Mobile Phones and Smart Devices Policy

Document Information	
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Approval Body	Ascent Academy Trust Board
Date Approved	September 2026
Review Date	September 2027
Version	2.0 - to comply with the new Safeguarding Policy for 2026-2027
Statutory	Yes
Applies to:	Whole School

Approval

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Headteacher	S. Allen		August 2026
Chair of Governors/Trustees	K. Hermon (Chair of LAB) P. Hill (Chair of Trustees)		
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1. Introduction

The Woodsetton School is are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person. As a special school, we recognise that many of our pupils are particularly vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, image-based harm and breaches of privacy due to their age, communication needs, SEND, medical needs and dependence on adults.

Mobile phones, smart watches, tablets, cameras and other internet-enabled devices can provide valuable communication tools. However, they also present safeguarding risks including:

- Unauthorised photography, video or audio recording.
- Image-based abuse.
- Cyberbullying and online harassment.
- Sharing of personal information.
- Access to harmful content.
- Deepfake, AI-generated and digitally manipulated images.
- Distraction from the supervision and care of pupils.
- Breaches of confidentiality and data protection.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Searching, Screening, Confiscation and Electronic Device Searches Policy.
- Online Safety Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Data Protection Policy.
- Behaviour Policy.
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Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility and all staff, governors, volunteers, contractors, agency staff, students and visitors are expected to comply with this policy at all times.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Protect pupils from harm, exploitation and image-based abuse.
- Maintain pupils' dignity, privacy and wellbeing.
- Ensure staff remain fully attentive to their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Promote safe and professional use of technology.
- Provide clear expectations for staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors.
- Ensure compliance with safeguarding legislation, KCSIE 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, UK GDPR and school safeguarding procedures.
- Support a culture where concerns relating to the inappropriate use of technology are reported promptly and acted upon.

3. Key Principles

The following principles underpin this policy:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All pupils have a right to safety, dignity, privacy and respect.
- Staff must maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- Safeguarding concerns relating to technology must be treated seriously.
- Personal devices must never compromise the care, supervision or safety of pupils.
- Concerns regarding inappropriate technology use must be reported immediately.

- The school adopts a mobile phone-free approach for pupils except where authorised for safeguarding, educational or medical reasons.

4. Staff Use of Mobile Phones and Smart Devices

For the purpose of this policy, "mobile devices" includes:

- Mobile phones
- Smart watches
- Tablets
- Personal laptops
- Cameras
- Audio recording devices
- Any internet-enabled or image-capturing technology

Staff, volunteers, students and agency workers may bring personal devices onto site subject to the following conditions:

Staff must:

- Keep personal devices secure at all times.
- Store devices out of sight of pupils during the school day.
- Use personal devices only in designated staff areas, offices or areas where pupils are not present.
- Use devices only during breaks, lunchtime or before and after the school day unless authorised by a senior leader.
- Ensure emergency contacts use the school's main telephone number during working hours.
- Maintain professional boundaries and appropriate conduct at all times.

Staff must not:

- Use personal devices whilst supervising pupils unless authorised for a specific safeguarding, medical or educational purpose.
- Use personal devices in personal care areas, changing areas, toilets or medical treatment rooms.
- Take photographs, videos or audio recordings of pupils using personal devices.
- Store pupil images on personal devices.
- Use personal devices to communicate directly with pupils.
- Use personal devices to communicate with parents regarding individual pupils except through authorised school systems and with management approval.
- Access, store, create or share inappropriate, abusive, offensive, extremist or illegal content.
- Create, share or possess AI-generated, deepfake or digitally manipulated images involving pupils.

Any breach may be treated as a safeguarding concern, low-level concern, misconduct matter or disciplinary offence and may result in referral to external agencies where appropriate

5. School Devices

Where photographs, videos or recordings are required for educational, assessment, safeguarding, communication or promotional purposes:

- Only authorised school equipment will be used.
- Images will be stored securely on approved school systems.
- Use will comply with parental consent arrangements and data protection requirements.
- Images will only be used for legitimate educational, safeguarding or communication purposes.

Staff must follow the school's Online Safety and Data Protection procedures at all times.

6. Off-Site Visits and Educational Activities

During educational visits, sporting activities and community-based learning:

- Designated staff may carry school-issued / agreed mobile phones for operational, safeguarding and emergency purposes.
- Personal devices must not be used to photograph or record pupils.
- Emergency communication must take place using authorised school systems wherever possible.
- Staff must maintain the same professional standards expected on school premises.

7. Visitors, Contractors and Professionals

Visitors may bring mobile phones onto school premises; however:

- Mobile phones and smart devices must be kept out of sight when pupils are present unless authorised.
- Visitors must not photograph, film or record pupils, staff or school premises without explicit permission from the Headteacher or delegated senior leader.
- Visitors will be informed of mobile phone expectations during the signing-in process.
- Contractors requiring access to devices for operational reasons must seek authorisation and may be supervised whilst on site.
- Supply staff, volunteers and students will receive mobile phone guidance as part of induction.

Signage relating to the use of mobile phones and image-capturing devices will be displayed across the school.

Visitors who fail to comply may be required to leave the premises immediately.

8. Safeguarding Concerns, Searches and Confiscation

Where concerns arise regarding the use of a device, the school may take action in accordance with the Searching, Screening, Confiscation and Electronic Device Searches Policy.

This may include:

- Confiscation of a device.
- Examination of a device by authorised staff where there is a lawful and proportionate reason.
- Referral to the DSL.
- Referral to Children's Social Care.
- Referral to the Police.

Particular attention will be given to incidents involving:

- Nude or semi-nude imagery.
- Image-based abuse.
- Deepfakes or AI-generated imagery.
- Online exploitation.
- Bullying or harassment.
- Safeguarding concerns involving pupils or staff.

Staff must not investigate such matters independently and must immediately refer concerns to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

9. Reporting Concerns

All staff have a responsibility to challenge and report inappropriate use of mobile phones and smart devices.

Concerns must be reported immediately to:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- A Deputy DSL.
- The Headteacher where concerns relate to an adult working in the school.

This includes:

- Safeguarding concerns.
- Low-level concerns.
- Breaches of professional boundaries.
- Unauthorised photography or recording.
- Suspected online abuse.
- Misuse of social media or electronic communication.

Concerns will be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy including the Allegations and Low-Level Concerns procedures.

10. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher, DSL and Governing Body will monitor the implementation of this policy as part of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where:

- Legislation changes.
- Statutory guidance is updated.
- Serious incidents identify the need for revision.
- Local safeguarding procedures change.

11. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy including Low-Level Concerns
- Searching, Screening, Confiscation and Electronic Device Searches Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Acceptable Use Agreements