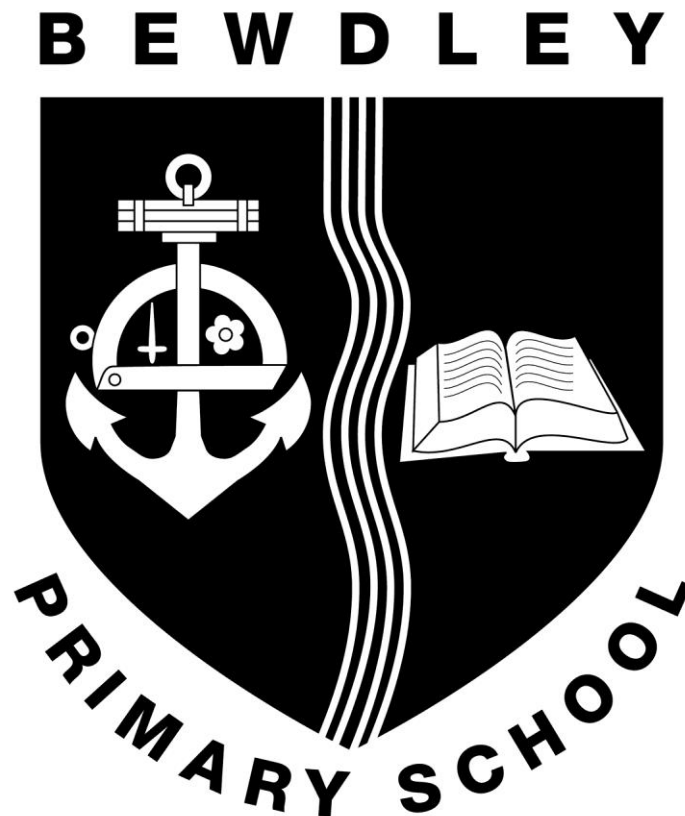




Mobile Phone and Personal Devices Policy 2026

At Bewdley Primary School, the safety and wellbeing of pupils is paramount. In line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance on mobile phones in schools, the school is a mobile phone-free environment for pupils throughout the school day. This policy establishes clear expectations for mobile phones, smartwatches and other personal interactive communication devices, balancing legitimate communication needs with safeguarding, privacy, professional conduct and the school's commitment to a calm, focused learning environment.

This policy applies to staff, pupils, volunteers, governors, parents/carers, visitors and contractors on the school site and, where relevant, on school visits and activities.

Principles

- Pupils will not use mobile phones or other personal interactive communication devices during the school day or on the school premises.
- A pupil may bring a device to school where there is a legitimate need, for example for safety when travelling independently, but the pupil must not have access to it during the school day. It must be handed in or stored in accordance with school arrangements.
- Reasonable adjustments and individual exceptions will be made where required, including for disability, SEND, medical needs or other exceptional circumstances.
- Staff will model appropriate use and will not use personal mobile phones for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day.
- Personal devices must not be used routinely to photograph, film or record pupils.

Staff use of mobile phones and personal devices

- All staff are expected to enforce this policy consistently and to model the school's mobile phone-free expectations.
- Staff may bring personal mobile phones to school but they should be on silent or switched off, out of sight and securely stored during contact time.
- Personal mobile phones must not be used for personal reasons in classrooms, playgrounds or other spaces where pupils are present.
- Limited work-related use of a mobile phone or similar device may be appropriate where authorised or necessary, for example for multi-factor authentication or an agreed school system. Such use must remain professional and should not undermine the school's expectations for pupils.
- Personal use should be restricted to non-contact time in appropriate areas where pupils are not present, such as the staffroom, office areas or an empty classroom.
- In Nursery and Reception, personal phones must be stored securely away from areas in which children are being taught or supervised.
- Where exceptional personal circumstances require a member of staff to remain contactable, this should be agreed with the Headteacher or an appropriate senior leader.
- Staff must not give pupils or parents their personal mobile number or routinely contact them from a personal device. School communication systems should be used.
- Personal mobile phones must not be used for routine contact with pupils or parents. Where an exceptional safeguarding or emergency circumstance makes use of a personal phone unavoidable, this must be authorised by the Headteacher or DSL, the number should be withheld where possible, and an appropriate record must be retained.
- Staff must not use personal devices to photograph, film or record pupils. Legitimate school images and recordings must be captured using school-approved equipment and systems.
- School images or personal data must not be transferred to or stored on personal devices for the purpose of uploading to websites, social media or other platforms.
- Staff must not use personal mobile phones to process or store personal data or confidential school information, including entering such information into generative AI tools or other unapproved online services.
- Any concerning, inappropriate or suspected safeguarding-related use of a personal device must be reported promptly to the Headteacher or DSL as appropriate.

