Mobile Devices Policy

Hampton Lakes Primary School

Policy last reviewed:	September 2026
Next review due:	September 2029
Member of staff responsible:	Miss Zoe Trigg
Ratified by:	HL LGB

1. RATIONALE

At Hampton Lakes Primary School we recognise that mobile phones are a feature of modern society and that a large number of students own one. We also recognise that some parents/carers request that their child/ren bring a mobile phone to school for before and after school safety/security reasons.

In line with the Department for Education's Mobile Phones in Schools guidance, Hampton Lakes Primary School aims to provide a calm, safe and distraction-free environment where pupils can learn effectively and safely. The school therefore operates as a mobile phone-free environment during the school day.

We wish to promote and set an example for responsible phone use; however, the increasing sophistication of mobile phone technology presents us with a number of issues:

- The integration of cameras and internet browsing, leading to safeguarding and data protection issues.
- The high value of many phones.
- The potential to use the phone whilst in silent mode, leading to distraction and disruption.
- The potential misuse of social media, messaging applications and online platforms which may lead to cyberbullying, safeguarding concerns and disruption to pupils' wellbeing.

Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. The school strongly discourages pupils from bringing mobile phones onto the school site unless there is a genuine need related to travel arrangements, safeguarding or other exceptional circumstances agreed with the school. This means that permission to use a mobile phone in school is only granted, with restrictions, to older students. The school is prepared to allow all students to have a mobile phone with them but only within the parameters outlined in the policy below.

For the purposes of this policy, the term "mobile device" includes mobile phones, smartphones, smart watches, smart glasses, tablets, e-readers, wearable technology, wireless earbuds, fitness trackers and any other electronic device capable of communication, internet access, photography, video recording, audio recording, location tracking, messaging, data storage or the sending and receiving of notifications.

2. AIMS

- To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones at our school.
- To create a mobile phone-free learning environment which supports pupils' education, wellbeing and safety.
- To minimise safeguarding risks associated with mobile phones and smart technologies.
- To ensure the school's approach reflects current Department for Education guidance and safeguarding requirements.

3. GUIDELINES

Staff

- Staff should model responsible device use and avoid using personal mobile devices in the presence of pupils except where necessary for school business or emergencies.
- Staff must not use personal devices to photograph, record or communicate directly with pupils. Any communication must take place through approved school systems.
- During teaching time, whilst on duty and during meetings, mobile devices will be switched off or put on "silent" or "discreet" mode.
- Except in urgent or exceptional situations, mobile device use is not permitted during teaching time, whilst on duty or during meetings.
- Mobile phones should be stored securely and must be kept out of sight during teaching time.
- Mobile devices may be used during staff non-contact time but any calls or text messages sent/received should be made out of sight of students.
- In accordance with the *Acceptable Use Policy* staff should not use personal devices for photography in school. Only school cameras or devices are to be used.
- Staff should not give out their personal mobile telephone number to parents or students, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.
- The school mobile telephone should be carried to any trips or visits to ensure that school and/or parents can be contacted in the event of an emergency.

All Students

- In general, children should not bring valuable items to school, as they can be easily lost or stolen.
- If children do bring mobile phones or devices to school, they are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk.
- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency the school office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact. Administration staff can ensure that a child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.
- Children who bring a mobile phone or devices (including those suspected to be wearable devices) to school must switch the device off before entering the school site. The device must be handed to their class teacher, teaching assistant or the school office immediately upon arrival and stored securely until the end of the school day.
- Mobile phones must not be used anywhere on the school site, including before school, during breaktimes, at lunchtime or during after-school activities unless specifically authorised by a member of staff.
- Pupils must not use mobile devices to access social media, messaging services, games or internet services whilst on school premises.

Parents and visitors, including volunteer helpers

- We request that parents and visitors do not use mobile devices within the school building.
- For safeguarding reasons parents and visitors are advised not to use camera phones to take images on the school grounds unless permitted for special events.
- Parents should not place images of other children taken at school on social media sites without permission from the parents involved.

- Parents/carers are requested not to contact pupils directly via mobile phones during the school day. Urgent messages should be communicated through the school office.
- Visitors must comply with the school's safeguarding, photography and data protection procedures regarding mobile device use

Educational Visit and Trips

- Personal tracking devices, including Apple AirTags, GPS trackers, smart watches with location tracking, and similar technologies, are not permitted on educational visits unless authorised by the Headteacher for a specific medical, SEND or safeguarding need. The school recognises that whilst parents may wish to use tracking devices for reassurance, their use may create safeguarding, privacy and operational concerns. Parents should contact the school directly if they have concerns regarding their child's safety whilst on a visit.
- Hampton Lakes Primary School does not permit pupils to carry personal location tracking devices, including Apple AirTags, GPS trackers or similar products, during the school day or on educational visits unless approved by the Head of School as part of an Individual Healthcare Plan, SEND provision or specific safeguarding arrangement.

4. SANCTIONS

In line with our Behaviour policy, the following sanctions may be applied when students fail to follow these guidelines:

- Confiscation of the mobile phone/device. Staff will take any confiscations to the Head of School's office for storage.
- If it is a first-time offence the student can collect the phone from the School Office at the end of the day.
- More serious use or repeat offences, parents will be required to contact the Assistant Head of School to arrange a meeting and the collection of the phone at a time that suits both parties.
- In the event of a student needing to contact parents before the end of the day they should speak to their class teacher, who will contact their parents on their behalf.

5. INAPPROPRIATE USE

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

- Disrupts or is likely to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school; or
- 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/devices will include students using them 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. It also includes filming incidents or lessons in school and uploading them onto a social media site. These types of misuse will be dealt with under our Anti-bullying and Behaviour policies.

Under the direction of senior staff, schools have the power to search students' phones if the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being used to commit an offence or cause personal injury. Pornographic images should be disposed of unless there are grounds to believe it constitutes an offence (it is extreme or an indecent image of a child) in which case it should be delivered to the police as soon as possible. (DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation, Advice for schools)

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.

6. RELATED TECHNOLOGY

The procedures applying to the inappropriate use and security of mobile phones, apply equally to the inappropriate use of portable computer games, iPods, tablet computers, smart watches and similar devices.

7. EXEMPTIONS

Exemptions of this policy can only be approved by the Head of School and then only in exceptional circumstances.

8. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy should be read alongside:

- Mobile Phones in Schools, Department for Education (2024, updated 2026).
- Behaviour in Schools (DfE).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version).
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation (DfE).
- Equality Act 2010.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- UK GDPR.