



Storybrook Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy





1. Purpose

Storybrook recognises that mobile phones and smart devices can provide valuable communication and learning opportunities. However, they can also present safeguarding, wellbeing, online safety, privacy and behavioural risks.

As a specialist SEMH setting, Storybrook acknowledges that pupils may be particularly vulnerable to online risks, inappropriate contact, cyberbullying, exploitation, harmful content and difficulties managing technology safely.

This policy sets out clear expectations regarding the use of mobile phones, smartwatches and other smart devices by pupils, staff, visitors, contractors and volunteers.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- E-safety policy
- Filtering and monitoring policy
- Behaviour and relationships policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Data protection policy

2. Legal framework

This policy has been developed with regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Department for Education statutory guidance, *Mobile phones in schools* (2026)
- Department for Education guidance, *Behaviour in schools*
- Department for Education guidance, *Searching, screening and confiscation at school*
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education Act 1996, as amended

Storybrook recognises that the management of mobile phones and smart devices forms part of the school's wider safeguarding, behaviour, online safety and filtering and monitoring arrangements.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, smart devices include:

- mobile phones
- smartphones
- smartwatches





- tablets
- internet-enabled devices
- wearable technology
- devices capable of photography, recording or internet access

4. Pupil mobile phones and smart devices

Pupils are not permitted to use personal mobile phones during the school day.

Personal mobile phones should not be brought into school unless there is an exceptional reason agreed by the Headteacher.

Where a pupil brings a mobile phone to school:

- the device must be handed to a member of staff upon arrival
- it will be securely stored
- it will be returned at the end of the school day

Devices handed in by pupils will be stored securely in the school office or another agreed secure location.

Pupils must not:

- use personal mobile phones during the school day
- access social media on personal devices
- photograph or record others
- use devices during lessons or social times
- connect personal devices to the school network without permission

These expectations support a mobile phone-free school environment throughout the school day and reflect Storyybrook's safeguarding responsibilities and the needs of its pupil cohort.

Exceptions and reasonable adjustments

Storyybrook recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances in which a pupil requires access to a mobile phone or smart device during the school day. This may include where access is required as a reasonable adjustment related to a disability, to support a medical need, or because of other exceptional individual circumstances.

Any exception will be considered on an individual basis by the Headteacher, taking account of the pupil's needs, safeguarding considerations and the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Where an exception is agreed, clear arrangements will be established regarding the purpose for which the device may be used, when and where it may be accessed, and any supervision or safeguarding controls required. An agreed exception does not provide unrestricted access to the device during the school day.





5. Smartwatches

Smartwatches and other wearable devices that are capable of:

- accessing the internet
- sending or receiving messages or notifications
- making or receiving calls
- taking photographs or video recordings
- recording audio

will be treated in the same way as mobile phones for the purposes of this policy.

Pupils must not use such devices during the school day. Where a pupil brings a smartwatch or other device with comparable functionality into school, it must be handed to a member of staff on arrival and stored securely in accordance with the arrangements for mobile phones.

Any agreed exception or reasonable adjustment will be considered and managed in accordance with Section 4 of this policy.

6. Educational use of technology

Where technology is used as part of planned learning activities:

- devices will normally be provided by the school or specifically approved for educational use
- personal mobile phones will not be used as part of routine teaching and learning
- pupils will be appropriately supervised
- internet access will be subject to the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements
- staff will reinforce safe, responsible and age-appropriate use of technology.

Any exceptional use of a pupil's personal device will only take place where specifically authorised by the Headteacher, for an identified purpose, and subject to appropriate safeguarding controls.

7. Staff use of mobile phones

Staff may carry personal mobile phones during the school day but must use them professionally and appropriately. Staff must not use personal mobile phones for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day.

Personal mobile phones should normally only be used during authorised breaks and away from pupils. Exceptions may be made where use is necessary in an emergency or for an agreed professional purpose, such as multi-factor authentication or another legitimate school-related function.

Staff must ensure that the use of any personal device does not compromise pupil supervision, safeguarding responsibilities, confidentiality, data protection or professional standards.





