected to limit the impact of the use of phone to other colleague.

4. Use of Mobile Phones by Pupils

- Pupils must not use their mobile phones (all devices with communication and smart technology) during the School day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).
- Pupils who travel to and from school without an accompanying adult and who wear a yellow badge may carry a mobile phone for safety. In these cases, pupil may bring a mobile phone on to School but must deposit it with the SMT/School office at the start of the day and collect at the end of the day.
- Mobile phones ideally should be 'brick' phones. Smartphones are discouraged.
- Mobile phones deposited in the office by children will be kept safely. 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. 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 to the office will be confiscated immediately. Parents or carers will be asked to collect the mobile phone from the School office.
- 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.
- Pupils travelling on the School buses in the mornings and after School are not permitted to use their phones or smart watches (unless in exceptional circumstances such as contacting parents regarding travel arrangements)

5. Exceptions for special circumstances

Eaton House School recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where the use of a mobile phone is appropriate. Any exception must be authorised by the Head or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) where appropriate.

- Medical needs – Where a pupil requires access to a mobile phone to support a documented medical condition or disability, as agreed with the School and supported by an appropriate healthcare or support plan.
- Emergency situations – Where the use of a mobile phone is necessary to protect the health, safety or welfare of pupils, staff or visitors, or during an emergency.
- Safeguarding or welfare reasons – Where access to a mobile phone has been agreed by the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to support a pupil's safeguarding or welfare needs.

5.1 Authorisation of Exceptions

Any agreed exception should be proportionate, time-limited where appropriate, and reviewed regularly.

Where an exception is agreed on an ongoing basis, it should be recorded in the pupil's individual support plan, healthcare plan or other appropriate School records.

An agreed exception does not permit the misuse of a mobile phone or exempt the pupil from complying with other relevant School policies, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour, acceptable use of technology and data protection.

6. Parents, Carers and Visitors

Parents and carers are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

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.

- Notices and signs are displayed in the reception and entry to building advising visitors, parents and carers that mobile phones are not to be used. This includes all uses including, texting and photographing.
- Visitors and supply staff are not allowed to use mobile phones on the School premises and phones must be kept in their bags. Mobile phones can be used in the staff room.
- If a visitor, parent or carer is seen using their mobile phone, they will be asked politely to turn it off/desist from using it/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. On these occasions the use of a phone is permitted for photographing/videoing only; images should only be taken by parents and carers if they include their own child and that the use of these images is for their own personal use and must not be uploaded for any internet use or any other social networking sites or used in any form of publication unless they are solely of their own child.

- The School recognise that children may inadvertently be included in photographs by another parent; the School, therefore, are obliged to warn parents and carers of the legal and safeguarding risks of publishing such photographs on any platform. The placing of any photographs of children on social media is dangerous and parents may be in breach of the Data Protection Act if they upload photos of other children without the explicit consent of that child's parents.

7. Mobile Phones on School Trips and Educational Visits

The School recognises that trips and educational visits may require different arrangements from the normal School day. Any use of mobile phones during School trips must be proportionate, support the aims of the visit, and comply with the School's safeguarding and behaviour expectations.

- The trip leader should carry the School mobile phones where possible.
- Staff and volunteers must only use mobile phones to communicate with other staff, the School or emergency services. Personal calls and messages should only be made in exceptional circumstances and away from pupils.
- Staff must ensure that mobile phone use does not affect the supervision or safety of pupils. Another member of staff should supervise the group if a personal call is necessary.
- The trip leader may collect staff or volunteers' mobile phone numbers for use during the visit in case of an emergency. These details will be kept securely and deleted after the trip has ended.
- The School may permit, restrict or prohibit the use of mobile phones for pupil depending on the nature of the activity, the age of the pupils and safeguarding considerations.
- The trip leader will decide when, if at all, mobile phones may be used during activities outside the normal School day.

- Pupils must use mobile phones responsibly and only at times authorised by the trip leader. Their use must not disrupt activities, interfere with supervision or affect the educational purpose of the visit.
- The School may require pupils to hand in their mobile phones at certain times, including overnight, where this is considered necessary for safeguarding, wellbeing or to ensure adequate rest.

Any misuse of a mobile phone during a trip or residential visit may result in the phone being confiscated for the remainder of the visit and may lead to further action in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy.

8. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Principal and Heads'.

Appendix 1: Mobile Phone Information Slip for Visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices at Eaton House Schools

Our School is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the School premises
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone, when working with pupils or while children are present

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.

Appendix 2: Code of Conduct / Acceptable Use Agreement for pupils allowed to bring phones to School due to exceptional circumstances

(Pupil code of conduct / acceptable use agreement)

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

1. You may not use your mobile phone throughout the School day, including lesson times, in between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, unless a teacher specifically allows you to for a specific reason.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of School staff or other pupils.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the School's behaviour policy. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - Email
 - Text/messaging app
 - Social media

EATON HOUSE SCHOOLS
POLICY DOCUMENT

8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence. For instance, by making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes (including AI-generated images or 'deepfakes')
9. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in School.
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the School's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. 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.
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.