Mobile Devices & Accessories Policy

Policy Management – HWS				
Review date	**Version**	**Reviewer / owner**	**Approving body**	**Meeting date of policy approval**
December 2025	1	Principal	Local Governing Committee (LGC)	23/03/2026

This policy is reviewed every three years. The next review is due by December 2028.

Mobile Devices and Accessories

All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only. ***DFE Guidance updated January 2026***

Mobile phones are prohibited at Highworth Warneford School. Pupils may bring mobile phones and other electrical devices to school but they must be switched off in their bags. The school accepts no responsibility for any device that is lost, stolen or damaged.

On entry to the school through the main gates or reception all mobile and electrical devices (this includes speakers) must be switched off and stored in pupils' bags. Devices must not be used at any point on the school site. This includes breaktimes, lunchtimes and movement between lessons.

If a device is seen or heard, the pupil will be instructed to give it to a member of staff, it will be placed in a safe in the main office, parents will be contacted and will required to collect.
If a pupil refuses to comply or behaves inappropriately towards staff, then a sanction will be put in place, including a bag search. Sanction for non-compliance is a one-day isolation or two half days, repeated refusal could lead to suspension.

Schools should feel confident to use their power to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty where their policy is clearly breached, for instance where a mobile phone is used by a pupil or is heard ringing in a pupil's bag. The law protects staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to items they have confiscated as a sanction, providing they have acted lawfully. ***DFE guidance updated January 2026***

Parents and carers are reminded that the school reception is the appropriate point of contact during the school day. They are therefore asked not to contact pupils directly via mobile devices. Pupils are instructed to seek assistance from school staff should they need to speak to parents/carers rather than attempting to contact them themselves.

Smart watches (e.g., Apple Watches) are discouraged due to their high value but may be brought to school at the owner's risk. These devices are subject to the same expectations as mobile phones and must remain switched off and stored during the school day.

Sanctions and Procedures

If a pupil refuses to comply or behaves inappropriately towards staff, then a sanction will be put in place, including a bag search. Sanction for non-compliance is a one-day isolation or two half days, repeated refusal could lead to suspension.

Prohibited Behaviours

- Devices must not be used to audio record, photograph or film staff or other pupils without consent. This constitutes a breach of GDPR and will result in immediate confiscation, a detention, and retention of the device until a parental meeting has taken place.

- Mobile devices must not be used as calculators. Pupils are expected to bring a suitable calculator to school; those who require support in obtaining one should inform the school.

Permitted Use

- Medical exemptions- these have to be agreed by the Principal or Vice Principal.
- If a member of staff authorises, for example on the way back from a sporting fixture to inform parents of collection times. At the conclusion of such activities, pupils must switch off their devices and return them to their bags immediately.
- Pupils may bring devices on school trips to enable communication with parents/carers in the event of delays or changes to arrival times. Specific guidance will be provided for each trip.

Accessories

- Headphones, including Air Pods or similar devices, must not be visible or used during the school day – same rules apply as mobile phones and devises.

Staff Mobile Phone Usage

DFE guidance Staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. This will empower staff to better challenge pupils to meet the school expectations and effectively enforce the prohibition of mobile phones throughout the school day. There may be occasions where it is appropriate for a teacher to use a mobile phone or similar device, for instance to issue homework, issue rewards and sanctions or use multi-factor authentication. Responsible bodies and school leaders should be clear with staff on their expectations around use of mobile phones during the day.

Benefits of not having mobile phones on site.

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- Establishing a calm, safe and supportive environments conducive to teaching, and keeping children safe in education.
- The risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying.
- Reduced anxiety and stress, decreased cyber bullying, enhanced emotional regulation, greater social interaction, increased concentration, creativity and problem solving.

Related Policies

Behaviour Policy

ICT Acceptable Use Policy

Online Safety Policy