

Whitnash Primary School

'Learning, growing and succeeding together'

Pupil Mobile Phone Policy



February 2026

Aims of the Policy

- To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones and smart devices (including smartwatches) at our school for pupils.
- To outline the procedures and processes of this policy.

This policy provides clear guidance on the use of mobile phones in school by pupils.

Rationale

Mobile phones are great pieces of technology that help everyone benefit from immediate communication, mobile internet and social networking. However, as a primary school we recognise that there is scope for their misuse by children.

There are lots of ways that children can cause harm when they misuse their mobile phones. Many of these areas, as well as safe use, are covered in classes during Computing and Personal, Social and Health Education:

- online bullying by text, image and instant messaging
- taking and sharing inappropriate pictures with and without consent
- access to inappropriate websites bypassing school filters
- accessing phones in lessons and at break time

Furthermore, there has been growing awareness of the harmful effects of smartphones on young people's well-being. Research has received extensive media coverage and thousands of parents have joined national campaigns such as Smartphone Free Childhood, in a bid to delay giving smartphones to their children.

For all of these stipulated concerns, our school has adopted the Smartphone Free Childhood initiative and **banned Smartphones, including smart devices such as smartwatches in school for pupils**. We have taken this decision alongside a group of other local schools.

Further Rationale

- ✓ **To take the pressure and expectation away from parents to give smartphones to young children**

We understand that many parents do not want to give their child a smartphone but feel pressured to do so, due to social pressures and the peer pressure experienced by our children to have a smartphone in readiness for secondary school. Increasing numbers of parents are providing their children with a smartphone in Years 5 and 6, and even younger. Continual changes in technology mean it is incredibly difficult for parents to monitor these advances robustly, particularly ensuring children only use age-appropriate apps. We are experiencing an exponential increase in behaviour fallouts and more serious concerns relating to children's use of these apps. We have also seen an increase in children bringing smartphones to school who do not walk to/from school independently.

It is important that as the adults, we make the right decisions for children, based on what children need and not necessarily what they want

✓ **To protect children from harm**

Research shows that many children show signs of behavioural addiction to smartphone devices. The latest evidence communicates the negative impact that use of smartphones can have for children.

Research states that the average UK 12-year-old spends 29 hours a week, equivalent to a part-time job, on their smartphone. This leaves little time for the real-world activities and relationships that enable them to learn and practice essential life skills needed for the transition to adulthood. The younger a child receives a smartphone, the worse their mental health. A fifth of UK 3-4 year olds own their own device and 24% of 5-7 year-olds do. Smartphone Free Childhood encourage parents to sign up to the Parent Pledge which encourages parents/carers to delay giving their child a smartphone until they have completed Year 9.

Our school strongly recommend not giving children a smartphone, in the same way we are clear in our advice that children should not have access to social media platforms that are not suitable for their age.

School Policy

Children are not allowed to bring a smart phone to our school unless permission has been given for exceptional circumstances e.g. for medical App purposes.

If there is an expedient need for a child to have a Smartphone in school, this must be discussed with the school. The school will require a permission form to be completed by the parent, and if deemed applicable the child may be requested to complete a Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Agreement.

Year 5 and 6 children are allowed to walk or cycle to and from school independently or with friends (we ask you notify the school). Particularly for these children, some parents provide a phone for their child to make contact with them. If parents believe their children need access to a phone, an alternative would be an old style/first phone, that can only receive and make calls or texts and not access the internet or Apps.

These phones are currently permitted in school, provided they are handed into the main office each morning and collected at home time.

Children from Year 5 and 6 may only bring in a mobile phone, at parents own risk, if all of the following requirements apply:

- they walk to and from school without adult supervision.
- this use has discussed and agreed by a senior member of school staff
- the permission form has been completed by the parent or carer
- the child follows and agrees the Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Agreement

Children who are brought to school and collected by an adult are not allowed to bring any type of phone into school, which essentially means no child in Reception to Year 4 will be allowed a phone in school. If there is an expedient need for any younger child to walk home or require a phone, this must be discussed with the school.

The school will require a permission form to be completed by the parent in these circumstances, and if deemed applicable the child may be requested to complete a Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Agreement.

What if my child brings a phone to school without prior agreement?

Children are not allowed to bring a smart phone to our school unless permission has been given for exceptional circumstances e.g., for medical App purposes.

Any smartphones found to be brought into school will not be handed back to the child, but will be kept in the school office for parents to collect.

Mobile phones are stipulated in our school Behaviour Policy, as such these items may be searched for by authorised staff under the latest Screening, Screening and Confiscation Guidance from the Department of Education (DfE).

If a child in any year group brings a phone to school, it will be handed over to the school office for safe keeping during the day. A parent or carer must collect it from the office (not the child) and if applicable under this policy parents will be requested to complete the permission form. In all other circumstances the parents and child will be requested adhere to the school's policy and refrain from bringing in the phone again.

If there is found to be safeguarding concerns relating to the images or content, then the school will follow its Safeguarding Policy as appropriate.

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff, the school and the Local Authority. Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy is likely to result in the enforcement of the Whistleblowing Policy and associated procedures.

Should parents need to contact pupils or vice versa during the school day, this should be done via the usual school procedure of contacting the school office via phone or email.

The policy supports the school policies for Health & Safety, Anti-Bullying, Child Protection and Safeguarding and the Online Safety. This policy will be monitored and reviewed as required but at least every two years.

Date: February 2026

Review: February 2027

**Appendix 1:
Permission Form for allowing a pupil to bring a mobile phone to school**

Dear Parent / Carer,

In accordance with our mobile phone policy, if your child requires pre-authorisations before being permitted to bring a mobile phone to school.

For permission to be granted, the following requirements must apply:

- your child walks to and from school without adult supervision.
- this use has discussed and agreed by a senior member of school staff
- your child follows and agrees to the school's Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Agreement

OR

- there is an expedient need for a child to have a Smartphone in school
- this use has discussed and agreed by a senior member of school staff
- your child follows and agrees to the school's Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Agreement (if applicable in the circumstances).

Your child needs to bring their phone to the school office first thing in the morning before they go their classroom.

The school bears no responsibility for the loss or damage to a mobile phone

Your child's phone should be appropriately marked so that they can recognise it

The school reserves the right to revoke this permission if pupils do not abide by this school policy.

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PARENTAL AGREEMENT

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____

We have read the policy and understand its implications

Signed:.....(Parent / Guardian

Date.....

.....

To be completed by a senior member of staff

Permission agreed by:

Name of SLT Member: _____

Signed:.....Date:

Appendix 2:

Mobile Phone Acceptable Use Agreement for Pupils

You must follow the rules below if you have permission to bring your mobile phone to school:

1. Your phone should be left in the office as soon as you arrive at school.
2. If you forget to hand in your phone, you must return your phone to office as soon as you realise your error.
3. You may not use your phone, for any reason, while you are on school premises.
4. Your phone must be turned off at all times while on school premises.
5. Your phone can be collected from the office at the end of the school day.

Failure to hand in your phone or use it appropriately may result in permission being withdrawn and you being no longer able to bring a phone to school.

Pupil Signature :Date: