

# Mobile phone policy

The Eden School



**Approved by:**

The Board of  
Governors

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## Contents

1. Introduction and aims .....	2
2. Relevant guidance .....	2
3. Roles and responsibilities .....	3
4. Use of mobile phones by staff .....	3
5. Use of mobile phones by pupils.....	5
6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors .....	9
7. Loss, theft or damage .....	9
8. Monitoring and review.....	10

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### 1. Introduction and aims

At The Eden School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

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
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

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

This mobile phone policy is closely linked to other relevant school policies, including:

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:** Ensuring the safe use of technology and reducing the risks associated with mobile phone misuse.
- **Data Protection Policy:** Addressing concerns around the handling of sensitive information and the need to prevent unauthorized data sharing via mobile phones.
- **Behaviour Policy:** Reinforcing the importance of focused learning environments and setting clear expectations for mobile phone use during school hours.
- **Anti-bullying Policy:** Mitigating the potential for cyberbullying and inappropriate online interactions facilitated through mobile phones.
- **Acceptable Use of ICT Policy:** Outlining the responsible use of technology, including mobile phones, and ensuring that all technology use in school adheres to school guidelines.

### 2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

#### 3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Behaviour The Head of Behaviour for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils 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.

#### 3.2 Governors

The Governors at The Eden School are responsible for monitoring and reviewing this Mobile Phone Policy to ensure its effectiveness and relevance in supporting the school's ethos, safeguarding measures, and learning environment.

They will:

- Review the policy annually to ensure it aligns with current safeguarding and data protection legislation.
- Monitor any incidents related to mobile phone misuse and assess the policy's impact on reducing disruptions and safeguarding risks.
- Receive regular reports from the Headteacher on the effectiveness of the policy and any required updates or adjustments.
- Work with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the policy is effectively communicated to students, parents, and staff, and that it is consistently enforced.

### 4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day.

The text below is an example only, and you should adapt it to suit your specific needs.

#### 4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while [children are present/during contact time]. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils 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 [insert number] as a point of emergency contact.

## 4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data or any other confidential school information. This includes entering or sharing any personal or sensitive data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Bard), which may not comply with data protection regulations.

All school data and confidential information must be processed using authorised school devices and in accordance with the school's data protection policies.

More detailed guidance on data protection, including appropriate usage of school information and communication technology (ICT), can be found in **The Eden School's Data Protection Policy** and **ICT Acceptable Use Policy**. Staff are required to familiarise themselves with these policies to ensure compliance with data protection laws and school protocols.

## 4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details (e.g., phone number, email address) to parents/carers or pupils, nor should they connect with them through social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) or messaging apps (e.g., WhatsApp, Signal). Staff must avoid publicising their personal contact details on any social media platform or website to prevent unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils.

For more information on these guidelines, please refer to **The Eden School's ICT Acceptable Use Policy** and **Online Safety Policy**, where similar provisions are detailed for interacting with parents/carers and pupils.

## 4.4 Photographs and Recordings

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or any other material that could identify a pupil. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings for educational purposes (e.g., during a lesson, school trip, or activity), this must be done using school-owned equipment, such as school-issued cameras or tablets.

In cases where classroom apps or programmes require the use of a member of staff's mobile phone, the use of such devices must comply with the school's data protection guidelines and ICT policies. If internet access is required, it must be done through secure and authorised school networks, and not via personal data plans or hotspots. Staff should refer to **The Eden School's ICT Acceptable Use Policy** for further details on appropriate device usage in these scenarios.

## 4.5 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some specific circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use their personal mobile phones for work-related purposes. These circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards, or sanctions using school-authorised platforms
- Using mobile phones for multi-factor authentication (MFA) to access school systems
- Emergency evacuations where communication with staff or emergency services is essential
- Supervising off-site trips or residential visits, where school communication systems are not available

If personal mobile phone use is required in these situations, staff are expected to:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with **The Eden School's Staff Code of Conduct**

- Avoid using their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or any content that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to directly contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made through the school office or a designated school contact

For **educational visits**, particularly residential trips, the school will explore the possibility of providing staff with a school mobile phone or a SIM card with a separate number, to avoid the use of personal devices for communication with parents/carers and pupils. Please refer to **The Eden School's Educational Visits Policy** for further guidance on managing communication during off-site activities.

