BURBAGE GROVE ROAD SCHOOLS FEDERATION

MOBILE PHONE & SMART DEVICE POLICY

2026-2029

The governing board adopted this policy: 25.06.2026
Chair of Governors:

Signed:

Date:

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1. Introduction

The Burbage Grove Road Schools Federation is committed to providing a safe, secure and purposeful learning environment where all pupils can achieve their full potential.

The Federation recognises that mobile phones and smart devices are an increasingly significant part of everyday life. However, their presence within school can present safeguarding, privacy, online safety and wellbeing risks, as well as causing disruption to learning.

The Federation therefore operates a total ban on mobile phones and communication-enabled smart devices for pupils. Exceptions will only be considered where there is a genuine medical, safeguarding or other exceptional need and in accordance with the Federation's safeguarding, equality and medical needs responsibilities.

This policy establishes clear expectations regarding the use of mobile phones and smart devices by pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, contractors, parents/carers and visitors.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Safeguard pupils and staff.

- Promote positive behaviour and engagement in learning.
- Minimise distractions during the school day.
- Protect the privacy and dignity of pupils and staff.
- Reduce opportunities for cyberbullying and online abuse.
- Prevent unauthorised photography, recording and online sharing.
- Support pupils' wellbeing and healthy social interaction.
- Ensure compliance with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All pupils.
- All employees.
- Governors.
- Volunteers.
- Agency and temporary staff.
- Contractors.
- Parents and carers.
- Visitors to Federation premises.

For the purposes of this policy, the term "mobile phone" includes:

- Mobile phones.
- Smartphones.
- Smartwatches with communication functions.
- Tablets.
- Devices capable of photography or video recording e.g. watches, glasses
- Devices capable of internet access.
- Devices capable of messaging or telephone communication.

4. Relevant Legislation and Guidance

This policy has been developed with reference to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Behaviour in Schools (Department for Education)

- Mobile Phones in Schools Guidance (Department for Education)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance (Department for Education)
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions (Department for Education)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- Approve and review this policy.
- Monitor its effectiveness.
- Ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are met.

5.2 Senior Leaders

Senior leaders will:

- Implement and monitor this policy.
- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities.
- Address breaches of the policy.
- Review the policy in line with the agreed review schedule.

5.3 Staff

Staff will:

- Apply the policy consistently.
- Challenge breaches appropriately.
- Report safeguarding concerns promptly.
- Model appropriate and professional use of technology.

5.4 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Support the Federation's approach to mobile phones and smart devices.
- Avoid contacting pupils directly during the school day.
- Contact the school office if communication with their child is required.

6. Use of Mobile Phones and Smart Devices by Pupils

6.1 Total Ban

The Burbage Grove Road Schools Federation operates a total ban on mobile phones and personal communication devices for pupils.

Pupils must not bring mobile phones, smartphones, communication-enabled smartwatches, tablets or any other personal electronic device capable of communication, messaging, photography, recording or internet access onto Federation premises.

This prohibition applies:

- Before school.
- During the school day.
- During breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- During clubs and enrichment activities.
- During educational visits unless alternative arrangements have been agreed by the Federation.

Given the age of pupils attending schools within the Federation, mobile phones and communication-enabled smart devices are not considered necessary during the school day.

6.2 Smartwatches

Smartwatches capable of:

- Making or receiving calls.
- Sending or receiving messages.
- Accessing the internet.
- Taking photographs.
- Recording audio or video.

are prohibited and will be treated as mobile phones under this policy.

Pupils may wear a basic watch used solely for telling the time.

6.3 Exceptional Circumstances

The Federation recognises that, in limited circumstances, a pupil may require access to a mobile phone or smart device whilst attending school.

Examples may include:

- Medical needs, including where a mobile phone is required to support the monitoring or management of a medical condition such as diabetes.
- Significant safeguarding considerations.

- Other exceptional circumstances identified by the Federation.

Requests will be considered on an individual basis, taking into account the pupil's age, needs, safeguarding considerations and the Federation's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Where an exception is agreed, appropriate arrangements will be put in place to ensure that the device is used only for its agreed purpose and does not adversely affect the safety, wellbeing or education of other pupils.

