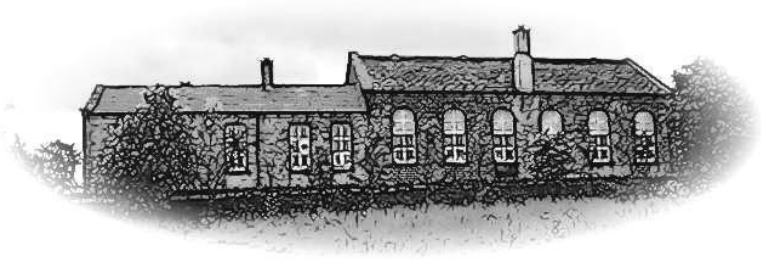
Scapegoat Hill J & I School



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Mobile Phone Policy

Approved by:	**Governors**	**Date:**	**October 2026**
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1. Introduction and aims

At Scapegoat Hill Junior and Infant School, 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, 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
- 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 is Keeping Children Safe in Education.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 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 school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy. The headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every year, 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.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default: anything other than this should be by exception only.

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 during the school day, while children are present. 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:

- 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 01484 647008 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, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Gemini).

Staff should refer to the school's Data Protection Policy for comprehensive guidance on the handling, storage, and sharing of personal data, in line with statutory requirements, and to the ICT Acceptable Use Policy/agreement for expectations regarding the safe and appropriate use of digital systems; all staff are expected to be familiar with and adhere to these documents, which are available via the school office and to seek advice from the headteacher or designated lead where necessary.

4.3 Safeguarding

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

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

Where classroom applications or programmes require the use of a staff member's mobile phone, this may be permitted solely for professional purposes, such as multi-factor authentication to securely access school systems; in such circumstances, staff must ensure their device is used appropriately, maintains the confidentiality of school data at all times, and complies with the requirements set out in the school's Data Protection and ICT Acceptable Use Policies.

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

Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions

Contacting the school building from the playground during playtimes or PE

Use of multi-factor authentication

Emergency evacuations

- Supervising off-site trips
- 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, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office 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 and Personal Communication Devices by Pupils

Pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones, smart watches with communication functions, or any other personal communication devices onto the school site. These devices are prohibited at all times whilst on school premises and during school-led activities.

Any pupil who brings a mobile phone, smart watch or other personal communication device onto the school site will be in breach of this policy. The device may be confiscated and retained securely until it can be collected by a parent or carer.

The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of any mobile phone, smart watch or personal communication device brought onto the school site in contravention of this policy.

Pupils will be taught about the risks associated with mobile phones and connected devices, including distractions from learning, reduced social interaction, cyberbullying, inappropriate online content and the sharing of images. The school promotes a mobile-phone-free environment in order to support learning, wellbeing and positive relationships.

5.1 Smart Watches

For the purposes of this policy, smart watches with communication, internet, messaging, camera or recording functions are regarded as personal communication devices and are therefore prohibited on the school site.

5.2 Exceptions in Exceptional Circumstances

The Headteacher may authorise an exemption to this policy in exceptional circumstances where there is a clearly evidenced medical, safeguarding or disability-related need. Any exemption will be considered on an individual basis and agreed in writing with parents or carers.

Where an exemption is granted, the school will set out clear arrangements for the possession and use of the device. Failure to adhere to these arrangements may result in the exemption being withdrawn.

This keeps the message clear: the default position is that no pupil mobile phones or smart watches are allowed on the school site at all.

5.3 Sanctions

Mobile phones will be confiscated (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

Headteachers can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools). Mobile phones will be returned to an adult/carer at the end of the school day (not to the child).
In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs (SEN), disability)
- The pupil'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 if pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care, is appropriate

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

Parents 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, 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 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 school.

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, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil
- Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power 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

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that their phones are appropriately labelled, powered off and ready to be stored away securely when not in use during the school day.

Pupils must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

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.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked cabinet. Schools will be responsible for any loss, theft or damage to the phone and the headteacher is responsible for them.
Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of the headteacher in a timely manner.

Policy Implemented	June 2026	Headteacher/Governors
Policy Reviewed	October 2026	Headteacher/Governors
Policy Reviewed		

9. **Appendix 1**

Acceptable Use Agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances detailed in section 5.

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.
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 pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils.
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 school's [behaviour policy]. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils 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 ‘sexting’.
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 school’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 school’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.

10. Appendix 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

- Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staffroom
- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present
- The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

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