## 4.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

## 4.6 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

# 5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

At The Eden School, we believe that mobile phones should not interfere with the learning environment or the safety and well-being of our pupils. To support this aim, **pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones during the school day**, including during lessons, between lessons, at breaktimes, and at lunchtimes.

### School Procedure for Mobile Phones:

- Pupils may bring their mobile phones to school but must **hand them in at reception upon arrival**.
- The phones will be securely stored at reception throughout the school day.
- Pupils may collect their mobile phones from reception at the **end of the school day** before they leave the premises.

This approach ensures that mobile phones do not cause distractions during the school day and that the security and well-being of all pupils are maintained. We understand that some pupils may need to carry mobile phones for safety reasons when travelling to and from school. However, these must be submitted at the start of the school day and will not be accessible until school ends.

In exceptional circumstances, if a pupil requires access to their phone during the school day, they may seek permission from the **Headteacher or a designated member of staff**, and the phone will be made available for the specific, approved use.

### Banned Use of Mobile Phones:

- Mobile phones are not to be used, seen, or heard during school hours.
- Pupils found using mobile phones during the day, or not submitting their phones to reception upon arrival, will have their phones confiscated and returned at the end of the day.

- Repeated misuse of mobile phones may lead to further disciplinary action in accordance with the school's **Behaviour Policy**.

This policy is in place to maintain an environment focused on learning and safety, while allowing pupils to responsibly use mobile phones outside of school hours.

## 5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

In line with the DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance, at The Eden School, we consider smartwatches to fall under the same category as mobile phones and other devices with communication and smart technology.

### School Procedure for Smartwatches:

- **Smartwatches are not permitted to be worn or used during the school day**, including during lessons, between lessons, at breaktimes, and at lunchtimes.
- Pupils who bring smartwatches to school must **hand them in at reception upon arrival**, along with their mobile phones. The smartwatches will be securely stored at reception until the end of the school day, at which point pupils may collect them before leaving the premises.

### Concerns with Smartwatches:

- Pupils may be able to use a smartwatch to communicate via text or calls, even if their phone is stored elsewhere, which could disrupt lessons or allow unauthorised communication during the school day.
- Due to the size and similarity to regular watches, smartwatches may be easier to conceal, making it more difficult for staff to monitor their use.
- Smartwatches can be more fragile than mobile phones, so the **confiscation and storage procedures** may be adjusted to safely accommodate them.

### Banned Use of Smartwatches:

- As with mobile phones, smartwatches are not to be seen, used, or heard during school hours.
- If a pupil is found using a smartwatch during the school day, it will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- Repeated misuse of smartwatches may result in further disciplinary action in line with the school's **Behaviour Policy**.

## 5.2 Exceptions **for special circumstances and for sixth-form pupils**

At **The Eden School**, we recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances where it is necessary for some pupils to have access to their mobile phones during the school day. These circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and exceptions will be granted at the discretion of the school leadership.

**Exceptional Circumstances:** Examples of special circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils travelling to and from school independently
- Young carers who need to be contactable during the day
- Pupils with medical needs, such as diabetes, who use their mobile phones to monitor health conditions (e.g., blood sugar levels)

**Requesting Permission:** Pupils or parents/carers who believe that they qualify for an exception should contact [insert name and contact details] to request permission. The school will review the request and

determine whether it is appropriate to allow the pupil to carry a mobile phone. If permission is granted, the pupil must adhere strictly to the school's **[Code of Conduct/Acceptable Use Agreement]** for mobile phone use (see Appendix 1).

