



St Christopher's Prep School and Nursery

Mobile Phone and Smart Watch Policy

Policy Owner: Head Teacher

Approved by: Governing Body/Proprietor

Date of Policy: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Applies to: All pupils, staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors

1. Purpose

St Christopher's Prep School and Nursery is committed to providing a safe, calm and focused environment in which children can learn, play and develop positive relationships.

The use of mobile phones and smart watches can cause distraction, disrupt learning and create safeguarding, privacy and data-protection risks. The school therefore operates a **mobile phone and smart watch-free environment for all pupils**.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Online Safety Policy and Data Protection Policy.

The policy has been developed with reference to:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026;**
- Department for Education **Mobile Phones in Schools** guidance, revised in 2026;
- relevant data-protection and safeguarding requirements; and
- the school's duty to provide a safe and appropriate learning environment.

The Department for Education's revised guidance states that schools should be mobile-phone-free environments by default, with arrangements for exceptions where necessary. The guidance is intended to support schools in maintaining safe, calm and focused learning environments.

2. Scope

This policy applies throughout the school day and to all areas of the school site, including:

- classrooms;
- corridors;
- playgrounds;
- dining areas;
- assemblies;
- clubs and activities;
- educational visits and trips;
- sports activities;
- before- and after-school provision; and
- other school-organised activities unless an agreed exception applies.

The policy applies to **all pupils from Nursery to Year 6**.

3. Pupil Mobile Phones

3.1 Mobile phones are not permitted for pupil use in school

Pupils are not permitted to bring or use mobile phones in school.

Where a pupil has a particular reason (under exceptional circumstances) for needing to travel to and from school with a mobile phone, parents/carers must discuss this with the school in advance.

Where the school agrees that a pupil may bring a mobile phone onto the school premises, the phone must:

1. be switched off before entering the school;
2. be handed to the designated member of staff or stored in the school-approved location;
3. remain inaccessible to the pupil throughout the school day; and
4. only be returned at the agreed end of the school day.

Mobile phones must **not** be kept in pupils' pockets, bags, trays, desks or classrooms during the school day unless the school has specifically authorised an alternative arrangement.

Parents/carers should not contact pupils directly on their mobile phones during the school day. If a parent/carer needs to contact their child urgently, they should contact the school office.

4. Smart Watches and Wearable Technology

Smart watches are not permitted for pupils in school.

This includes watches or wearable devices capable of:

- sending or receiving messages;
- making or receiving calls;
- accessing the internet;
- taking photographs or recording audio/video;
- accessing social media;
- recording or transmitting information;
- receiving notifications from a mobile phone; or
- otherwise communicating electronically.

For the avoidance of doubt, **a smart watch is treated in the same way as a mobile phone under this policy.**

Pupils may wear a simple, non-smart watch provided it does not have communication, recording, internet or smart-device functionality.

Where there is uncertainty about whether a particular watch or wearable device is permitted, parents/carers should check with the school before the child brings it to school.

5. Other Personal Electronic Devices

Pupils should not bring personal electronic devices into school unless they have been specifically authorised by the school.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- tablets;
- personal laptops;
- handheld gaming devices;
- devices capable of recording audio or video; and
- other internet-enabled wearable technology.

Where a device has been specifically authorised for an educational, medical or accessibility purpose, the school will agree appropriate arrangements with the pupil and their parents/carers.

6. Exceptions for Pupils

The school recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where a pupil may require access to a mobile phone or electronic device.

Any exception must be:

- agreed in advance by the Head Teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team;
- based on a genuine and identified need;
- appropriately risk assessed where necessary; and
- subject to clear conditions regarding storage and use.

Examples may include a specific medical, accessibility or safeguarding requirement.

An exception does **not** provide general permission for the pupil to use a mobile phone during the school day.

7. Breaches of the Policy by Pupils

If a pupil is found to have a mobile phone or smart watch in school without authorisation, the device will be removed from the pupil and stored securely in accordance with the school's procedures.

Parents/carers may be required to collect the device from the school.

Repeated breaches may result in further consequences under the school's Behaviour Policy.

The school will respond proportionately and consistently, taking into account the age and circumstances of the pupil.

Where there is a safeguarding concern relating to a device, the school may need to follow its safeguarding and child protection procedures.

8. Staff Mobile Phone Use

The school recognises that staff may need to carry a mobile phone for personal or professional reasons. However, staff must ensure that personal mobile phone use does not interfere with their professional responsibilities or compromise safeguarding.

8.1 Teaching and Direct Supervision

Staff mobile phones must be completely out of sight and stored in a suitable secure location whenever staff are teaching, supervising or directly working with pupils.

Staff must not:

- keep their personal mobile phone on their person while teaching or supervising pupils;
- leave a mobile phone visible on a desk, work surface or classroom shelf;
- use a personal mobile phone while teaching;
- check personal messages, notifications or social media while supervising pupils;
- take photographs or videos of pupils using a personal device; or
- use personal devices to communicate with pupils or parents/carers.

