

Dacre Braithwaite CE Primary School

Use of Mobile Phones and Devices policy



Headteacher: Jo Dobbs
Chair of LAC: Ian Gray
Policy date: Sept 2026
(due for ratification on 28th September 2026)
Review date: Sept 2028

Aims of this policy

Introduction and Aims

At Dacre Braithwaite CE Primary School, we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

From January 2026, the Department for Education expects all schools to be mobile- phone- free environments by default throughout the entire school day, including lessons, transitions, breaktimes, and lunchtimes. Our policy below sets out how we adhere to this guidance.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers.
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour.
- Reduce risks linked to online harm, bullying, inappropriate content and mental health concerns.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school settings:

- Risks to child protection.
- Data protection issues.
- Potential for lesson disruption.
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage.
- Appropriate and safe use of technology in the classroom.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy. Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by Dacre Braithwaite, 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 every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff and governors

3.1 Personal mobile phones (including Smart Watches)

To align with the DfE expectation of a phone- free environment, staff must **not** use their personal mobile phones:

- During contact time
- In areas where pupils are present
- In any way that interrupts learning

When staff are using their mobile phones for Two Factor Authentication (2FA) they are permitted to do so and then put it back in their bag in the staffroom for the rest of the day.

Use is restricted to non-contact time, in staff-only areas. Where exceptional circumstances require temporary access (e.g. medical call-back) the staff member's phone is permitted to be with them but must be kept securely in a cupboard away from children.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.

All photos or recordings must be taken using school devices only, and never on personal phones.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents 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 or pupils.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/trip/activity, this must be done using the schools' resources eg: iPad.

3.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- emergency evacuations
- supervising off-site trips
- supervising residential visits.

Staff may use personal mobile phones when supervising residential visits or school trips, in case of emergencies. Only phone calls are allowed to be made to the school or emergency services. 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 which could identify a pupil.
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents.

If necessary, contact must be made via the school office.

3.5 Sanctions

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

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

4.1 DfE expectation

The 2026 DfE guidance states: "All schools should be mobile-phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only."

Exceptions must be discussed with the Headteacher beforehand.

Where exceptions apply, phones must be switched off on arrival, handed to staff, and stored securely in the office until the end of the day. Phones must **not** be carried by pupils during the school day under any circumstances.

4.2 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy, the phone will be confiscated. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.)

If a phone is confiscated, the Headteacher will collect the phone and inform the parent that it needs to be collected from the school at home time. The school's behaviour policy sanctions will be applied. Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows school to search a pupil's phone if you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

If inappropriate content is found on the phone, which is a serious cause for concern in regard to the pupil's conduct, bullying, peer-on-peer abuse, it can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to: sexting threats of violence or assault, abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

To maintain a phone-free environment:

- Phones must not be used anywhere on the school site: in the playground, or in classrooms, corridors or areas where pupils are present.
- Photos or recordings of pupils are not permitted unless at a public event, and even then must not be shared online without consent.
- Volunteers and trip supervisors must not contact parents directly or take photos of pupils.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones into the schools must ensure that phones are stored securely at the school's office. Pupils must secure their 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 the schools' premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from either of the schools.

A copy of the school's Use of Mobile Phone / Device policy and disclaimer is made available to new parents and pupils.

If the school confiscates a phone from a pupil, they will be stored in the Headteacher's office in a secure location. Lost phones should be returned to the office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

7. 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 schools will take into account:

- Feedback from parents and pupils.
- Feedback from teachers.
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents.
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations.

Appendix

8. Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to Dacre Braithwaite CE Primary School

PUPIL DETAILS

Pupil name:

Year group/class:

Parent(s) name(s):

Dacre Braithwaite CE Primary School has agreed to allow _____ to bring

[his/her] _____ mobile phone to school because [he/she] _____:

(Please select and tick the appropriate statement)

- Travels to and from the Academy/School alone.
- Is a young carer.
- Attends a different home after the school day to the one home departed from in the morning.

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to Dacre Braithwaite must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones. The school reserves the right to revoke permission if pupils don't abide by the policy.

Parent signature: _____

9. Mobile phone information slip for visitors at Dacre Braithwaite

- Use of mobile phones in our school
- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds.
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present.
- If you must use your phone, you may go to the school office entrance or offsite.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff.
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils.
- 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.