

Pupil Mobile Phone and Personal Device Policy

Policy written by:	Gill Fotheringham	Head Teacher
Policy ratified by:	Ann Stewart	Director of Children's Services
Policy date:	May 2026	
Policy review date:	May 2027	

Document control

Title: Mobile phone policy

Applicable to: All School Staff, Parents and pupils

Ratified by: Ann Stewart

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Introduction and Aims

1.1 Introduction

At Sutherland House School, we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones and internet connected electronic devices, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents, and staff, as well as the wider school community. We also recognise that mobile phones are now part of modern society and that most pupils own a phone with access to the internet. We also recognise that for safety reasons pupils may carry a mobile phone to contact parents/carers after school/before school during taxi time or when travelling to school. However, such devices can lead to problems in school such as bullying/harassment, disruption of lessons, issues relating to safeguarding concerns and inappropriate web usage.

1.2 Aims

- Promote, and set an example for safe and responsible device use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils
- To support our behaviour policy, which aims to promote positive behaviour and safety of pupils across the school.
- To ensure that pupil welfare and safeguarding incidents associated with mobile phones and devices are reduced.
- To clarify parental and staff responsibility around mobile phones

Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy complies with Department for Education (DFE) statutory safeguarding guidance, ***Keeping Children Safe in Education***, and its advice on:

- Teaching online safety in schools
- Preventing and tackling bullying and cyber bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff
- Relationships and sex education

This policy also complies with ***DFE Guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation 2022***, and ***Education and Inspections Act 2006***.

Role of Parents/Carers

Parents / Carers play a crucial role in ensuring that their children understand the need to use mobiles and devices in an appropriate way. Parents and carers will be encouraged to support the school in promoting good online safety practice and to follow the school's guidelines on the appropriate use of mobile phones in school.

Parents are expected to:

- Notify a member of staff of any concerns regarding the misuse of mobile phones in school.
- Ensure their child has a good understanding of relevant areas of the policy, and how they must adhere to this in and out of school.
- Cooperate with the process outlined in Section 5 and Section 6.

- Recognise their ultimate responsibility for supply and management of the device.

Parents can seek further guidance on keeping children safe from the following:

- [Childnet — Online safety for young people](#)
- [Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK](#)

Role of staff

4.1 Which staff will be responsible

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

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 Head Teacher, along with SLT, is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the policy, and keeping staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

4.2 How staff will be trained

Staff will receive:

- Clear guidance on the Pupil Mobile Phone and Personal Device Policy, and its implementation
- Regular safeguarding training, including cyber bullying and the risks around the use of the internet
- If necessary, specific training around the misuse of internet devices or mobile phones in schools

They will also be encouraged to seek further advice as needed.

4.3 Communication between school and Parents/Careers

Staff will pass any relevant information around the use of phones in school via the home-school diary system or preferred method of communication.

Use of Mobile phones and Personal Devices by Pupils

5.1 Permitted pupil use of mobile phones

At Sutherland House School, we recognise that in some cases pupil use of mobile phones may be deemed appropriate. This relates to:

- Pupils travelling to and from school

Any rationale justifying use of the mobile phone during school hours will not be accepted. This is inline with government guidance on the expectation that all schools must be mobile phone free zones.

5.2 Unpermitted use of mobile phones

In the case of general phone usage, the following actions are always prohibited by pupils.

This applies to all pupils who may have access to mobile phones, both in and out of school:

- Attempt to capture any footage/photographs within the school vicinity, of staff, pupils

at any time.

- Bullying by text, image, and messaging
- Making disrespectful comments, misrepresenting events, or making defamatory remarks about teachers or other pupils
- Pupils posting material on social network sites with no thought to the risks to their personal reputation or the reputation of others or the school and sometimes with the deliberate intention of causing harm to others
- General disruption to learning caused by pupils attempting to access phones in lessons
- The deliberate engineering of situations where people's reactions are filmed or photographed to humiliate, embarrass and intimidate by sharing these images or videos online
- Pupils phoning parents immediately following an incident so that the ability of staff to deal with an incident is compromised
- Publishing photographs of vulnerable pupils, who may be on a child protection plan, where this may put them at additional risk
- The use of a mobile phone for taking and sending of provocative images or text messages.

Please be aware that this list is not exhaustive, and any actions causing similar harms or consequences are also prohibited.

Usage Management

6.1. Unpermitted devices

No pupil should bring electronic devices with them on site or during school activities whilst under supervision of school staff. Pupils are expected to hand in electronic devices on arrival to school and these will be returned back at the end of the school day. All electronic devices will be securely locked away throughout the school day.

Where a pupil does not comply with this element of the policy, staff will request the device to be handed to staff. This will remain with staff and be sent home with the pupil at the end of the day. Parents will be called on the day to remind them of the policy, and that their child must not attend school with their device the following day. Where safeguarding concerns are raised, relevant organisations including local authority safeguarding teams or the police may be contacted.

If a pupil does not hand in the electronic device or acts in a way that compromises the safety or safeguarding of staff and/or pupils, parents will be called and you will be expected to support with the handover of any electronic devices. The pupil will not be allowed to join in lessons or school activities until this is complete. Where this situation does not improve or the rules are not followed, education will be directed offsite at home or in the community until this policy is adhered to. It is parental responsibility to ensure that this policy is supported.

6.2. Signing in and storage of permitted devices

Where permission has been granted for pupils to use their devices during transitions to and from school, the device must be handed to school staff upon arrival at the school site or agreed activity location.

Staff must store the device securely, and report to admin the name of the pupil and type of device that has been stored.

6.3. Lack of cooperation with policy and device misuse

Where pupils do not comply with the policy, in relation to storage, usage or any other relevant areas, parents will be informed and appropriate actions taken including parents being called to collect the device or education being directed offsite either at home or in the community.

Where there is significant, immediate concern that a pupil has access to a device and is demonstrating severe misuse (e.g. photographing/videoing/recording staff and pupils or actively engaging in bullying or harassing behaviours), the pupil will be asked to hand their phone to staff. At this stage, particularly if pupils are unresponsive to staff requests, parents may be requested to attend the school to remove the device and take it away from the building.

Where it is felt by the school that the device will continue to be severely misused, the school has authority to confiscate the item (Education and Inspections Act 2006).

Where the school has reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury, staff have the authority to decide to search the phone content, as outlined in the DFE guidance on 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' (DFE, 2022). Where this is deemed appropriate, parents will be informed, as appropriate, and may be asked to support in the process. Referrals may be made to external agencies if 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:

- 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 based on someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- PBS Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Offsite Educational Visit Policy