



The Drive Community Primary School

Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy

September 2026 – September 2027

Purpose of this policy

The Drive Community Primary School is committed to a calm, safe and supportive environment where pupils can learn free from distraction and online harms. In line with the Department for Education's guidance, our school operates as a mobile phone-free environment by default, covering lessons, transitions, break and lunch.

The DfE document Mobile phones in schools (updated 29th June 2026) is statutory, and sets clear expectation that schools prohibit pupil mobile phone use throughout the school day. 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.

Scope and definitions

- Mobile phone: any device capable of calls, messaging or internet access over a mobile network (e.g., smartphones, basic handsets).
- Smart device: any personal device with similar functionality (e.g., smartwatches that send/receive notifications, record audio/video).
- Air tag.
- This policy covers pupils during the school day on the school site, on school visits, and in any before/after-school provision on site unless explicitly varied by the Headteacher.

Principles of this policy

1. Phone-free by default: Pupils must not have access to or use mobile phones/smart devices during the school day. Smartwatches with notifications/camera/microphone are treated as mobile phones and are not permitted.
2. Consistency matters: Staff and pupils must understand the rules and apply them consistently.
3. Proportionate exceptions: Limited, needs-based exceptions may be agreed (e.g., medical, SEND, safeguarding). Decisions will be recorded and reviewed.

These principles support:

- Safeguarding
- Behaviour and calm learning environments
- Reduced distraction
- Improved wellbeing and reduced bullying (as highlighted in Anti Bullying Alliance analysis of the new guidance)

How we implement a phone-free day

To comply with the DfE expectation that pupils must not have access to their mobile phones during the school day, The Drive Primary has adopted a daily hand-in system. This is one of the DfE-endorsed methods for ensuring a secure and fully phone-free environment. This applies to those pupils who travel to school on their own and carry their mobile phone for safety reasons.

Daily Arrival Procedure

- Pupils who bring a phone, smart watch or air tag must hand it in immediately on entering the classroom.

- Phones, smart watches and airtags will be stored in a locked box which is held in the main school office.
- All devices must be switched off before hand-in.

End-of-Day Procedure

- All devices are returned to pupils by staff at their dismissal door/line.
- For safeguarding reasons, the device is handed directly to the pupil.

After-School Clubs & Wraparound Care

- The no-access rule continues until the child leaves the site, including after-school clubs.

Exceptions and reasonable adjustments

In limited circumstances, the Headteacher may authorise exceptions, recorded on the pupil's plan and communicated to relevant staff:

- Medical: where a device is part of a care plan (e.g., monitoring or alerts), usage rules will be risk-assessed.
- SEND/Disability: reasonable adjustments may be agreed where the device supports access or regulation, with clear times/places and staff oversight.

Sanctions and responses

- If your child is found to have a smart device on site without permission the device will be confiscated and parents/carers will be required to come to school and collect the device.
- Using or accessing a device during the day breaches the School Behaviour Policy. Sanctions are consistent, fair and escalating, and parents/carers will be informed for repeated breaches. Confiscated devices are stored securely and returned to a responsible adult where appropriate.
- Searching/Confiscation: The school may confiscate a phone where rules are broken and, where necessary and lawful, search a pupil's belongings for a phone.

Staff expectations (modelling)

Staff should keep personal phones out of sight during pupil-facing time and not use them in front of pupils, except for explicit professional reasons, in line with the Staff Code of Conduct.

All staff should consistently enforce the school's policy on the use of mobile phones.

Staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. This will empower staff to better challenge pupils to meet the school expectations and effectively enforce the prohibition of mobile phones throughout the school day. There may be occasions where it is appropriate for a teacher to use a mobile phone or similar device, for instance to issue homework, issue rewards and sanctions or use multi-factor authentication.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers

- Parents, visitors and volunteers should not use mobile phones on site in areas where pupils are present, except with staff permission (e.g., medical needs, essential

communication) and must never record pupils. Signage and event-specific briefings will make expectations clear. (Good practice aligned to DfE's communication emphasis.)

- Parents should not encourage children to take devices on residential trips/trips and if found, will be confiscated for the duration of the event and parents will need to collect the device from the Head Teacher.

Where parents have questions or concerns, staff should address these in a timely manner and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

Visitors and Volunteers

- Phones must remain on silent and out of sight.
- No personal photographing or filming is permitted.
- Use only school provided devices for work with pupils.

Communication and induction

- We will communicate this policy clearly and regularly (website, prospectus, admissions pack, transition meetings, newsletters, assemblies, visual signage) and explain the rationale and benefits (reduced distraction; improved wellbeing; safer culture). Consistency and parent buy-in are key.
- We will communicate expectations to the whole school community.
- We will review annually or in response to updated local or national guidance.
- We will oversee safe storage systems for phones handed in.

Trips, clubs and residential

- The default phone-free expectation applies on school trips, clubs and residential. The visit leader will confirm arrangements in pre-trip briefings and risk assessments, including how parents can contact pupils in an emergency. Any exception must preserve a phone-free learning experience.

Safeguarding, online safety and data protection

- This policy supports our wider safeguarding duties (including online safety) by reducing opportunities for bullying, image-sharing, and exposure to harmful content during the school day. Where issues arise outside school, we will work with families and, where appropriate, agencies.
- Staff must never access pupil devices without lawful basis and authorisation. Any incident involving images or potential harm is handled under our Safeguarding and Online Safety policies and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.