

Mobile Phone (and Personal Electronic Devices) Policy

September 2026

Date Approved:	July 2026	Review Date:	May 2027	Approved by:	The Trust Board
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1. Introduction and aims

The use of Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs), in particular that of mobile phones, has put children and young people at risk in school environments, and in wider society. This policy is in place to protect all students whilst in school.

Schools, however, do not have the ability to limit children's access to material that is viewed through their own devices.

Examples of situations reported nationally have included:

- Access to inappropriate content;
- Access to extremist material;
- Use of PEDs for taking inappropriate images, videos and recordings;
- Students taking pictures or videos of others – including adults – without their consent;
- The creation of memes, manipulation of images and sharing this content online;
- Using images of other students for the purpose of humiliation bullying;
- Inappropriately sharing personal data online – either their own, or that of others.

The removal of access to PEDs for students during the school day creates a safer environment where students are protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media and other circumstances, above.

Furthermore, since students are not permitted to use their PEDs during the school day, they should not feel compelled to be checking for messages from friends who similarly, should be following the expectations of the school.

Alongside the above mentioned risks, research shows that "incoming notifications or the mere proximity of a mobile device can be a distraction, leading to students losing their attention from the task at hand" (UNESCO education report, 2023) and that young people are distracted unnecessarily which can lead to disruption and diversion. By removing these distractions, we enable students to be "fully present and engaged" (DfE guidance "Mobile Phones in School", February 2024).

At Fareham Academy, our policy aims to:

- Ensure our environment is PED-free by default
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of PEDs, where applicable
- Provide clear guidelines for the use of PEDs for students, 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 PEDs, in particular that of 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

1.1 Defining a Personal Electronic Device

Throughout this policy, when referring to PEDs, it includes mobile phones which are able to send and receive calls and messages, smart phones (defined as those who have internet connectivity and the ability to using Applications), smart watches, iPads/tablets or any mobile device that has the facility to send/receive messages or calls, use the internet, take pictures or recordings.

Where a device is not covered by the definitions above, the school reserves the right to classify it as a prohibited item – please check via reception if you are unsure.

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 PED 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, or any person that he/she delegates is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every year, holding staff and students 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 PEDs.

3.2 Trustees

Trustees will review this policy through the annual policy review schedule and will monitor its implementation through their engagement with senior staff in school, and on visits.

4. Use of PEDs by students

If a student chooses to bring a PED to school, Fareham Academy does not accept any responsibility for their loss, theft or damage. The School will also not accept responsibility for any adverse effects on health caused by the use of such devices, whether potential or actual.

Furthermore, access to the PED will not be allowed during the school day, other than through exception – below.

All students will be issued with a PED locker with a unique key for access, and will be required to turn off and lock their PEDs away during tutor time each day.

The Tutor will then lock the cabinet containing all personal lockers and this will remain locked throughout the school day.

At the end of the school day, students will return to their Tutor base to unlock and collect their PEDs, under supervision of their Tutor.

Students who have need to leave during the school day, if prearranged, will lock their PEDs in reception or The Pastoral Office for that day. Students who need to leave during the school day for an unplanned reason will need to contact their Tutor to release their PEDs.

Students on reduced hours' provision or those who do not see their tutor on a daily basis will have a locker in either the reception area, or the Pastoral Office.

Students will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of PEDs, and in particular mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of PEDs

throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Students will be encouraged to see a PED free environment as desirable and valuable.

4.1 Use of smartwatches or other similar devices by students

The DfE's [mobile phones guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy. Fareham Academy addresses this under 1.1 – defining a Personal Electronic Device.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smartwatches have wellness and health-related features. As Smartwatches enable the technology of a mobile phone, these are also prohibited and must therefore either not be brought onto the premises, or must be locked away alongside the mobile phone.