Staff must not:

- use personal devices to communicate with pupils
- share personal telephone numbers with pupils
- connect with pupils via social media
- photograph pupils on personal devices
- record pupils on personal devices
- store pupil information, images, recordings or other school data on personal devices

All communication with pupils and families must occur through approved school systems.

Staff must ensure that mobile phone use does not detract from supervision responsibilities.

Staff are expected to model the school's expectations for responsible mobile phone use and to consistently reinforce the school's mobile phone-free environment for pupils.

This expectation aligns with the Staff Code of Conduct and safeguarding procedures.

8. Photography and recording

Staff must not use personal mobile phones, smart devices or other personal equipment to photograph, video record or audio record pupils.

Only school-approved devices and systems may be used to capture images, video or audio of pupils for legitimate school purposes, including:

- educational and assessment purposes
- school publicity and communications, where appropriate
- recording school activities or events
- safeguarding purposes, where this is necessary and appropriate.

Images and recordings must be obtained, used, stored, shared and deleted in accordance with the school's safeguarding, data protection and information governance arrangements.

Images, video or audio recordings of pupils must not be stored, uploaded, transferred or shared using personal devices, personal accounts or personal cloud-storage services.

Where images or recordings are used for publicity, the school will ensure that the appropriate lawful basis and any required permissions or consent arrangements have been considered.

Visitors, volunteers and contractors

Visitors, volunteers and contractors must use mobile phones and smart devices in a manner that does not compromise pupil safeguarding, privacy or the safe operation of the school.

While pupils are present, visitors, volunteers and contractors must:

- keep personal mobile phone use to a minimum and, wherever practicable, use devices away from pupils





- not photograph, video record or audio record pupils using a personal device
- not use personal devices to communicate directly with pupils
- comply with the school's visitor, safeguarding and site-access procedures
- follow any instructions given by school staff regarding the use or storage of personal devices.

Where the nature of a person's work requires the legitimate use of a mobile phone or smart device, this may be permitted provided that its use does not compromise safeguarding, confidentiality or pupil privacy.

Any concern regarding inappropriate use of a mobile phone or smart device must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy DSL and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

10. Online safety and safeguarding

Storybrook recognises that mobile phones, smart devices and associated online services may be used to facilitate or expose pupils to a range of safeguarding risks, including:

- cyberbullying and online harassment
- child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour
- the creation, requesting, sharing or distribution of nude or semi-nude images
- AI-generated or digitally manipulated sexual or harmful images, including deepfakes
- grooming, exploitation and coercion
- sexual extortion or blackmail
- radicalisation and extremist content
- inappropriate or unsafe contact
- access to harmful or age-inappropriate content.

Any concern arising from the use of a mobile phone or smart device will be treated as a safeguarding concern where appropriate and managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and E-Safety Policy.

Where an incident involves the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, including AI-generated or digitally manipulated imagery, staff must not view, copy, print, share, forward or save the imagery unless specifically directed to do so as part of an appropriate safeguarding response. The concern must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and managed in accordance with current UKCIS guidance.

11. Searching devices

Storybrook may confiscate a mobile phone, smartwatch or other smart device where this is lawful, proportionate and consistent with the school's Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

The Headteacher, and members of staff authorised by the Headteacher, may search a pupil or their possessions where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item, including a mobile phone or smart device where this is identified as a searchable item within the school's rules and Behaviour and Relationships Policy.





Any search will be undertaken in accordance with applicable legislation and current Department for Education guidance on searching, screening and confiscation, with appropriate regard to the pupil's age, SEND, individual needs and safeguarding circumstances.

Where an electronic device has been lawfully confiscated following a search, data or files on the device will only be examined where there is a lawful basis and good reason to do so. Any decision to examine, retain, delete or pass information to the police will be made in accordance with statutory guidance.

Where there is reason to suspect that a device contains nude or semi-nude images of a child, staff must not intentionally view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery. The device should be secured and the matter referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy DSL, who will determine the appropriate safeguarding response.

Where information discovered on a device indicates that a pupil may be suffering, or at risk of, harm, safeguarding procedures will take precedence over disciplinary action and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will determine whether involvement from children's social care, the police or another agency is required.