**Sixth-Form Pupils:** Sixth-form pupils are allowed access to their mobile phones during the school day to reflect their increased independence and responsibility. However, their usage must not interfere with our policy for younger pupils. Therefore:

- Sixth-form pupils are only permitted to use their mobile phones in designated areas and during specified times where younger pupils are not present. These areas include [insert permitted locations and times].
- Misuse of mobile phones by sixth-form pupils will lead to sanctions in accordance with the school's **Behaviour Policy**.

### 5.3 Sanctions

At **The Eden School**, we are dedicated to fostering a respectful and conducive learning environment. As part of this, breaches of our **Mobile Phone Policy** will be addressed in line with the school's **Behaviour Policy**, ensuring that sanctions are reasonable, proportionate, and aimed at promoting positive behaviour.

#### Confiscation of Mobile Phones

If a pupil is found using their mobile phone without permission or in an inappropriate manner, the phone will be confiscated immediately under sections 91 and 94 of the **Education and Inspections Act 2006**.

- **First Offence:**
  - The mobile phone will be confiscated by the teacher or relevant staff member and securely stored in the school office.
  - The pupil will be allowed to collect the phone from the office at the end of the school day, after a reminder of the school's expectations regarding mobile phone use.
  - A note will be made in the pupil's behaviour record, and the incident will be addressed in line with **The Eden School Behaviour Policy**, focusing on encouraging the pupil to reflect on their behaviour.
- **Repeated Offences:**
  - For a second or further offence, the mobile phone will be confiscated and retained in the school office.
  - A parent or carer will be contacted, and they will be required to collect the phone from the school office. In addition, a meeting may be arranged between the parent/carers, pupil, and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to discuss the repeated breach and its impact on the pupil's behaviour record.
  - The school's **Behaviour Policy** will be applied, with potential for further sanctions such as detention or the restriction of privileges, depending on the frequency and nature of the breaches.
- **Serious or Dangerous Misuse:**
  - If the mobile phone is used in a way that severely disrupts the school environment or endangers the safety of others, the phone will be confiscated immediately, and the incident will be escalated to the Headteacher.
  - The phone may be confiscated for a longer period, and parents/carers will be required to meet with the Headteacher before the phone is returned.
  - In line with the **Behaviour Policy**, additional sanctions such as suspension or exclusion may be considered, depending on the severity of the misuse.

#### Search of Mobile Phones

In alignment with the **DfE's guidance on searching, screening, and confiscation**, staff have the right to search a pupil's mobile phone if there is reasonable suspicion that it contains:

- Inappropriate or harmful material (e.g., explicit content)
- Evidence of the phone being used to commit an offence or harm another person

If inappropriate content is found, the following steps will be taken:

1. **Confiscation of the device:** The phone will be securely stored, and parents/carers will be contacted.
2. **Application of the Behaviour Policy:** Sanctions will be issued in line with the nature of the breach, ranging from detention to possible suspension, based on the severity of the misconduct.
3. **Involvement of External Agencies:** If the content constitutes criminal behaviour (e.g., sexting, harassment, or threats of violence), the school will involve the police or other relevant agencies.

### Process for Confiscation and Collection

- **First offence:** Pupils may collect their phone at the end of the school day.
- **Repeated offences:** Parents/carers must collect the phone, and a meeting may be arranged to discuss the breach and its implications.
- **Serious breaches:** The Headteacher may extend the confiscation period, and the return of the phone will be discussed during a formal meeting with parents/carers.

All confiscations will be logged as part of the school's behaviour tracking system, ensuring that repeat offenders are monitored and supported.

### Sanctions for Mobile Phone Misuse

The **Behaviour Policy** sets out a range of sanctions for pupils who fail to adhere to school rules. Misuse of mobile phones will be treated as a breach of the **Behaviour Policy** and may result in the following:

- **Warnings:** Initial breaches will be addressed with a verbal warning and phone confiscation.
- **Detention:** Repeated breaches or more serious misuse (e.g., using the phone to cheat, bully, or disrupt) may result in detention.
- **Suspension of privileges:** Pupils may lose access to extracurricular activities or other privileges.
- **Exclusion:** In extreme cases, or where a phone is used to cause harm or commit an offence, exclusion may be considered, following the procedures set out in the **Behaviour Policy**.

