MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Learning Academies Trust

Version: 1.1

Approved by: Trust Board

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LEARNING ACADEMIES TRUST

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CHANGES

Policy date	Summary of change	Author	Version	Review date
01/06/2025	New policy created	Luke Pollard IT Operations Manager	1.0	01/06/2026
14/07/2026	Policy reviewed in line with DfE statutory requirements	LAT Safeguarding Lead (BS)	1.1	31/08/2027

1. AIMS

At Learning Academies Trust we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartwatches are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as for the wider community.

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

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
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes

Note: Throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones, smart watches and similar devices.

2. LEGISLATION AND 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. Guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK

3. 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 Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation. This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

4. USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY STAFF

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 during the school day, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room).

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

- To monitor a medical condition using a specific app (e.g. glucose levels)

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 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 approved generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots

More detailed guidance can be found in our LAT Acceptable Use, LAT Data Protection and LAT AI policies.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps. This is in line with our Code of Conduct.

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 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.

4.4 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
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

Staff may use personal mobile phones to contact parents or the school when supervising visits or school trips but their personal number must be blocked before making the call.

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 mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their mobile phones to contact parents/carers unless absolutely necessary. Routine contact must be made via the school office.

4.5 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

- 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 LAT Staff Disciplinary policy for more information.

5. USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY PUPILS

Pupils must not use their mobile phones during the school day. Where pupils do bring a phone to school:

- These must be handed in to the school office on arrival
- The phone must be switched off
- The phone must be collected from the school office at the end of the day

The only exception to this will be where the phone is required to support pupils with medical needs, e.g. a diabetic pupil who needs to use continuous glucose monitoring systems that connect to a smart phone. In these exceptional circumstances, the code of conduct must be shared and the acceptable use agreement must be completed and held on file.

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure 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

The DfE's statutory mobile phones 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 smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

Smartwatches may not be worn in school by pupils during the school day. Where a child wears a smartwatch to school they must hand it in to the front office on arrival at school and collect from the school office at the end of the day.

5.2 Exceptions

The school may permit individual pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. Permission will only be granted where there is a documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the school office for guidance – see appendix 4.

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

Misuse of mobile phones or other devices by pupils will lead to sanctions according to our behaviour policy.

5.3 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy, the mobile phone will be confiscated, as permitted under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The phone will be retained in the school office for the remainder of the school day.

Parents will need to collect the phone from the school office at the end of the school day.

Staff (SLT) have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. DfE Searching-screening-and-confiscation

The DfE guidance allows staff (SLT) to search a pupil's phone if there is good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being used/ has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

Where inappropriate content is found or inappropriate behaviour is suspected, sanctions may be applied in line with the school behaviour policy. In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs (SEN), 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 Keeping Children Safe in Education. This will include speaking with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy (DDSL), who will consider if 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:

- Consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos
- 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

6. USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY PARENTS/CARERS, VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

Parents 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.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it of their own child at a public event (such as a school fair or play), where the school has permitted the use of photo or video recording.
- Photos and recording are for personal use only and must not be published on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

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 – see appendix 3.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact or share information 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 possible 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 their phones are appropriately labelled, ready to be stored away securely when not in use during the school day.

Pupils must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. 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.

Phones handed in to the school office must be turned off.

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. This disclaimer will be included in any agreement form signed by the parent and a copy of the disclaimed published in the main reception area by the school office.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in locked cabinet. These should be handed back to the child's parent/carer at the end of the day

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Trust is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the Trust 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
- Government legislation.

If there are any concerns with this policy, these should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher in a timely manner.

APPENDIX 1: CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT FOR PUPILS ALLOWED TO BRING THEIR PHONES TO SCHOOL DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

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 you have specific agreement from the Headteacher to do so for medical reasons.*
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:
    a. Email
    b. Text/messaging app
    c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence.
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 or smartwatch. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobile phones and smartwatches 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.

APPENDIX 2: PERMISSION FORM ALLOWING A PUPIL TO BRING THEIR PHONE TO SCHOOL

PUPIL DETAILS	
School name:	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow the pupil named above to bring their mobile phone to school because they:

Please tick as appropriate

- ☐ Travel to and from school alone
- ☐ Need the phone to support their medical needs
- ☐ Other, please give details ……

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its code of conduct agreement

- ☐ Please TICK to confirm that you have read and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct – see Appendix 1 of the LAT Mobile Phone policy.

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/Carer signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate) : _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Valid until:	
Date:	

APPENDIX 3: TEMPLATE MOBILE PHONE INFORMATION SLIP FOR VISITORS

This information will be handed out to all visitors on arrival at the front office:

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

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 school office

Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff

Do not use your phone in lessons, 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.

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APPENDIX 4: SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS

School	Contact details
Elburton Primary School	T: 01752 404489 E: office@elburtonprimary.co.uk
Ford Primary School	T: 01752 567661 E: office@fordprimary.co.uk
High View Primary School	T: 01752 772984 E: office@highviewschool.org.uk
Hooe Primary School	T:01752 402042 E: office@hooeprimary.co.uk
Hyde Park Infant School	T: 01752 225493 E: office@hydeparkprimary.co.uk
Hyde Park Junior School	T: 01752 225314 E: office@hydeparkprimary.co.uk
Knowle Primary School	T: 01752 365364. E: office@knowle-plymouth.co.uk
Mayflower Community Academy	T: 01752 365730 E: office@mayfloweracademy.co.uk
Mount Street Primary School	T: 01752 205091 E: office@mountstreetpri.co.uk
Mount Wise Primary School	T: 01752 567602 E: office@mountwiseprimary.co.uk
Plaistow Hill Primary & Nursery	T : 01752 365410 E: office@plaistowhill.co.uk
Pomphlett Primary School	T: 01752 408966 E: office@pomphlettprimary.co.uk
Prince Rock Primary School	T: 01752 257698 E: office@princerock.co.uk
Salisbury Road Primary School	T: 01752 660566 E. office@salisburyroad.co.uk
Shakespeare Primary School	T: 01752-312048 E: office@spsplymouth.org
Victoria Road Primary School	**T:** 01752 365411 **E:** office@victoriaroad.uk
Widewell Primary School	T: 01752 778796 E: office@widewellprimary.co.uk
Woodfield Primary School	**T:** 01752 706384 **E:** office@woodfieldpri.co.uk