# Mobile Phone Policy

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| Document Control | | | |
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| Owner | CFOO | Approver | ESICC |

This document applies to all schools and operations of the Galileo Multi Academy Trust:
www.galileotrust.co.uk

# Policy Review Sheet

| **Date of changes:** | **August 2026** |
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| **Page/ Section** | **Changes to note** | **Reason for change** *e.g., change in legislation* |
|---|---|---|
| | New Policy | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| **Date of final approval:** | | |

# Contents


1. **Induction and Aims** ..... 4
2. **Relevant Guidance** ..... 4
3. **Roles & Responsibilities** ..... 4
4. **Use of Mobile Phones by Staff** ..... 4
5. **Use of Mobile Phones by Pupils** ..... 6
6. **Use of Mobile Phones by Parents/Carers, Volunteers and Visitors** ..... 7
7. **Loss, Theft, or Damage** ..... 8
8. **Appendix 1: Permission to Bring a Mobile Phone or Smart Device to School (Exceptional Circumstances)** ..... 9

## 1. Induction and Aims

**Across the Trust, our policy aims to:**

- Ensure our schools provide mobile phone-free environments by default.
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones, where applicable.
- Provide clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones by pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers across all Trust schools.
- Support the Trust's other policies, especially those related to safeguarding and behaviour.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones within our schools, such as:

- Risks to safeguarding.
- Data protection issues.
- Risk of theft, loss or damage.
- Appropriate use of technology for educational 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 includes Keeping Children Safe in Education, which sets out the expectation that all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default.

## 3. Roles & Responsibilities

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 Chief Financial and Operating Officer (CFOO) is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy every two years, or sooner where necessary. Headteachers are responsible for the effective implementation of this policy within their respective schools.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers promptly and clearly communicate the reasons for restricting 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 pupils 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 (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 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 Microsoft Copilot).

Further guidance on the handling of personal data, information security, and the acceptable use of technology can be found in the Trust's Data Protection Policy and the Trust's ICT and Social media Acceptable Use Policy. Staff are expected to familiarise themselves with and adhere to the requirements set out in these policies at all times.

### 4.3 Safeguarding

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

### 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
- 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 the Trust's 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

### 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 school phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet.
- Make sure that all communication and conduct linked to the device is always appropriate and professional, 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 Trust's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

## 5. Use of Mobile Phones by Pupils

The DfE's mobile phone guidance states that the use of mobile phones should be prohibited throughout the school day.

Pupils must not use mobile phones or any smart technology (such as smartwatches) at any point during the school day. This includes during lessons, between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

Where a pupil requires access to a mobile phone or smart device in exceptional circumstances, this must be agreed in advance by the Headteacher. In such cases, the device must be handed to and securely held by an appropriate member of staff for the duration of the school day.

Pupils will be educated on the risks associated with the use of mobile phones and smart technology, both within school and more broadly. This includes risks relating to distraction from learning, reduced wellbeing, cyberbullying, online safety, safeguarding, and the inappropriate use of technology. Through this education, pupils will be encouraged to recognise the benefits of a mobile phone-free school environment.

Any breach of this policy, or of the school's Acceptable Use Agreement, may result in disciplinary action in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. This may include the confiscation of the device.

### 5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

Pupils are not permitted to wear or use smartwatches or other wearable smart technology in school. Smartwatches are treated in the same way as mobile phones due to their communication, recording and internet-enabled capabilities.

Any smartwatch brought onto the school site must be switched off and stored in accordance with the school's arrangements for mobile phones. Any breach of this requirement may result in confiscation of the device and sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

### 5.2 Sanctions

If a pupil uses a mobile phone, smartwatch or other smart device during the school day without permission, staff will take appropriate action in line with this policy and the school's Behaviour Policy.

Where a pupil is found to be using a mobile phone or smart device in breach of this policy, the device may be confiscated and securely stored until it can be returned in accordance with the school's procedures. Depending on the circumstances, the school may require a parent or carer to collect the device.

Repeated breaches of this policy may result in further sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

In all cases, sanctions will be reasonable, proportionate and take account of individual circumstances, including the pupil's age, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and any other relevant factors.

Where there are concerns that a mobile phone or smart device contains material that may place a child or others at risk of harm, or where there is reason to believe a device has been used in connection with bullying, harassment, safeguarding concerns or criminal activity, the school will act in accordance with its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, and statutory guidance. This may include involving the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), parents/carers, the police or other relevant agencies, where appropriate.

Any inappropriate use of a mobile phone or smart device that compromises the safety, wellbeing or privacy of others will be treated seriously and may result in further disciplinary action.

## 6. Use of Mobile Phones by Parents/Carers, Volunteers and Visitors

Parents and carers 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 but must refer any proposed 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 who are permitted to bring a mobile phone or smart device to school in exceptional circumstances must ensure that it is clearly labelled with their name and handed to the agreed member of staff for secure storage upon arrival at school.

Pupils and staff are responsible for ensuring that any mobile phone or smart device brought onto school premises is appropriately secured, including the use of passwords, PIN codes or other security features where available.

The Trust accepts no responsibility for mobile phones or smart devices that are lost, stolen or damaged on school premises, during educational visits, while travelling to or from school, or whilst otherwise in the possession of the pupil or member of staff.

Parents/carers will be made aware of this through publication of this policy on the Trust and school websites and through school communications where appropriate.

Any mobile phone or smart device confiscated in accordance with this policy will be stored securely by the school until it is returned in line with the school's procedures. The member of staff taking possession of the device is responsible for ensuring that it is handed to the appropriate secure location for storage.

Any mobile phone or smart device that is found on school premises should be handed to the school office. Reasonable steps will be taken to identify and contact the owner.

## 8. Appendix 1: Permission to Bring a Mobile Phone or Smart Device to School (Exceptional Circumstances)

| PUPIL DETAILS | |
|---|---|
| **Pupil name:** | |
| **Year group/class:** | |
| **Parent/carer(s) name(s):** | |

The school has agreed to allow [pupil name] to bring their mobile phone to school because they:

| **Reason for Request:**<br>*List the appropriate reasons here. We've listed some common reasons below (Please delete or amend as required):<br>• Travel to and from school alone<br>• Are a young carer<br>• Need the phone to support their medical needs<br>• Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed |
|---|

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the Trust's policy on the use of mobile phones.

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

| FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY | |
|---|---|
| **Authorised by:** | |
| **Date:** | |