

# Mobile Phone & Device Policy

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION – FRONT SHEET

Please note – the generic policy will be published on the Trust website with a School specific policy published on the individual School Website. Physically printed copies of this policy may be out of date. For the most up to date policy please go to the School Website.

### POLICY DETAILS

POLICY OWNER/AUTHOR	NEW POLICY	CURRENT POLICY - REDRAFT/AMENDMENTS	
Lara Hall – Director of School Improvement	Yes	No	

### VERSION HISTORY

VERSION NO & DATE	N/A			
VERSION DETAIL & CHANGES	1			
PREVIOUS REVIEW DATE	N/A	NEXT REVIEW	August 2026	REVIEW CYCLE
				TBC

### APPROVAL INFORMATION

DATE APPROVED/REVIEWED	26 <sup>th</sup> April 2026	APPROVED BY	Trust Executive Committee
UNION CONSULTATION REQUIRED	No	IF YES, PLEASE STATE DATE OF CONSULTATION	N/A
NAME OF LIFE MAT SCHOOL	DESFORD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL		

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## 1. Purpose

This policy:

- establishes a **mobile phone-free environment during the school day by default**
- reduces disruption, improves focus, and supports learner wellbeing and positive behaviour
- supports safeguarding, including reducing risks of bullying, harmful content, filming/sharing, and online incidents
- sets consistent expectations for learners, staff, and parents across the LiFE Multi-Academy Trust

### 1.1 Relationship to other policies

- Behaviour Policy
  - Searching, Screening and Confiscation procedures (school-level, aligned to DfE searching guidance)
  - Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy (KCSiE)
  - ICT Acceptable Use / BYOD (mobile phones excluded from BYOD)
  - Equality, SEND, Supporting Learners with Medical Conditions
  - Educational Visits / Trips Policy
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## 2. Scope and definitions

### 2.1 Devices covered

This policy applies to **mobile phones** and **smart technology with similar functionality**, including (where relevant):

- smartphones and feature phones
- smart watches capable of messaging/notifications/recording
- devices capable of audio/video recording or internet access via networks

Schools may extend this to other devices (e.g., personal tablets) via their local schedule.

### 2.2 What “school day” means

The **school day** includes:

- lessons, transitions between lessons, breaktimes, lunchtime
- Schools may also apply restrictions to before/after school while learners are under school supervision.

### 2.3 What “SLT” means

SLT stands for **Senior Leadership Team**

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## 3. LiFE MAT minimum standards

All LiFE MAT schools must:

1. Operate as a **mobile phone-free environment by default** during the school day. Any departure is **exceptional and justified**.



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2. Ensure learners **do not have access** to their mobile phone during the school day (how this is achieved is a school decision).
3. Set clear **sanctions**, including when **confiscation** is used, and ensure consistent enforcement.
4. Include mobile phones/smart devices in the list of items that **may be searched for** (within legal powers) and align practice to searching guidance.
5. Build in **reasonable adjustments/adaptations** for learners who need access because of disability/SEND or medical needs (e.g., diabetes monitoring), with individual plans.
6. Set expectations for **staff conduct** (staff should not use phones for personal reasons in front of learners during the school day, with defined exceptions).

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## 4. Local school implementation choices

### 4.1 School model

#### Our approach as a school is as follows:

- **Parental Permission:** Only children whose parents have consented to their child leaving school unaccompanied at the end of the school day, are permitted to bring a mobile phone or smart technology with similar functionality into school. Any parent who wants their child to bring their mobile phone into school must complete a permission form as shown in this policy and on the school website.
- **Hand-in system:** Where parental permission has been given, mobile phones and smart technology with similar functionality must be handed in to staff at the start of the school day and returned at the end of the day. Devices should be labelled clearly to ensure that staff are able to return them to their rightful owner.

### 4.2 Beginning of the school day

On arrival at school pupils must:

- Turn phone off
- Remove/disable smart watches (where included)
- Hand in all devices to classroom staff

Devices are stored in locked, staff-only secure area of the school (e.g. school office)

### 4.2 End of the school day

- Devices are returned to pupils at dismissal
- Pupils are expected not to turn phones on until they are off school grounds.
- Where pupils are attending after school clubs or wraparound care, all devices must remain off and with their own belongings or in the school office.

### 4.3 Parent contact arrangements

- single point of contact is the school office
- The school office will relay any messages to the relevant pupil
- urgent contact can be made to the school office

### 4.5 Trips and outside normal hours

Phones are prohibited on trips

Trip leads will have parent contact numbers for all children in their care.



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Any concerns regarding safeguarding will be relayed to the Senior Leadership Team and Designated Safeguarding Lead during the school day. There will always be a DSL, DDSL or member of SLT “on-call” for out of hours trips.

Communications will come through Arbor or phonecall where urgent.