The Federation reserves the right to review any agreed arrangements where they are no longer required.

6.4 Communication During the School Day

Parents and carers must not contact pupils directly during the school day.

Where urgent communication is necessary, parents and carers should contact the school office, which will ensure that messages are passed on appropriately.

7. Sanctions for Pupils

Any pupil found in possession of a prohibited device may be subject to:

- Immediate confiscation of the device.
- Notification of parents/carers.
- Appropriate behaviour sanctions in line with the Federation Behaviour Policy.

All sanctions will be reasonable, proportionate and take account of individual circumstances.

8. Safeguarding Concerns

The Federation recognises that mobile phones and smart devices can present safeguarding risks, including:

- Bullying and cyberbullying.
- Inappropriate communication.
- Unauthorised photography or recording.
- Sharing of inappropriate content.
- Access to unsuitable online material.

Any concerns relating to the use, possession or suspected misuse of a mobile phone or smart device will be dealt with in accordance with the Federation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy and Online Safety Policy.

Where there are concerns that a pupil may be at risk of harm, or where a device is believed to have been used in a way that places a child or member of staff at risk, the Federation will take appropriate action and may seek advice from, or refer concerns to, external agencies including Children's Social Care and the Police.

All safeguarding concerns will be managed in line with current statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

9. Use of Mobile Phones by Staff

9.1 Personal Mobile Phones

Staff must not use personal mobile phones in classrooms or areas where pupils are present unless there is an emergency or temporary specific authorisation has been given. This also applies to personal devices that allow messaging/calls/photography e.g. smartwatch.

Personal use should be limited to non-contact time and staff-only areas.

In regards to safeguarding, only DSLs/DDSLs are permitted to use a mobile device for two-factor authentication in an area

Designated staff who work between both settings are permitted, by the Executive Headteacher only, to use a mobile phone for contact, work emails, contractors and photography.

Wraparound care staff are authorised to use the school mobile phone for official Federation purposes only, including communication relating to pupil care, operational matters and emergency contact where required. Such use must remain professional and comply with safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection expectations.

9.2 Data Protection

Staff must not use personal devices to:

- Store confidential Federation information.
- Process personal data without authorisation.
- Photograph or record pupils.
- Enter personal, safeguarding or confidential information into public artificial intelligence systems.

All staff must comply with the Federation's data protection procedures.

9.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not:

- Share personal contact details with pupils.
- Communicate with pupils through personal social media accounts.
- Use personal messaging services to communicate with pupils.

Any communication with pupils must take place through approved Federation systems and procedures.

9.4 Educational Visits

Staff may use mobile phones on educational visits where required for safety, communication or emergency purposes.

Such use must remain professional and comply with safeguarding expectations.

9.5 Breaches by Staff

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Federation's disciplinary procedures.

10. Parents, Carers, Visitors and Volunteers

Parents, carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors are expected to use mobile phones responsibly whilst on Federation premises.

They must:

- Respect the privacy of pupils and staff.
- Follow instructions from staff regarding mobile phone use.
- Avoid using phones in classrooms or when working with pupils.
- Refrain from photographing or recording pupils without permission.

Photographs taken at public events should be for personal use only.

Images or recordings containing other children should not be shared publicly without appropriate consent.

Visitors who fail to comply with this policy may be asked to stop using their device or leave the premises.

11. Educational Visits

The Federation will determine arrangements for mobile phone use during educational visits on a case-by-case basis.

Parents, carers and pupils will be informed of any specific arrangements before a visit takes place.

12. Loss, Theft or Damage

The Federation accepts no responsibility for personal devices that are lost, stolen or damaged whilst on Federation premises, during educational visits or whilst travelling to and from school.

Any confiscated devices will be stored securely until collection.

Lost property should be handed to the school office.

13. Monitoring and Review

The Federation is committed to ensuring that this policy supports safeguarding, behaviour and learning.

The policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if changes in legislation, national guidance or safeguarding requirements make this necessary.