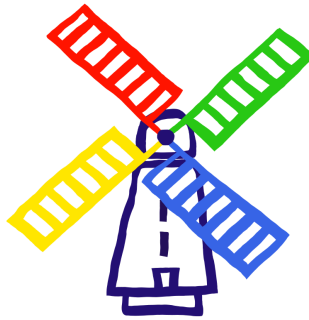




Mobile Phone Policy

Unity
Trust
Courage
Curiosity
Respect
Kindness



A community for learning. Raising expectations. Fulfilling high standards.

Revised: May 2026

Headteacher: Mrs Gemma Hillier

The policy is to be reviewed by: May 2027



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1. Introduction and aims

At Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones/watches, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set 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
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

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

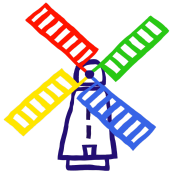
2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently 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 Headteacher, Mrs Gemma Hillier is responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, 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.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day.

Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, whilst in contact and visible to children 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, offices etc).

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 or student safeguarding 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 01494 714371 as a point of emergency contact.

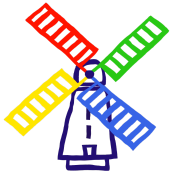
Data protection

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 Bard). For more information specific to data protection, please refer to our Data Protection Policy.

Safeguarding

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



Please see our ICT acceptable use policy for more details.

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 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 in an appropriate and professional manner, 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 and when they do need to use a mobile phone they should dial 141 beforehand to ensure that the number is not visible.

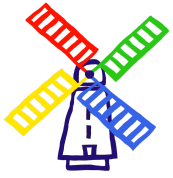
Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. See the Buckinghamshire Conduct & Discipline Policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Smart phones, smart watches and other smart technology are not permitted to be brought to school.

'Dumb' phones may be brought into school by pupils. These must be turned off at the gates and handed immediately into the school office or the member of staff at the gate.



Pupils may collect their 'dumb' phones after 3pm (or before if leaving the premises earlier) but must not switch these on until they have left the school site.

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances, for example a medical need, or young carer. This can be discussed and approved with the Headteacher, Mrs Gemma Hillier via safeguarding@widmerend.bucks.sch.uk. Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's Pupil Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

Pupils taking part in residential trips are not permitted to bring their mobile phones.

Sanctions

Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

If a mobile phone is found to be used in school without permission, the Headteacher has the right to confiscate the phone for 48 hours, until the end of the following school day (including weekends). The exception to this is at the end of a half/full term, whereby the phone can be collected from the front office by the parent/carer of the child at the end of the day.

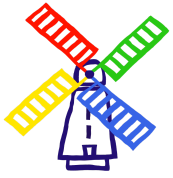
Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows schools to search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe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

The sanction in this case issued by school will always be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, 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 Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education

If parents/carers find inappropriate content or suspect inappropriate behaviour on their child's phone, they must report this to the Headteacher, Mrs Hillier in the first instance or the other DSLs in her absence. Please email safeguarding@widmerend.bucks.sch.uk or call 01494 714371.

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors



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 personal devices in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at the front office or attend a public event at school, via the safeguarding guidance leaflet.

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, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to the Headteacher Mrs Hillier, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

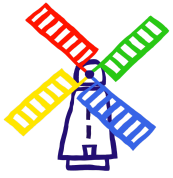
Parents/carers must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the school day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school for exceptional purposes must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use. Please see Appendix 1 for guidance.

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 and from school. Parents must consent to their child bringing a mobile phone to/from school, via Arbor.



Confiscated mobile phones will be stored in the school office, locked in a secure cabinet. Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School then becomes responsible for the mobile phone and can be held liable for loss, theft or damage. Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, 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 Headteacher, Mrs Hillier in a timely manner.

This policy links to:

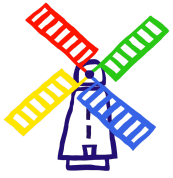
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying Policy



Appendix 1: Code of conduct for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
2. Phones must be switched off unless it needs to be kept on for medical purposes (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets. 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. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
9. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone. This language is not permitted under our school's Positive Behaviour Policy.
10. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
11. 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 Positive Behaviour Policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
12. Mobile phones are not permitted in any 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.



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