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## 5. Expectations and rules

### 5.1 Pupils

Pupils must not:

- use phones/smart devices during the school day (including breaks and transitions)
- record audio/video or take photos on site unless explicitly authorised for curriculum purposes
- use devices to contact others during the day

Pupils should be taught:

- risks of phone use (distraction, disruption, bullying) and benefits of phone-free culture

### 5.2 Staff

- Staff must **consistently enforce** the school’s rules
- The rules for staff apply equally to parents/carers, visitors, volunteers, governors and contractors.
- Staff should not use personal phones **in front of pupils who may be present** during the school day, except where authorised (e.g., school systems for behaviour/rewards, medical emergencies).
- Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send messages, **in front of pupils who may be present** during the school day or their contracted working hours, except where authorised.
- Staff should provide the school office as the main point of contact for them during their contracted working hours so that they do not need to keep their phone on them or answer their phone whilst responsible for the supervision of children.
- Use of personal mobile phones and smart watches must be restricted to non-contact time (e.g. whilst taking an agreed break from work duties), and/or to areas of the school where pupils cannot be present and would not normally access. These areas have been agreed as:
  - In the car park or outside of the school’s perimeter fence.
  - In the staffroom/staffroom garden area
  - In the school office (back office only)
  - Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher or SENDCO office
  - In the fishbowl meeting room (when only adults are present) or the school kitchen
- There may be circumstances where a member of staff needs to be contactable during their contracted contact time. Where it is not possible to make contact with the school office (e.g. contact is required outside of the office staff’s hours of work), the following instances may be viewed as an appropriate reason to be contacted on their mobile phone, but permission must be granted by the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher first:
  - For emergency contact by their child, or their child’s school where this is likely
  - In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members The Head Teacher will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements.
  - Where permission for being contacted on their mobile phone has been granted, the member of staff must move to one of the approved areas listed about to continue with their call.
- Reasonable adjustments for this could include:
  - The use of authenticators to access school platforms (e.g. CPOMS)
  - Emergency evacuations
  - Supervising off site trips or residential visits
  - Medical requirements (e.g., diabetes monitoring via phone) where preventing use would be unreasonable
  - Medical emergencies



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- Staff may wear **smart watches** or similar devices. Brief and discreet interaction with a smartwatch (for example, to check a notification, time, or work-related alert) is permitted where it does not disrupt teaching, supervision, or engagement with pupils. Staff must not use smart watches to send messages, access social media, record audio/video, or otherwise engage in personal communication while supervising pupils unless there is a clear professional or safeguarding reason.

### 5.3 Parents/carers

- Parents should support the policy and direct daytime contact via the school office
- Parents should understand any exception plans and reinforce expectations at home

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## 6. Sanctions, confiscation, and returns

### 6.1 Minimum suggested stepped response (schools can adapt)

1. **First breach:** confiscation until end of day and parents informed about the breach.
2. **Repeated breach:** temporary removal of permission for phone to be brought to school - period proportionate to the nature of the breach.
3. **Persistent refusal/non-compliance:** escalation to SLT; behaviour contract; additional restrictions; permanent removal mobile phone permission and consideration whether there is a safeguarding/peer-on-peer issue.

DfE guidance notes schools should feel confident to confiscate phones where policy is breached, and that staff are protected from liability for loss/damage when acting lawfully.

### 6.2 Applying sanctions in line with the school behaviour policy

There may be occasions where the school needs to apply sanctions in line with the school behaviour policy where there has been inappropriate use of a mobile phone that is impacting on the wellbeing or safety of other children.

- Where there is an allegation of online bullying using mobile phones, the school may request to view content on a child's mobile phone to review evidence. Parents would usually be contacted first unless there is a safeguarding or other reason not to.
- Schools have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a pupil's phone if you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.
- Where there is reasonable reason to do so and/or a child has not complied with school rules, schools are permitted to confiscate phones under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- If they are confiscated, parents will be contacted and they will be asked to collect the phone on behalf of their child. 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.

### 6.3 Refusal to hand over

School staff may consider the following if a pupil refuses to hand over their device:

- A safe de-escalation approach as per the schools behaviour policy
- Searching powers may be considered (see section 7)

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:



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- 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
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## 7. Searching pupils (summary statement)

- Headteachers (or authorised staff) have statutory powers to search where there are reasonable grounds and where items are prohibited by school rules; schools can identify mobile phones as an item that may be searched for within the behaviour policy.
  - All searching must follow the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation procedures aligned to [DfE searching guidance](#).
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## 8. Reasonable adjustments and exceptions

### 8.1 Core principle

A phone-free environment is the default, but schools **must** meet legal duties and make **reasonable adjustments**.

### 8.2 Typical exceptions

- **Medical needs** (e.g., diabetes monitoring via phone) where preventing use would be unreasonable
- **Disability/SEND** where access is necessary to avoid substantial disadvantage (Equality Act)
- Other exceptional circumstances assessed case-by-case (e.g., young carers)

### 8.3 How exceptions work

Where Parents/Carers or other adults believe their child requires their phone for any of the above, they should contact the school office and request a mobile phone permission form. If approved the following will be clearly communicated to parent/carer, staff and pupil:

- permitted purpose
  - permitted times/locations
  - supervision arrangements
  - how to minimise wider access/distraction
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## 9. Safeguarding, online safety, and incidents

- If phone misuse raises concerns that a pupil may be at risk of harm, staff follow safeguarding procedures and involve the DSL.
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## 10. Implementation, communication, and review

### 10.1 Implementation expectations

Each school must:



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- brief staff and train on consistent enforcement
- educate pupils on rationale and expectations
- publish the policy and communicate it clearly to parents

## **10.2 Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by a Director of School Improvement for LiFE Multi-Academy Trust. At every review, it will be approved by the board of trustees.

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