ACET

Striving for **Excellence**
Empowering Achievement
Shaping **Learning**

Mobile Phone Policy

DATE: September 2026

POLICY LEAD: Executive Leaders

APPROVED BY: Executive Team

DOCUMENT CONTROL		
Policy Level	Trust	
Approved By	Executive Team	
Approval Date	September 2026	
This policy remains valid until it is reviewed and replaced; it does not expire by date alone. Policies are reviewed annually, or sooner if required by statutory or legislative changes, in line with best practice		
Policy Lead / Author	Executive Leaders	
Version Number	**Date Issued**	**Updated Information**
V1	September 2026	• New Policy

Contents

1. Introduction and aims 3
2. Relevant guidance 3
3. Roles and responsibilities 3
   Staff 3
   Governors ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
4. Use of mobile phones by staff 3
   4.1 Personal mobile phones 3
   4.2 Data protection 4
   4.3 Safeguarding 4
   4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes 4
   4.5 Work phones ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
   4.6 Sanctions ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
5. Use of mobile phones by pupil/students 5
   5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupil/students 5
   5.3 Sanctions 6
6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors 7
7. Loss, theft or damage 7
8. Monitoring and review 7

Appendix 1: [Code of conduct / acceptable use agreement] for pupils/students allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances 9

Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil/student to bring their phone to school 10

Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors 11

1. Introduction and aims

At ACET, 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/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support academy's other policies and procedures

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
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

2. 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.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Staff

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 academy, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Principal is responsible for monitoring, reviewing, and holding staff and pupils/students 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.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the academy) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone while pupils/students are present / during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones is restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the academy where pupils/students are not present (such as the staffroom).

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

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 should not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information. The processing of any personal data must be done in line with the ACET Data Protection Policy, Cybersecurity and IT Acceptable use policies.

Staff must not enter personal data, pupil work containing identifiable information, or confidential academy information into AI tools that have not been formally approved by the Trust. Where AI tools have been approved for use, staff must ensure that only the minimum necessary data is used and that information is anonymised or pseudonymised wherever possible. AI-generated outputs must always be reviewed by a member of staff before being relied upon.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils/students, including by 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 pupil/students.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils/students, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil/student. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson / school trip / activity, this must be done using school equipment.

The Trust's wireless internet connections are secured and filtered. Staff must not share wi-fi passwords with unauthorised individuals. Any use of the trust internet systems must be done in line with the ACET ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

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/students for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips

- Supervising educational visits. A school mobile will be provided when 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/students, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil/student
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

5. Use of mobile phones by pupil/students

Pupils/students must not use their mobile phones during the school day or at any time whilst on the school site. This includes the start and the end of the school day, 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).

In the primary academies, some older children bring their mobile phones to the academies. When this is the case, the following will be adhered to:

- Staff will collect mobile phones on arrival
- Mobile phones will be stored out of site of children and other staff
- Mobile phones will not be locked away during the day, and the academy has no responsibility of loss or damage of these devices.
- Mobile phones will be handed back to each pupil/student at the end of the day
- Pupils/students will not use their mobile phones on academy grounds
- Pupils/students will not take mobile phones on residential visits, unless there is a specific medical needs (for example, for diabetic pupils/students who use continuous glucose monitoring systems that connect to a smart device).

Pupils/students will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in the academy 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/students will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupil/students

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 its 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.

Our approach to smartwatches is the same as mobile phones.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

Consider whether:

- Some pupils/students will be permitted to possess, or use, a mobile phone/smart device in school
  For instance:
  Pupils/students with diabetes use their phones to monitor their blood glucose levels.

In the case of permission due to exceptional circumstances, permission will only be granted where there is a documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, pupils/students or parents/carers should contact Stacey Flint (Assistant Vice Principal) stacey.flint@swintonacademy.org

Any pupils/students who are given permission must then adhere to the academy's [code of conduct / acceptable use agreement] for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

5.3 Sanctions

In the primary settings, any child refusing to hand over their mobile phone will be in breach of the Behaviour Policy and sanctions will fall in line with that Behaviour Policy.

In secondary academies students found using a mobile phone during the school day will have the device confiscated. The phone will be returned at the end of the school day from a designated collection point. Where a phone is confiscated on three occasions within a half term, a parent/carer will be required to collect the device and further sanctions may be applied in line with the Behaviour Policy. Refusal to comply with the confisciation process will result in suspension.

Staff may search a pupil/student's mobile phone where there is a lawful reason to do so, in accordance with the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. This may include circumstances where there is reason to believe that a device contains prohibited content, evidence of bullying, harm to another person or evidence of a criminal offence. Any such search will be carried out in line with statutory guidance and safeguarding procedures.

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The academy will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs (SEN), disability)
- The pupil/student'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 academy 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

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers 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.
This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils/students, 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, when working with pupils/students 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 the academy.

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/students, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil/student

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the academy's policy for pupils/students using their phones but must refer any proposed sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the right 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

In secondary academies mobile devices remain the responsibility of the student. The Academy/Trust accepts no responsibility for mobile devices that are lost, damaged or stolen on academy premises, transport, during educational visits or whilst travelling to and from the academy.

Any mobile phone that is found on academy premises should be handed to the academy reception or main office. Where mobile phones are confiscated, they will be stored securely until they are returned in line with academy procedures.

8. Monitoring and review

ACET is committed to making sure that this policy has a positive impact on pupil/students' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, ACET will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupil/students

- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the DfE, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for pupils/students allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Pupil/student 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 students.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other students.
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 academy's behaviour policy. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils/students 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. 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 academy'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 academy'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.

Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil/student to bring their phone to school

Use this form if you don't normally allow students to bring their phones to school but are granting an exception.

It should be signed by parents/carers. In secondary schools, it may also be appropriate to get students to sign.

STUDENT DETAILS	
Student name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow [student name] to bring [their] mobile phone to school because they:
List the appropriate reasons here. We've listed some common reasons below (you can delete as required):

- Need the phone to support their medical needs
- Other extenuating circumstances – as agreed with the Leadership Team.

Students who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its acceptable use agreement.
The academy reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil/student does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Student signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Print out and cut copies of this slip to give to visitors when they arrive at your school.

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our academy

Our academy is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent while on the academy grounds
- Please do not use phones where students are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the main reception.
- Do not take photos or recordings of students (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with students or while children are present

The academy accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the academy grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our academy is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent while on the academy grounds
- Please do not use phones where students are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the main reception.
- Do not take photos or recordings of students (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils/students or while children are present

The academy accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the academy grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our academy is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent while on the academy grounds
- Please do not use phones where students are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the main reception.
- Do not take photos or recordings of students (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with students or while children are present

The academy accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the academy grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.