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Mobile Phone Policy

September 2026

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Mobile Phone Policy September 2026

Author: The Key for School Leaders

Co-ordinator: School Business Manager

Committee: Academy Resources and Audit Committee (ARAC)

Date Produced: September 2026

Date approved: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Amendments

Periodically the Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees will add to or revise the content within this policy. Any revision made are noted below.

Edition	Date	Revision made by	Content revised
1.0	27/08/2026	Mrs Marwaha	New policy adopted from The Key for School Leaders
			Names may be redacted for GDPR and Cyber Security Purposes

Please note that for the purpose of this policy, the following terminology will apply:

Headteacher	Executive Head, Head of School, Headteacher
Trust	Links Multi Academy Trust
School	Links Multi Academy Trust St Albans, Links Multi Academy Trust Hatfield and Cedars

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Mobile Phone Policy September 2026

Introduction and aims

At Links Multi Academy Trust our policy aims to:

- Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones, where applicable
- Provide clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for children, 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 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

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

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.

Roles and responsibilities

Staff

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 Safeguarding lead is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every year and holding staff and children 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 mobile phones.

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 children throughout the school day. All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default: anything other than this should be by exception only.

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, during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where children 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 01727 836150 or 01707 346170 as a point of emergency contact.

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 Google Gemini).

Links Academy's GDPR and AI policies can be found here:

https://linksmultiacademytrust.co.uk/statutory-information/

Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or children, 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 children.

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

Staff are permitted to use their phones to access school apps. For example, the use of 'Microsoft Authenticator' for emails or CPOMS would be permitted.

Staff are permitted to use mobile phones in non-contact time but should avoid doing so in the presence of children wherever possible.

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 children for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- 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 our staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of children, their work, or anything else that could identify a child
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

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

Sanctions

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

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

Use of mobile phones by children

Children must not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

Children must place their mobile phones in their lockers on arrival. This will be supervised by a member of our pastoral team. Lockers will be opened, and phones returned at the end of the school day. Children will not be permitted to check their phones during the day other than in an emergency or for medical purposes.

Children will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to make sure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Children will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

Sanctions

- Children found to be in possession of a phone will have that phone confiscated. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from children under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- On the first occasion, phones will be returned to the child at the end of the school day.
- On any subsequent occasions, the phone will be returned to parent/carers at a mutually convenient time. Whilst every effort would be made to ensure this is on the same day, we cannot guarantee this will be the case should collection need to be outside of normal school hours.

Staff have the power to search children' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the. The DfE guidance allows you to search a child's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being / has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a child's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being / has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs (SEN), disability)
- The child'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 whether pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care is appropriate

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:

- Making of or sharing nudes and semi-nudes including images that are digitally altered or wholly generated using AI (such as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes')
- 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

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 children, 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 children 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 contact other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of children, their work, or anything else that could identify a child

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for children 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.

Loss, theft or damage

Children bringing mobile phones to school must make sure that their phones are stored away securely in lockers when not in use during the school day.

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

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while children are travelling to or from school.

Monitoring and review

The school is committed to making sure that this policy has a positive impact on children' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and children
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the DfE, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of the school safeguarding lead in a timely manner.

Appendix 1: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Print out and cut copies of this slip to give to visitors when they arrive at your school. Adapt the template to reflect section 6 of this policy.

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where children are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to reception
- Do not take photos or recordings of children (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with children or while children are present
- The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

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Policy Review – Mobile Phone Policy

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Academy Resources and Audit Committee and the Trustees in September 2026.

It is due for review in September 2027 up to 12 months from the above date.

Signature

Date

Mr Allen
Executive Headteacher

Signature

Date

Mrs Lynch
Chair of Trustees