



Introduction

The staff and Governors of Isbourne Valley School recognise that the pace at which technology changes, the impact which that has on our society and lives, that many people own mobile phones and that they are a part of everyday life for most of us. In this policy the term “mobile phone/s” includes smart watches, smart glasses, portable computer games, tablets and similar devices, and/or other devices which receive or send messages and are able to access the internet.

Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in a professional environment, free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. The school therefore strongly discourages pupils from the bringing of mobile phones to school. The school is prepared to allow mobile phones on the premises but only within the parameters of the policy as stated below. This policy applies to and must be followed by all staff, volunteers, parents, pupils and visitors to the school.

Our Aim

The aim of this policy is to inform all members of the school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones at Isbourne Valley School, to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school (e.g. safeguarding, data protection issues, theft, loss or damage, or use of technology for learning purposes) and to outline the procedures and processes of this policy. We aim to:

- Make sure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- Make sure the use of mobile phones, where applicable, is safe, responsible and lawful
- 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, behaviour and online safety

Relevant guidance

This policy meets the 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.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are required to actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

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 governing body is responsible for reviewing this policy every two years. The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy 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.

Use of mobile phones

Staff

During registration, teaching time, whilst on playground duty and during meetings, mobile phones will be switched off or put on ‘silent’ mode.

If staff wish to use their mobile phone to make a call or send a text message then this should only be done during non-contact time, lunchtime or breaks where they are not on duty. This usage must be in the staffroom or office only.

Except in urgent or exceptional situations, mobile phone use of any kind is not permitted during registration, teaching time, while on playground duty or undertaking extra-curricular clubs etc. The Headteacher will decide, on a case-by-

case basis, whether to allow for special arrangements. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number (01242 621341) as a point of emergency contact.

Staff should NOT use personal devices to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil. Only school cameras or devices are to be used.

On school visits, trips or other circumstances that take an adult and children outside of the usual educational base, school issued mobile phones only must be used. In emergency or exceptional circumstances, personal mobiles may be used (an example of this being an urgent call to school or a 999 call where a fault occurs with the school provided mobile).

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, CoPilot and Google Gemini).

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including by connecting through social media and messaging apps. From time to time children of staff may be pupils attending Isbourne Valley School. We recognise that, as a parent, the member of staff will need to be able to communicate with other parents in the same way as the parents or carers of any other pupil at the school. In those circumstances the member of staff is expected to follow the rules and guidelines when acting in their professional capacity as a member of the school staff and those expected of parents at other times.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils.

Pupils

In line with statutory guidance, our school is a mobile phone-free environment by default. Pupils are not permitted to have access to or use their mobile phones or smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (e.g. smart watches), which we refer to collectively as 'mobile phones', throughout the school day. This prohibition includes all lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes, and lunchtimes.

Any deviation from this mobile phone-free baseline will be by exception only (for example, approved arrangements for specific medical tracking or documented safeguarding needs) and must be explicitly authorised by the Headteacher.

Where there is an arrangement by exception, any use of mobile devices in school by pupils must be in line with the acceptable use agreement (see appendices 1 and 2 of our Online Safety Policy). Any breach of the acceptable use agreement by a pupil may trigger a sanction in line with the school's behaviour policy, which may result in the confiscation of their device.

Pupils must 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 the Headteacher (for example, for a specific medical reason). Where the bringing of a mobile phone to school is authorised the phone must be handed to the school office or otherwise stored as directed by the Headteacher.

Parents and Volunteers

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.

Parents and volunteers who are on site during the school day should also be mindful of the professional, distraction free environment that we strive to achieve. Their mobile phones should be switched off or put on 'silent' mode.

In exceptional circumstances, parents or volunteers may need to answer or make a call or send a text message and this can be done in the staffroom or the office.

For safeguarding reasons adults must not use camera phones to take images on the school grounds unless permitted on special events such as Sports Days or performances by the Headteacher.

Photographs of other children taken at school and on school trips must not be placed on social media sites without permission from the parents of those children.

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, but must refer any proposed sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

Parents and 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.

Consequences

In line with our Behaviour Policy and our Code of Conduct, pupils, parents and staff who fail to comply with this policy will receive the following sanctions:

For Pupils:

The mobile phone will be confiscated, stored in the school office and handed back to the pupil or parent at the end of the day. School will communicate with parents/ guardians regarding mobile phone use at school. Normal classroom sanctions from the Behaviour Policy will be used.

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 [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). This will include speaking with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy, who will consider whether pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

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:

- Making of or sharing nudes and semi-nudes including images that are digitally altered or wholly generated using AI (such as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes')
- 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

For Parents/ Volunteers:

Parents will be spoken to by the Headteacher and asked to refrain from using their phone.

Repeated breach of this policy's procedures may result in the adult being asked not to enter the school building. The ultimate consequence of deliberate, repeated failure to comply could lead to the adult being banned from school property.

For Staff:

Staff will be spoken to by the Headteacher. Staff who fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. See the school's staff disciplinary policy documents and Code of Conduct for more information.

Inappropriate Use

Generally, a mobile phone will be used inappropriately if it:

- Disrupts or is likely to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school, including being used at a time when an adult is designated to work with/supervise a child(ren);
- Threatens or is likely to threaten the safety or well-being of any person; or

- Is in breach of any law.

Inappropriate use of mobile phones will include them being used to bully, intimidate or otherwise harass other people through any SMS or text message, photographic, video or other data transfer system available on the phone. This type of misuse will be dealt with under the Behaviour Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Staff Discipline and Grievance Policy.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. The school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

Exemptions

Exemptions to this policy can be approved only in exceptional circumstances by the Headteacher.

Related Policies

This policy operates and should be read alongside the following policies, copies of which are available from the school office:

Safeguarding Policy

Acceptable User Policy

Online Safety Policy

Behaviour Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Staff Discipline and Grievance Policy

Adopted by Isbourne Valley School Governing Body on 9th September 2026

Next review Spring Term 2027