

Mobile Devices (Including Smart Glasses and Watches) Policy

Approval Date: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

1. Introduction and Purpose

At Overton CE Primary School, the welfare, safety and wellbeing of our children are paramount.

This policy sets out clear expectations for the use of mobile devices (including mobile phones, smartphones, smart watches and other connected devices) to:

- Safeguard children and staff
- Promote a safe, respectful and focused learning environment
- Prevent disruption, misuse and safeguarding risks
- Ensure consistency and clarity for all members of the school community

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Department for Education's statutory guidance *Mobile phones in schools* (2026), which states that schools should operate as mobile phone-free environments by default throughout the school day.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals on the school site or involved in school activities, including:

- Staff
- Children
- Volunteers
- Governors
- Visitors
- Contractors
- Parents and carers

For the purposes of this policy, a *mobile device* includes any device capable of sending/receiving calls, messages, images or accessing the internet (including smartphones, smart watches and wearable technology).

3. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use of ICT Policy

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

- Approves this policy and monitors its effectiveness
- Ensures compliance with statutory safeguarding and behaviour guidance

The Head Teacher

- Has overall responsibility for implementation and enforcement
- Makes decisions regarding exceptions and sanctions
- Ensures staff are trained and supported

Staff

- Model appropriate behaviour
- Enforce this policy consistently
- Report any concerns in line with safeguarding procedures

Children, Parents and Visitors

- Are expected to adhere to this policy at all times

5. Core Principle: Mobile Phone-Free Environment

Overton CE Primary School operates as a **mobile phone-free environment for children during the school day**. The prohibition applies throughout the entire school day, including before registration, lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes, transitions between lessons, educational visits and extracurricular activities unless specifically authorised by the Head Teacher.

Smart watches and other wearable technology capable of messaging, internet access, photography, audio recording, location sharing or receiving notifications are subject to the same restrictions as mobile phones.

6. Staff Use of Mobile Devices

This policy does not apply to school-owned devices used for teaching, learning, safeguarding, communication or administrative purposes.

For staff-owned devices, in order to maintain professional standards and safeguard children:

- Mobile devices must be **switched off or on silent and kept out of sight** during the school day
- Devices must not be used in the presence of children (e.g. classrooms, playgrounds) except when requiring a 2 factor authentication
- Use is permitted **only during non-contact time in staff-only areas**
- Staff must not use personal devices to:

- Take photographs or videos of children
- Record lessons or interactions
- Communicate directly with parents

All photographs or recordings must be taken using **school-approved devices only**.

In exceptional circumstances (for example family emergency), staff must inform the Head Teacher and agree appropriate arrangements.

Failure to comply with this section may result in action under the **Staff Disciplinary Policy**.

7. Mobile Devices for Work-Related Purposes

During off-site activities:

- Mobile use must be **professional and appropriate**
- Staff must not use personal devices to photograph children unless given permission by the Head Teacher/Chair of Governors
- Communication with parents must take place **via the school office**
- Accompanying parents must not:
 - Contact other parents about children
 - Take photographs of children other than their own

8. Child Mobile Devices

General Rule

- Children are **not permitted to use mobile devices** during the school day

Bringing Devices to School

- Children in **Year R to Year 4 must not bring mobile devices to school**
- From September 2026:
 - **Year 5 and 6 children may only bring basic “brick phones”** (no internet or camera functions), where permission has been granted by completing a form available on request from the office

Permission Process

- Parents must complete a formal request by completing the online form available from the school office outlining the reason
- If any parent believes they meet the exemption criteria, they need to email their request to the Head Teacher through the school office email
- Approval is granted by the Head Teacher

Storage Arrangements

- Devices must be:
 - Switched off
 - Handed to the class teacher or school office on arrival
- Devices are stored securely and returned at the end of the day
- Devices remain the responsibility of the owner; the school accepts no liability for loss or damage

Misuse and Sanctions

Misuse includes:

- cyberbullying;
- taking, sharing or receiving inappropriate images;
- accessing inappropriate online content;
- misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) tools to create, alter or distribute harmful, intimidating or misleading content relating to members of the school community.

Sanctions include:

- Unauthorised devices will be confiscated
- Devices will be returned to a parent/carer
- Further sanctions will be applied in line with the Behaviour Policy

The school reserves the right to **confiscate devices in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006**.

Where there is reasonable suspicion of misuse, devices may be searched in line with DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Where a device is confiscated:

- the incident will be recorded;
- parents/carers will be informed where appropriate;
- the device will be stored securely;
- return arrangements will be determined by the Head Teacher.

Use Outside of School

Where mobile devices are used outside school to bully, intimidate or harm others, the school will respond in line with its Behaviour and Safeguarding policies.

Exemptions

Exceptions may be granted where a mobile device forms part of a child's:

- medical treatment or monitoring;
- SEND provision;

- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP);
- disability-related reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010;
- safeguarding or welfare arrangements;
- young carer responsibilities.

Following our consultation in June 2026, we appreciate that a few parents see having a smart phone as being part of safeguarding when children are traveling to and from school independently. We advise all parents that primary aged children need to be accompanied for this journey but if you assess and believe that your child can do this safely, we ask that you complete a form giving your child permission to leave the site at the end of the day independently. Having looked at this carefully and taken advice, we believe that there are alternatives to tracking using a smart phone such as air tags or ParentShield SIM Card. Here is a link with advice for parents

<https://www.smartphonefreebasingstoke.org/faq#h.rgu8gnsne8ko>.

Any exception will be risk assessed and authorised by the Head Teacher.

9. Visitors, Volunteers, Governors and Contractors

Visitors, volunteers, governors and contractors must not use personal mobile devices in areas where children are present unless authorised by a member of the senior leadership team.

- Individuals **without child contact** must follow general expectations
- Individuals **with child contact** must:
 - Switch off mobile devices
 - Store them securely away from children

Failure to comply may result in removal from the premises.

10. Parents and Carers

Parents are asked to:

- Use mobile devices **responsibly and courteously** on school premises
- Not use mobile devices in the presence of children unless authorised

Photography at school events is permitted **for personal use only**, provided that:

- Images are not shared publicly if they include children other than their own
- No photography takes place in areas or situations where it is inappropriate

Failure to comply may result in being asked to leave the site.

11. Safeguarding and Reporting Concerns

Any misuse of mobile devices that raises safeguarding concerns must be:

- Reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

12. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- Behaviour and safeguarding records
- Staff and child feedback
- Incidents relating to mobile device misuse

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in statutory guidance.

13. Dissemination

This policy will be:

- Shared with staff as part of induction
- Available to parents via the school website
- Communicated clearly to children in an age-appropriate way

14. Legislative references

- Mobile phones in schools (DfE, statutory guidance, 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- Behaviour in Schools (DfE)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation (DfE)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026