

Ouston Primary School

Mobile Phone and Devices* Policy



Review Date: Autumn 2025

Reviewed by: Curriculum Committee

Next Review date: Autumn 2027

**This includes all other mobile communication devices such as Smart Watches*

The aim of the Mobile Phone/Devices Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools - which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection. This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, children, young people, parents, carers and visitors. This list is not exhaustive.

Under the DfE Mobile Phones in Schools Guidance (2026), the school implements a whole-school ban on mobile phone use throughout the school day to support behaviour, reduce distraction, and promote pupil wellbeing.

Staff

Staff must not use their mobile phones/devices in the vicinity of the children and are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during work time (excluding break and lunch times). Staff should ensure that mobile phones are turned off or on silent at all times while in the vicinity of children. Mobile phones should not be visible to pupils unless their use is linked to learning, for instance as a stopwatch or to play music. Ipads/tablets are used in school to take photos/videos of pupils rather than staff mobile devices. Further guidance for staff is found in the ICT Staff Acceptable Use policy.

To support safeguarding and to use in the case of an emergency, staff may take mobile phones on school visits but must follow the guidance in this policy and in the Staff ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

The mobile phone policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction.

All staff will receive training on managing mobile-phone-related incidents, responding to harmful content, and recording and reporting concerns, in line with DfE expectations.

Pupils

We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and that they also play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. We therefore allow Year 5 and 6 pupils, who walk to and from school without an adult, to bring their mobile phones to school if parents prefer this for safety reasons. (** This is at the discretion of parents and is not a requirement for children to be allowed to walk home independently.)

The school operates a whole-school ban on mobile phone/devices use during the school day for all pupils. Phones must not be used at any time on school premises, including before and after school, breaktimes and lunchtimes in line with DfE guidance.

Where a pupil has a specific need—such as being a young carer, having a medical requirement, or requiring assistive technology—a reasonable adjustment may be agreed following a DSL-led risk assessment.

To support school in adhering to the DfE guidelines, the following expectations must be followed:

- Parents/carers must sign and return the permission slip attached to the policy.
- Mobile phones/smart watches must be switched off and handed in to class teachers at the start of the day. These will be kept in a class box and sent to the school office to be stored securely. The box will be collected from the school office at the end of the school day and phones given back to pupils by the class teacher before they leave. For those pupils in the outdoor classroom, phones are placed in a box which is given to the class teacher. The classroom is securely fobbed, ensuring phones are safe and inaccessible to pupils during the day.
- Pupils are not allowed to use their mobile phones/devices on site at the start or end of the school day. This includes on the school yard. They are also not allowed to bring them to/use them at events such as School Discos.
- Under no circumstances should a mobile phone be used by a pupil to record still or video images, or to record audio whilst on the school premises.
- The school reserves the right to refuse pupils to bring a mobile phone to school where the guidelines above have not been followed.
- Pupils are not permitted to take mobile phones on school trips/residential visits. School staff will communicate with parents/carers as needed during these visits via Class Dojo or the school texting service.
- All searching, screening and confiscation of devices will follow DfE statutory guidance. Any harmful or inappropriate content found on a device will be managed in line with safeguarding procedures, including escalation to police or children's social care where appropriate.

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy whilst on the premises. Volunteers are asked to leave mobile phones in bags and these to be stored in a cupboard in the classroom or in the cloakroom next to the staffroom.

Visitors must not use mobile phones on site unless authorised by staff for safeguarding or operational reasons.

Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers should only use mobile phones for urgent communication when on the school premises, including on the yard at the beginning and end of the school day. The monitoring of the use of mobile phones is increasingly difficult and therefore warrants a whole school ban, in line with DfE guidelines.

We will no longer allow parents/carers to use phones to photograph or video school events such as shows and sports day due to increased safeguarding concerns for our pupils, including our most vulnerable pupils. The sharing of images and videos of our staff during events is also not permitted as permission has not been granted.

We do, however, acknowledge that assemblies and school events create special memories and school staff will ensure photographs of events are taken and shared on Class Dojo.

Parents must not contact pupils directly during the school day. This is to ensure pupil safety, reduce distraction, and maintain a calm school environment, in line with DfE guidance. Parents / Carers who need to pass on a message during the school day should ring the school office on 4102599.

By sending their child to our school, parents agree to the expectations set out in this policy.

Children’s Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones/Devices & Parent/Carer Permission

Children in Year 5 and 6 will be permitted to bring a mobile phone/device to school where parents are in agreement and where the pupil walks to and from school without an adult. *Any other reason can be added to the reply slip below*

Parents/Carers must complete the request form below explaining the reasons why their child should bring a mobile phone into school.

Mobile phones, where brought into school, will be the sole responsibility of the pupil concerned and the school will accept no responsibility for any subsequent damage or loss.

Pupils should switch off and hand phones in to the class teachers at the start of the day. These should be identifiable and will be kept in a class box and sent to the school office to be stored securely. The box will be collected from the school office at the end of the school day and phones given back to pupils by the class teacher before they leave.

Pupils are not allowed to use their mobile phones/devices on site at the start or end of the school day. This includes on the playground.

The school reserves the right to refuse pupils to bring a mobile phone/device to school where the guidelines above have not been followed. Any mobile phone/device which is used without permission will be confiscated and kept in a safe place by the school until appropriate arrangements can be made for the collection of the phone by a parent/carers.

Under no circumstances should a mobile phone be used by a pupil to record still or video images, or to record audio whilst on the school premises.

The school will monitor mobile-related safeguarding incidents and report patterns or concerns to SLT and governors to inform ongoing policy review.

I have read and understood the above policy regarding children bringing a mobile phone/device to school.

I am writing to request permission for my child.....
to bring a mobile phone/device to school because
.....

I have explained the rules regarding mobile phones to my child.

Signed Date.....

Name..... Relationship to child.....