All searches and associated decisions will be appropriately recorded in accordance with the school's safeguarding and behaviour procedures.

12. Misuse of mobile phones and smart devices

Misuse of a mobile phone or smart device may include:

- bringing or retaining a device contrary to the school's agreed arrangements
- using or attempting to use a device during the school day without permission
- refusing to hand in a device when required
- cyberbullying, harassment or inappropriate online communication
- inappropriate photography, video or audio recording
- accessing, creating or sharing harmful, inappropriate or age-restricted content
- sharing inappropriate images or recordings
- misuse of social media or messaging services
- using a device in a way that compromises the privacy, safety or wellbeing of another person
- any use that gives rise to a safeguarding concern.

Where a pupil breaches the school's mobile phone or smart device expectations, staff will respond consistently and in accordance with the Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

Responses will be reasonable and proportionate and may include:

- requiring the device to be handed to a member of staff
- confiscation for an appropriate period
- communication with parents or carers
- restorative or behaviour-support measures
- review of any individual arrangements relating to the pupil's access to a device
- safeguarding intervention or referral to external agencies where appropriate.





When determining the appropriate response, Storyybrook will consider the circumstances of the incident and the individual pupil, including their age, SEND, any disability or reasonable adjustment, their understanding of the expectation, the seriousness and frequency of the behaviour and any safeguarding considerations.

Where the behaviour gives rise to a safeguarding concern, safeguarding procedures will take precedence and the matter will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy DSL.

Repeated or serious misuse may result in additional restrictions on the pupil bringing a mobile phone or smart device onto the school site, where this is reasonable and appropriate.

13. Implementation, monitoring and review

The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy as part of the school's wider safeguarding and behaviour arrangements.

The school will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers understand Storyybrook's expectations regarding mobile phones and smart devices, including the school's mobile phone-free approach during the school day and the consequences of misuse.

Pupils will be reminded of these expectations at the start of each academic year and at appropriate intervals thereafter. Expectations will be communicated in an age-appropriate and accessible way, taking account of pupils' individual needs.

Parents and carers will be informed of the school's arrangements and encouraged to support the school's mobile phone-free approach. Where a parent or carer needs to contact a pupil during the school day, communication should normally be made through the school office.

Staff will be expected to apply this policy consistently and to model appropriate use of mobile phones and smart devices.

Details of the school's approach to mobile phones will be made available to parents and carers, including through publication on the school's website where appropriate.

Implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and DSL. Any significant safeguarding, behaviour or online-safety incidents involving mobile phones or smart devices will inform ongoing review and, where appropriate, safeguarding and governance monitoring.

This policy will be reviewed:

- at least annually
- following a significant incident or identified safeguarding concern
- where monitoring identifies that arrangements require amendment
- following relevant changes to legislation or statutory guidance.





14. Educational visits and activities outside the school day

Storyybrook recognises that different arrangements may be appropriate for mobile phones and smart devices during educational visits, residential activities or other school activities taking place outside the normal school day.

The arrangements for each visit or activity will be determined through appropriate planning and risk assessment, taking account of the age and individual needs of pupils, the nature and duration of the activity, safeguarding considerations and the need for pupils to communicate with parents or carers where appropriate.

Where pupils are permitted to bring a mobile phone or smart device, clear expectations will be established in advance regarding when, where and how the device may be used. Devices may be collected and securely stored by staff for all or part of the visit where this is considered appropriate.

Pupils must not use personal devices to photograph, video record or audio record other pupils or staff without permission, or to access, create or share inappropriate or harmful content.

Any misuse or safeguarding concern arising during an educational visit or activity will be managed in accordance with this policy, the Behaviour and Relationships Policy, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the school's Educational Visits procedures.

Any individual exception or reasonable adjustment will be considered in accordance with Section 4 of this policy.

15. Policy statement

Storyybrook is committed to ensuring that mobile phones and smart devices are used safely, responsibly and appropriately. Through clear expectations, strong safeguarding practice and a culture of vigilance, the school seeks to protect pupils, staff and the wider community from risks associated with mobile technology.

