



Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy for Staff and Pupils

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“For learning, smiling and remembering”

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1. Introduction and aims

At Avondale 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, safeguarding and behaviour

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 headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 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

Although governor approval is not needed for this policy, it will be shared with governors 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. Personal mobile phones must not be used in corridors, carried about in pockets, used on the yard or left on desks. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present. Whilst children are in the classroom, personal phones must not be visible.

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
- A call back from the doctor or hospital

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 school office number 01254 703449 as a point of emergency contact.

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).

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found in our school's data protection policy and ICT acceptable use policy.

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 connect with parents/carers or pupils over messaging apps or social media as detailed in our ICT acceptable use policy and online safety policies.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that 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. Exceptional circumstance must be brought the attention of the headteacher.

At times, staff may use their personal mobile phones to access cpoms, access a 2 factor authentication pin number or to access the internet. School WIFI must be used and as detailed throughout this policy, mobile phone use should always be out of the sight of children.

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 are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Accessing CPOMS

Please see our policy on educational visits.

Staff may use personal mobile phones when supervising residential visits or school trips, and a contact number will be made available to parents/carers.

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 unless agreed with the headteacher

4.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes. Some work phones do not have a sim card and are used solely for taking photos of children as evidence of learning.

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, using the internet, taking photos of children to use as a blog post or to create a canva page
- 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 unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

They should also not use their phone on the school yard at the start of the school day or at home time. Children must only switch their phone back on when they are off the yard. Likewise, once entering the school yard, phones must be switched off immediately.

Staff will collect mobile phones on arrival from children mainly in year 5 and 6 only in exceptional circumstances e.g. when they need to walk home/walk to school by themselves or if they are going to a family members house after school and may need their phone whilst there.

Pupils with diabetes will use their phones to monitor their blood glucose levels. No other apps may be used during this time.

Mobile phones will be kept in the office securely and will be collected and given back at the end of the day

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to make sure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Pupils will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils/staff members

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.

Children must not wear a smartwatch whilst in school.

If a staff member wears a smart watch, this should be on silent and must not distract the teacher from their teaching or time with children.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

As stated above, there may be exceptional circumstance why a phone may be brought to school or may be used in school:

Pupils in year 5 and 6 travelling to and from school by themselves

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 Mrs Brown and complete a mobile phone agreement form. Parents will be contacted if the circumstance is not considered exceptional.

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

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5.3 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy.

The mobile phone will be confiscated and must be collected by a parent or guardian. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

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.)

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:

- 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

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
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that 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 or easily identifiable.

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.

Pupils, parents/carers will be aware of the disclaimer above by

Signs up in the school entrance or office

Including disclaimers in your permission forms for bringing a phone to school

Having our policy on our school website

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a secure location.

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on 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 Mrs Brown in a timely manner.

9. Appendix 1: Mobile Phone Agreement for pupils **allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances**

Avondale School Mobile Phone Agreement

Our school is a mobile-phone-free school.

We want our school to be a safe, calm and happy place where everyone can learn, play and spend time with their friends.

Pupil

I can only bring my phone into school if it has been agreed by the headteacher beforehand and I must follow the agreed rules.

My Mobile Phone Rules

I agree that:

- I will switch my phone off completely before I come onto the school grounds. My phone must not be on silent.
- I will hand my phone in straight away to my teacher so that it can be stored in the office.
- I will not switch my phone on until I am off the school yard.
- I will not use my phone during lessons, when moving around school, at breaktime, lunchtime, or while I am on the school grounds before or after school.
- I will not leave my phone in my bag.
- I will not use my phone in toilets.
- I will never take photos, videos or recordings of pupils or staff on school premises including the yard.
- I will keep my personal information safe and will not share someone else's personal information without their permission.
- I will keep my passwords and PINs private.
- I will never use my phone to bully, threaten, upset or embarrass another person, including through messages, email or social media.
- I will never create, send or share harmful or illegal images or content or AI-generated images of this kind.
- I will follow instructions from school staff if I am asked to switch off or hand over my phone.
- I understand that these rules also apply to smartwatches and other smart devices that can send messages, receive notifications, take photos or make recordings.

If something worries me

If something happens on my phone or online that makes me feel **worried, uncomfortable or unsafe**, I will:

STOP → DON'T SHARE IT → TELL A TRUSTED ADULT

I know I can ask an adult for help if I am worried about something.

What happens if I don't follow the rules?

If I do not follow these rules, a member of staff will take my phone and follow the school's behaviour policy. My Parents will be called to collect the phone.

I understand that refusing to follow a reasonable instruction from a member of staff is also a breach of the school's behaviour policy.

Pupil promise

I understand these rules and agree to follow them.

I understand that there is a special reason why school has agreed that I can bring my phone into school. My parents have ticked the reason below. I should not bring a phone into school for any other reason.

Pupil name: _____

Class: _____

Pupil signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Carer Agreement

I have read the mobile phone agreement with my child and understand the school's expectations. I am also aware that the school mobile phone policy is available on the school website.

The special circumstance where the school has agreed that my child can bring a phone into school is ticked below.

Please tick

- ☐ Travelling to and from school on my own
- ☐ For medical use e.g. diabetes
- ☐ Stopping at another family members house and therefore will need their phone

I understand that the school reserves the right to revoke permission if my child does not abide by the rules.

I understand that 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.

Parent/Carer name: _____

Parent/Carer signature: _____

Date: _____

10. Appendix 2: Mobile phone information slip for visitors

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 staffroom (contractors) or outside (parents)
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child and you have been given permission by the Headteacher), 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.