Personal mobile phones should be stored in a **suitable secure location**, such as a staff locker, designated staff storage area or other location approved by the school.

The expectation is that a personal mobile phone is **not accessible during teaching and direct pupil supervision**.

9. Staff Use During Breaks and Non-Contact Time

Staff may use their personal mobile phones during designated breaks and non-contact periods, provided that:

- pupils are not being supervised at the time;
- safeguarding responsibilities are not compromised;
- the use does not interfere with professional duties;
- confidential information cannot be viewed by pupils or unauthorised individuals; and
- the device is not used to photograph, record or communicate with pupils through personal accounts.

Staff should use personal mobile phones in designated staff areas wherever reasonably practicable.

10. Staff Emergency Contact

The school understands that staff may occasionally need to be contactable during the school day.

The school office is the primary contact point for urgent communications.

Where a member of staff has a specific personal or medical circumstance requiring access to their phone, this should be discussed confidentially with the Head Teacher so that an appropriate arrangement can be agreed.

Such an arrangement should not compromise safeguarding or the supervision of pupils.

11. Educational Visits and Trips

Staff are permitted to take personal phones for emergency use during educational visits.

The same expectations apply to mobile phones and smart watches during school trips and educational visits.

Pupils must not use personal mobile phones or smart watches on school trips unless an exception has been specifically authorised.

Where a trip requires pupils to have access to a communication device for safeguarding or logistical reasons, the school will establish clear arrangements before the visit.

Staff should follow the school's educational visits procedures and ensure that any devices used for professional purposes are appropriately managed.

12. Safeguarding, Privacy and Data Protection

Mobile phones and smart watches can contain cameras, microphones, recording functions, messaging applications, location services and internet access.

The school's restrictions therefore support:

- safeguarding and child protection;
- pupil privacy;
- protection from inappropriate recording or sharing of images;
- prevention of cyberbullying;
- appropriate professional boundaries;
- data protection;
- online safety; and
- the creation of a calm learning environment.

The school will respond appropriately where a device is suspected to have been used to record, photograph, communicate with or otherwise compromise the privacy or safety of a pupil or member of staff.

Any safeguarding concern will be dealt with in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures and KCSIE 2026.

13. Searching and Confiscation

Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a pupil has breached this policy, the school may follow the relevant procedures within its Behaviour Policy and statutory guidance relating to searching, screening and confiscation.

Any search or confiscation will be undertaken proportionately and in accordance with the school's legal responsibilities and safeguarding procedures.

Staff should not access the contents of a pupil's personal device unless there is an appropriate and lawful basis to do so and the school's safeguarding procedures have been followed.

14. Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are asked to support the school by:

- ensuring their child understands that mobile phones and smart watches are not permitted;
- contacting the school office where they need to communicate an urgent message;
- ensuring that any authorised device is managed according to the school's arrangements; and
- discussing any exceptional medical, accessibility or safeguarding requirements with the school in advance.

The school will communicate any changes to this policy to parents and carers.

15. Staff, Volunteers and Visitors

All staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors are expected to model appropriate mobile phone use.

If a contractor requires the use of a mobile device to record health and safety/maintenance information whilst inspecting the school's premises, permission will be authorised by the head teacher.

All adults must not use personal mobile phones in front of pupils unless there is a genuine professional, emergency or safeguarding reason.

Visitors should keep personal mobile phones away while they are working directly with pupils.

16. Related Policies and Guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
 - Behaviour Policy;
 - Staff Code of Conduct;
 - Online Safety Policy;
 - Data Protection Policy;
 - Educational Visits Policy;
 - Complaints Policy; and
 - Staff Handbook.
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17. Legislative and Guidance Framework

This policy has regard to the following statutory guidance and legislation:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE);**
- Department for Education **Mobile Phones in Schools** guidance, revised 2026;
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);
- relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance; and
- the school's legal duties relating to behaviour, safeguarding and pupil welfare.

KCSIE 2026 came into force on **1st September 2026** and sets out the safeguarding duties and expectations that schools in England must have regard to. The 2026 guidance also emphasises that all staff must follow their school's safeguarding policies and procedures.

The DfE's revised mobile phone guidance is also applicable from September 2026 and states that schools should be mobile-phone-free environments by default.

18. Policy Statement

St Christopher's Prep School and Nursery is committed to maintaining an environment in which children are safe, focused and able to develop positive relationships without unnecessary distraction from personal technology.

No pupil may use or have access to a mobile phone or smart watch during the school day unless an explicit exception has been authorised by the school.

Staff personal mobile phones must be out of sight and stored in a suitable secure location whenever staff are teaching, supervising or directly working with pupils.

These expectations apply consistently across the school and are an important part of the school's wider safeguarding, behaviour, wellbeing and professional conduct arrangements.

Policy reviewed: September 2026

Next review: September 2027