4.2 Exceptions

The school may permit students to use a PED in school, due to exceptional circumstances. Permission will only be granted where there is a documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, students or parents/carers should contact their Head of Year who will liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Examples of exceptional circumstances may include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Students who use their PED for a medical monitoring application, such as those with diabetes
- Students who are designated as young carers and must remain contactable
- Students who require use of content from a PED as part of their documented SEND needs
- Students who are engaged with a Police matter and The Police require contact with the student

Any students who are given permission must then adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for PED use (see appendix 1).

Fareham Academy will take a blended approach for students who are offsite while under our care – for example, while on a day trip, a residential, or undertaking Duke of Edinburgh. Where necessary, students will be permitted to retain their PED for use to contact the emergency number, but are expected to follow the Acceptable Use Agreement.

Where emergency contact is not needed, students may be required to hand in their PEDs.

4.3 Sanctions

Fareham Academy, with exceptional circumstances noted above, deems PEDs to be prohibited items.

As such, possession of a PED, which is in breach of this policy, will incur a sanction. In each case, the sanction given will be reasonable and proportionate. Fareham Academy will consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs (SEN), disability)
- The student'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

Students found in possession of a PED will have the item(s) confiscated and these will be placed in the safe in The Pastoral Office or Reception. Schools are permitted to confiscate items, including PEDs, under the Education and Inspections Act 2006. These will be returned to a named parent or carer between the hours of 14:40 and 16:00 ONLY. A repeat offence will lead to the student being banned from bringing said devices to Fareham Academy, and the student may be subjected to searches to ensure compliance in line with [The DfE's Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance](#).

In addition to being in possession of a PED, certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment 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 (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- 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 PEDs by staff

5.1 Personal mobile phones and smart watches

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their PEDs during the school day, in areas where students are present. Use of PEDs must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where students are not present (such as workrooms and empty classroom spaces).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their PED 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.

In addition, where functions of the school require use of an internet enabled device, such as the recording of registers, school devices will be made available.

5.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their PEDs 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).

Further, detailed information can be found in our [Data Protection Policy](#)

5.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or students, including connecting through social media and messaging apps. Only school email addresses can be provided.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or students.

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

5.4 Using PEDs for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use PEDs during the school day in front of students 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 PEDs in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use their PEDs to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student
- Refrain from using their PEDs to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

5.5 Work devices

Some members of staff are provided with an electronic device by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school devices, and access to them must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use school device functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct

5.6 Sanctions

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

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

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

Parents are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with PED use and the benefits of a PED-free environment.

Parents/Carers should not contact their child via their child's PED, and should contact the school reception if they need to get hold of their child during the school day.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including trustees 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 students (other than their own), unless it's at a public event (such as a school fair)
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not sharing, publishing or posting on social media without consent

- Not using PEDs in lessons, when working with students or while children are present, unless with your own child while in a meeting and in benefitting information exchange in said meeting.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for PED 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:

- Take photos or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for students using their PEDs, as set out in section 4 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Fareham Academy wishes for students NOT to bring PEDs onto the school premises, and as such discourages it. As such, the **school accepts no responsibility for PEDs that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while students are travelling to and from school.**

Students bringing PEDs to school must ensure that their devices are switched off and ready to be stored away securely.

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

Lost PEDs should be returned to The Pastoral 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 students' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

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

Any concerns regarding this policy can be raised for the attention of The Headteacher.

9. Appendix 1: Acceptable Use Agreement for students allowed to have their PEDs in school due to exceptional circumstances

Acceptable Use Agreement – Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs)

You must obey the following rules if you have your PED in school:

1. You may not use your PED throughout the school day, including lesson times, in between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, unless a teacher specifically allows you to.
2. PEDs must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your PED in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other students.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other students.
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 PED's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your PED to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the school's behaviour policy. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating students or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Don't use your PED 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 PED even when you aren't in school.
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the PED or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your PED 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 PED. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. PEDs are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a PED, you will be asked to store it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a PED into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a student to bring their PED to school

STUDENT DETAILS	
Student name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carers name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow _____ to have their PED in school because they:

Specific PED: _____

Students who bring a PED to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of PEDs, and its Acceptable Use Agreement.

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

Parent/carers signature: _____

Student signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	