### Special Considerations

The school will consider any special circumstances when applying sanctions, including:

- **Age or developmental stage** of the pupil
- **Religious requirements**
- **Special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)**

If a pupil's mobile phone use indicates that they may be suffering harm or at risk of harm, staff will follow the procedures outlined in **Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**.

### Criminal Conduct

The school takes any form of conduct related to mobile phone use that may constitute criminal behaviour extremely seriously. **The Eden School** will involve the police or other agencies where appropriate. This includes conduct such as:

- **Sexting** (consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- **Upskirting**
- **Threats of violence or harassment**

- **Abusive calls, messages, or social media posts** based on a person's ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics

## 6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents/carers, visitors, and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to **The Eden School's** mobile phone policy, similar to staff, when they are on the school premises during the school day. This includes maintaining the school's values of respect and safeguarding.

### This means:

- **No unauthorised photography or recordings of pupils:** Parents, visitors, and volunteers are not permitted to take pictures or make recordings of pupils, unless it is at a public event (such as a school fair) or involves their own child.
- **Personal use only:** Any photographs or recordings taken at public events should be used for personal use only, and parents/carers must not post them on social media without explicit consent from the school and parents of the children involved.
- **No mobile phone use in lessons or when working with pupils:** Parents/carers, volunteers, and visitors must not use their mobile phones during lessons or when actively working with pupils.

### Information and Procedures for Visitors:

- When parents/carers, visitors, or volunteers sign in at reception, they will be informed of the school's mobile phone use policy. A summary of the rules will be provided or made available for reference.
- At school events, notices or announcements will remind visitors of the mobile phone policy, particularly regarding photography and recordings.

**Parents/Carers and Volunteers on School Trips or Residential Visits:** Parents/carers and volunteers who are supervising school trips or residential visits are also expected to follow this mobile phone policy:

- **No phone use to contact other parents/carers:** Supervising parents or volunteers must not use their mobile phones to make contact with other parents during the trip or visit. If contact is needed, it must be made through the school office or staff in charge.
- **No photos or recordings:** They are not allowed to take any photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything that could identify a pupil, without prior permission.

Parents/carers and volunteers must also support and enforce the school's policy for pupils using mobile phones during trips, as outlined in **Section 5** of this policy. However, they do not have the authority to search or confiscate devices. Instead, any breaches of the mobile phone policy by pupils must be referred to a member of staff who has the proper authority to handle such incidents.

**Communication with Pupils During the School Day:** 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 are not permitted to contact their child directly on their personal mobile phones during school hours.

## 7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to **The Eden School** must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled and securely stored when not in use.

### Labelling and Security Measures:

- **Labelling:** Pupils must clearly label their mobile phones with their name and form group. Labelling can be done using a sticker or any other appropriate method that ensures the phone can be identified easily.
- **Password Protection:** All pupils must secure their mobile phones with passwords, pin codes, or biometric security to protect access to the phone's functions. This applies to both pupils and staff (for personal or work phones) to avoid unauthorised access and potential data breaches.

Failure to follow these security measures could lead to consequences in line with our behaviour policy for pupils or disciplinary action for staff members if data breaches occur.

**Disclaimer for Mobile Phone Loss, Theft, or Damage:** The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged, or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school. It is the responsibility of the pupils to ensure their phones are securely stored in the designated area.

#### **Making Pupils and Parents/Carers Aware of the Disclaimer:**

- **School Signs:** Clear signs will be placed at the school's entryway and reception, informing pupils and parents/carers of the mobile phone policy and the school's disclaimer regarding phone loss, damage, or theft.
- **Permission Forms:** The mobile phone disclaimer will be included in permission forms for pupils who wish to bring phones to school.
- **Home-School Agreement:** A disclaimer will also be included in the home-school agreement, ensuring that parents/carers understand the school's policy on mobile phones.
- **Policy Distribution:** A copy of the mobile phone policy and disclaimer will be provided to new pupils and their parents/carers upon enrolment, as well as being made available on the school's website.

