



AHS Purley Mobile Phone Policy

Prepared by: The Central Team

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1. INTRODUCTION

Abingdon House school Purley (AHSPurley) is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular, it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

In the school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance [Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility updated August 2023](#), considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person – this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part-time, and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school contracts the services of third-party organisations to ensure regulatory compliance and implement best practices for:

- HR and Employment Law
- Health & Safety Guidance
- DBS Check processing
- Mandatory Safeguarding, Health & Safety, and other relevant training
- Data protection and GDPR guidance
- Specialist insurance cover

Where this policy refers to 'employees', the term refers to any individual who is classified as an employee or a worker, working with and on behalf of the school (including volunteers and contractors).

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Abingdon House school Purley.

The policy documents of AHSPurley are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions, a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect between the republication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

2. AIMS

At Abingdon House School Purley 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 pupils, 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.

3. 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 to be considered alongside this policy includes [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), which sets out the expectation that all schools should be mobile phone-free by default.

4. ROLES AND 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 become aware of a breach of this policy.

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every 2 years, and holding staff and pupils 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.

5. USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY STAFF

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 or office spaces).

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

In addition, as part of their role, the Facilities Manager may need to use their phone during the day and will carry it with them. This will allow them to respond appropriately to Health and Safety issues and so that they can respond and coordinate contractors etc as needed.

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 (0208 092 2080) 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).

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found in AHSPurley's data protection policy.

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.

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 appropriately and professionally, in line with our 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

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 appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct

Sanctions

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

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

6. USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY PUPILS

Pupils 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).

Our process for ensuring that students do not use phones during the school day;

- Staff collect mobile phones on arrival and before the students enter the building
- Staff ensure that mobile phones and other electronic devices (such as tablets) are stored in our secure phone cabinet
- At the end of the school day students retrieve their devices as they leave the school building

Students whom need access to their phones on medical grounds will have careful risk assessments and agreed procedures to ensure that they can do so safely and in a way that protects the integrity of our whole school approach to phones.

Pupils 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. Pupils will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone-free environment as desirable and valuable.

Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's statutory [mobile phones guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in its policy.

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.

Students are allowed to wear smartwatches for time telling purposes. Staff are aware that;

- Pupils may be able to use a smartwatch to communicate via text, even if their phone is secured elsewhere
- Smartwatches are often smaller than mobile phones and at a distance look similar to regular watches, so might be easier to conceal
- Smartwatches can be more fragile than mobile phones, so any confiscation/storage procedures may need to be modified to safely accommodate them

However, pupils and their families are reminded that smartwatches must have all non-timetelling features disabled in order for them to be used in school. We will monitor anyone potentially breaking these rules and will ask parents/ carers to come and collect devices if they are being misused.

Exceptions

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances.

In the case of permission due to exceptional circumstances, permission will only be granted where there is a documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact Emma Stark (Deputy Head- Pastoral) at emma.stark@ahspurley.com.

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

Sanctions

Phones are taken prior to entry to the school building. Should students refuse to hand in their mobiles or electronic devices parents/ carers will be called to come and collect them. Students may also be sent home if they fail to follow instructions and it becomes a concern that we are unable to keep them safe.

Staff also have the option to confiscate phones or mobile devices. If they do so they will contact parents/ carers to explain the situation and suggest that they not bring them in at all the following day. Parents/ carers may be requested to collect phones.

If a mobile phone has been misused we retain the power to search pupils' for their phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows us to search a pupil'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).

Depending upon the content found within a phone the school may act in a number of ways.

- Ask students to delete content
- Parents/ carers may be asked to collect devices and to delete any offensive materials
- If the content is abusive or bullying then we will enact processes laid out in our behaviour policy

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 pupil'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 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

7. 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.

8. LOSS, THEFT OR DAMAGE

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must make sure that their phones are appropriately labelled, ready to be stored away securely when not in use during the school day. Students must make sure that they place their mobile devices into the correctly named pouch and that this is placed back into the correct form group tray. School leadership and the pastoral team will supervise this but students are responsible for their own equipment before it is locked securely away for the day.

Pupils 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 pupils are travelling to or from school.

Explain how you will make sure pupils and parents/carers are aware of the disclaimer above. For example, you could:

- Provide a copy of your policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents/carers
- This information will be provided prior to any residential or educational visit that may allow students to have access to their mobile devices.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office or in the secure phone cabinet.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

9. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy is linked to our:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection Policy

10. CONTACT INFORMATION

For any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact the Emma Stark (Deputy Head-Pastoral) at emma.stark@ahspurley.com.

11. APPROVAL & POLICY REVIEW

This Policy has been reviewed and approved by:

Policy Approver(s)	Cavendish Education Board of Directors/Senior Leadership Team of the school
Storage Location	Online, hard copy in the school
Effective Date	September 2026

Next Review Date

September 2027

12. REVISION HISTORY

Version	Change	Author	Date of Change
1	First published	Cavendish Central Team	September 2026

APPENDIX 1 **ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT** FOR PUPILS ALLOWED TO BRING THEIR PHONES TO SCHOOL DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

You must follow these rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone throughout the school day, including lesson times, in between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, unless a teacher specifically allows you to for a specific reason.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils.

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 phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the school's behaviour policy. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence. For instance, by making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes (including AI-generated images or 'deepfakes')
9. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone 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 phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

APPENDIX 2: PERMISSION FORM ALLOWING A PUPIL TO BRING THEIR PHONE TO SCHOOL

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:
List the appropriate reasons here. We've listed some common reasons below (you can delete as required):

- Travel to and from school alone
- Are a young carer
- Need the phone to support their medical needs
- Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed

- Attend a before- or after-school activity where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its acceptable use agreement.

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:	

APPENDIX 3: TEMPLATE MOBILE PHONE INFORMATION SLIP FOR VISITORS

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 pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to an office space
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils 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.

APPENDIX 4: [ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT \(STAFF\) - SCHOOLPRO APRIL 2026](#)

