

MOBILE PHONE / ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY

Last Review: September 2026

Committee: SLT

Date Ratified: September 2026

Policy Statement

Oldfield School is committed to providing a calm, safe and purposeful learning environment in which students can focus on their education free from unnecessary distractions. Research and experience demonstrate that unrestricted access to mobile phones and personal electronic devices can negatively affect learning, wellbeing, concentration, behaviour and social interaction.

The school therefore operates a mobile phone pouch system to ensure that mobile phones and wearable technology remain inaccessible during the school day.

This policy should be read alongside the schools:

- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Examinations Policy

Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Education Act 1996
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- DfE Behaviour in Schools Guidance
- DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Examination Regulations



Rationale

Students may carry mobile phones for safety reasons when travelling to and from school. However, mobile phones and wearable technology can:

- Disrupt learning and teaching.
- Reduce student engagement and concentration.
- Increase opportunities for cyberbullying and online conflict.
- Create safeguarding concerns through the unauthorised taking and sharing of images, videos and messages.
- Lead to breaches of privacy and examination regulations.

The school therefore requires all mobile phones and wearable technology to be secured throughout the school day.

Student Responsibilities

Students who bring a mobile phone or wearable device to school must:

- Bring their designated school phone pouch every day.
- Ensure their phone is switched off before entering the school site.
- Place their phone and any wearable technology into the pouch when arriving at school.
- Keep the pouch securely locked throughout the school day.
- Keep the pouch in good condition.
- Follow all instructions from staff regarding the use, storage or surrender of devices.

Daily Procedures

Arrival at School

Upon entering the school site students must:

1. Switch off their mobile phone.
2. Unlock their pouch if required using the designated unlocking station.
3. Place their phone and any wearable technology inside the pouch.
4. Secure the pouch.
5. Store the pouch safely in their bag.

From this point onwards, phones and wearable devices must remain secured and inaccessible for the duration of the school day.



End of the School Day

Students may unlock their pouch using a designated unlocking station after the end of the school day and once they are leaving school premises. Students are responsible for taking their pouch home and bringing it back the following day.

Late Arrival

Students arriving after the start of the school day must secure their phone in their pouch immediately upon arrival. Where necessary, Reception staff will provide access to an unlocking station.

Early Departure

Students leaving school during the school day must sign out through Reception. A member of staff may authorise access to the student's pouch immediately prior to departure.

Forgotten Pouches

Students who forget their pouch must report this before registration. The phone will be handed into Reception and stored securely until the end of the school day. Persistent failure to bring a pouch may result in behavioural sanctions and parents/carers being contacted. Where repeated incidents occur, the pouch may be deemed lost and a replacement requested.

Lost or Damaged Pouches

Students are responsible for maintaining their pouch in good condition. Where a pouch is:

- Lost;
- Intentionally damaged;
- Altered;
- Tampered with; or
- Rendered unusable,

the school may require the purchase of a replacement pouch. Until a replacement is obtained, any phone brought to school must be handed into Reception for secure storage. Deliberate damage to school property may result in sanctions in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy. Students should immediately report accidental damage to a member of staff.

Mobile Phones Seen or Used During the School Day

If a phone or wearable device is seen, heard, accessed or used during the school day without permission:

- The device may be confiscated in accordance with DfE guidance and the school's Behaviour Policy.
- The incident will be recorded.
- Parents/carers may be informed.
- Appropriate sanctions may be applied.

Sanctions may include:

First Incident

- Confiscation until the end of the school day.

Repeated Incidents

- Confiscation for a longer period.
- Detention.
- Parental meeting.
- Loss of privileges.
- Internal suspension where appropriate.

Serious Misuse

More serious sanctions, including suspension, may be applied where use involves:

- Refusal to hand over a device.
- Filming or photographing students or staff without permission.
- Cyberbullying.
- Accessing harmful or inappropriate material.
- Breaching safeguarding expectations.
- Deliberately circumventing the pouch system.
- Bringing equipment intended to unlock, tamper with or defeat the pouch mechanism.

Searches and Confiscation

Authorised staff may search for, confiscate and retain mobile phones and other prohibited items in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance.

Where there is reason to believe a device contains evidence of a safeguarding concern, criminal offence or serious breach of school rules, the school may examine the device and involve external agencies where appropriate.

Communication During the School Day

Students must not use mobile phones to contact parents/carers during the school day. If students need to contact home, they must do so through the school office. Parents/carers should contact the school office if they need to relay an urgent message to their child.

Educational Visits

Mobile phones may be permitted on educational visits were authorised by the trip leader. Students must follow staff instructions regarding use. Unless explicitly authorised, phones should remain switched off and stored securely.

Other Personal Electronic Devices

Personal electronic devices such as laptops, tablets and e-readers may only be used when authorised by staff for educational purposes. Devices capable of communication, internet access, photography or recording are subject to the same restrictions as mobile phones. The school accepts no responsibility for loss, theft or damage to personal electronic devices brought onto the premises.

Public Examinations

Mobile phones, smart watches and any unauthorised electronic devices are strictly prohibited in examination rooms. Students found in possession of such devices during examinations will be dealt with in accordance with JCQ regulations, which may result in disqualification from the examination.

Safeguarding and Online Safety

The school recognises that mobile phones and electronic devices may present safeguarding risks, including:

- Cyberbullying.
- Sharing inappropriate content.
- Online exploitation.
- Recording without consent.
- Access to harmful material.

Any safeguarding concerns identified through a device-related incident will be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and KCSIE guidance.

Liability

Students bring mobile phones and electronic devices to school at their own risk.



The school accepts no liability for loss, theft or accidental damage to personal devices unless caused by the negligence of the school.

Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.

The policy will be reviewed annually or earlier where changes in legislation, DfE guidance or school procedures require amendment.

Review Date: September 2027