**Confiscation of Phones:** If a mobile phone is confiscated, it will be stored securely in the school office within a locked cabinet. The phone will remain stored in this secure location until it is collected by the pupil or their parent/carer.

**Lost Phones:** If a phone is lost, it should be returned to the school office or handed to an appropriate member of staff. The school will make every effort to contact the owner and facilitate the return of the phone.

## **8. Monitoring and review**

**The Eden School** is committed to ensuring that this policy positively impacts pupils' education, behaviour, and welfare. The school will carefully review the policy periodically to ensure it remains effective and relevant.

When reviewing the policy, the school will consider the following:

- **Feedback from Parents/Carers and Pupils:** Regular surveys or consultations will be conducted to gather opinions and suggestions regarding the effectiveness of the policy and its impact on the school environment.
- **Feedback from Staff:** The school will seek input from teachers and other staff members regarding the management and enforcement of the mobile phone policy and its effect on classroom dynamics and pupil engagement.
- **Records of Behaviour and Safeguarding Incidents:** The school will review behaviour logs and safeguarding reports to assess whether the policy helps to reduce incidents related to inappropriate mobile phone use.
- **Relevant Advice:** Any updated guidance from the Department for Education, the local authority, or other educational organisations will be incorporated into the policy as necessary to ensure compliance with best practices.

**Raising Concerns About the Policy:** If there are any concerns or suggestions regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of **[Name/Role]**, who can be reached at **[contact details]** in a timely manner. The school encourages open communication to address any issues promptly and effectively.

**Governors' Involvement:** The governing body of **The Eden School** may choose to review and approve this policy. If governors are involved in the process, they will:

- Monitor the impact of the policy on pupil welfare and educational outcomes.
- Provide feedback and recommendations based on the information gathered during the review.

- Ensure that the policy aligns with the school's values and objectives for student behaviour and welfare.

The governors' role in approving and overseeing this policy will ensure that it continues to serve the best interests of the school community.

# Acceptable Use Agreement for Mobile Phones

If you are allowed to use a mobile phone for a specific lesson, you must follow these rules:

1. **Teacher Authorisation:** You can only use your phone if a teacher has specifically authorised it for the lesson. Otherwise, phones must remain with the school reception.
2. **Return After Lesson:** Phones must be returned to the reception immediately after the lesson ends. You are not permitted to keep your phone beyond the lesson.
3. **Phone Status:** During the lesson, when phones are not in use, they must be switched off.
4. **Designated Use Only:** You may only use the phone for the specific task instructed by the teacher during the lesson. No personal use is allowed.
5. **Toilets/Changing Rooms:** Phones are not to be used in the toilets or changing rooms under any circumstances.
6. **Photos and Recordings:** You cannot take photos or recordings of staff, pupils, or the classroom without the teacher's permission.
7. **Phone Security:** Do not share your phone password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
8. **No Bullying or Harassment:** Do not use your phone to bully, harass, or intimidate anyone, either during or outside of the lesson.
9. **Compliance with Staff Requests:** You must comply with any staff member's request to stop using or hand over your phone. Refusing to do so is a breach of the school's behaviour policy.
10. **Respectful Use:** Do not use inappropriate language or share inappropriate content via your phone during the lesson.
11. **No Personal Use:** Phones may not be used for personal purposes during the authorised lesson time, including texting, social media, or calling.
12. **Exams and Tests:** Phones are strictly prohibited in exam rooms, even if they are being used for lessons elsewhere.

# The Eden School

## Mobile Phone Request Slip

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested By (Teacher's Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Phone Use: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Request: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Signatures:

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Reception Signature (upon phone collection): \_\_\_\_\_

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Return Time (Reception): \_\_\_\_\_