Work-related use off site

- For residential visits or activities outside the normal school day, the school will determine appropriate arrangements in advance. Any permitted access will be risk assessed and must not disrupt the educational experience or compromise safeguarding.
- Mobile phones may be carried on educational visits for communication and emergency purposes in accordance with the visit risk assessment and school procedures.
- Staff use must remain professional and must not include taking photographs or recordings of pupils on personal devices.
- Communication with parents during visits should normally take place through the school office or an approved school communication route.
- Parents or volunteers accompanying visits must follow the same expectations concerning photography and communication with other families.

Visitors, volunteers and parents

Parents and carers are expected to support and reinforce the school's mobile phone-free approach. Where they need to contact their child during the school day, they should do so through the school office. Questions or concerns about the policy will be addressed by the school in a timely manner.

- Visitors and volunteers should not use personal mobile phones in areas where pupils are present unless this has been authorised for a legitimate reason.
- Personal devices must not be used to photograph, film or record pupils while volunteering, working in school or accompanying an educational visit.
- At public school events, the school's event-specific photography arrangements will apply. Parents must follow any instructions given by the school and must consider the privacy and safeguarding of other children before sharing images.

Pupil mobile phones and personal devices

Bewdley Primary School is a mobile-phone-free environment for pupils throughout the school day. References to mobile phones in this section also include smartwatches and other personal interactive communication technology where the school determines that the device presents similar risks or distractions.

- Pupils will be reminded of this policy, including the consequences of breaching it, at the start of each school year and again where appropriate.
- Pupils will be taught, in an age-appropriate way, about the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free school day, including improved focus, reduced disruption and reduced opportunities for bullying.
- Pupils are discouraged from bringing mobile phones or personal communication devices to school unless there is a legitimate need, for example travelling to or from school independently.
- Where a pupil needs to bring a device, the parent/carer must complete the school's permission process.
- On arrival, the device must be switched off and placed in the school's designated secure storage arrangement. It may be collected at the end of the school day.
- Pupils must not access or use the device anywhere on the school premises during the school day.
- Parents should contact pupils through the school office during the school day; pupils who need to contact home should do so through school arrangements.
- The school accepts no liability for loss or damage to personal devices brought onto the premises, subject to its legal responsibilities.
- Pupils will not normally take personal mobile phones on school visits or residential trips unless an individual exception has been agreed in advance.

Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

The school recognises that a pupil may need access to a personal device because of disability, SEND, medical needs, safeguarding arrangements, young-carer responsibilities, particular home circumstances or other exceptional circumstances. Any adaptation will be considered individually and agreed with the Headteacher/DSL and relevant staff, with appropriate risk management. Where access is agreed, it may be limited to a specific purpose, time and location. An agreed exception does not create a general entitlement for other pupils.

Breaches, confiscation and safeguarding concerns

- Where a pupil uses a device contrary to this policy, staff may confiscate it in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and current statutory guidance. Any confiscation used as a disciplinary penalty will be proportionate, taking account of the intended disciplinary outcome and the pupil's individual circumstances, including age and SEND.
- Confiscated devices will be stored securely and returned in accordance with the school's procedures. Parents will be informed where appropriate.
- Repeated or serious breaches may result in additional sanctions under the Behaviour Policy and/or withdrawal of permission to bring a device to school.
- If a device has been used to bully, harass, threaten, photograph, film or record another person without permission, the incident will be considered under the Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and/or Safeguarding and Child Protection policies as appropriate.

Serious incidents may include the creation or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, including images that have been digitally altered or generated using AI (for example deepfakes or deep nudes). These will be treated as safeguarding matters and, where appropriate, referred to external agencies.

- Where a device may contain sexual, illegal, harmful or safeguarding-related content, staff must not routinely search through, view, copy, forward or delete that content. The device should be secured and the matter referred immediately to the DSL, who will determine the appropriate next steps in line with current safeguarding guidance.
- Where a pupil needs to show a member of staff something on their device in order to raise an online-safety or safeguarding concern, staff will facilitate this safely and involve the DSL where appropriate.
- Searching a pupil or their possessions will only take place in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy, statutory guidance and safeguarding procedures. The school's behaviour rules should identify mobile phones and similar devices as items that authorised staff may search for where the legal threshold for a search is met.

Smartwatches and other connected devices

Smartwatches and other personal devices capable of calls, messaging, internet access, photography, recording or other interactive communication are covered by this policy where their functions create the same risks or distractions as a mobile phone. The school may require such functionality to be disabled, the device to be handed in, or the device not to be brought to school.

Monitoring and review

The Headteacher will monitor implementation of this policy. Review will take account of relevant behaviour and safeguarding incidents, feedback from pupils, parents/carers and staff, and current advice from the Department for Education and other relevant bodies. The policy will be reviewed by September 2027 or sooner where legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements, technology or school practice changes.

Legislation, statutory guidance and related documents

- Mobile phones in schools - statutory guidance (Department for Education, updated 29 June 2026; statutory from 29 June 2026 and to be followed by schools from 1 September 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (Department for Education)
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (Department for Education)
- Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (Department for Education)
- Data protection in schools (Department for Education)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Equality Act 2010

Related school policies and procedures

- Online Safety and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Use of Images / Photography Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Educational Visits Policy