



# Mobile Phone & Smart Technology Policy

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## Purpose and principles (ALT values)

Rush Common School is committed to creating a calm, safe and highly focused learning environment where pupils and students can thrive. This policy supports the Abingdon Learning Trust’s values: Quality, Opportunity, Collaboration, Ambition and Community by promoting respectful relationships, protecting wellbeing, and reducing distraction and online harms during the school day.

This policy sits alongside and supports the school’s Behaviour Policy and safeguarding arrangements under KCSIE.

## Status and scope

- This is a Trust-wide policy model which is made applicable to all ALT schools and provisions as required, including Sixth Form provision operated jointly across schools where relevant.
- This policy applies to: pupils/students, staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors and any other persons on school premises or supervising pupils off-site (e.g., trips).
- **Default position:** ALT schools are **mobile phone-free environments by default** across the school day, with any departure only by defined exception.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>LAC</b>
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## Definitions (what is covered)

For the purpose of this policy, “mobile phones / smart technology” includes:

- mobile phones and smartphones;
- smart watches and wearables capable of messaging/notifications/recording;
- earbuds/headphones with connectivity enabling calls, messaging or recording (including “pods”);
- any device capable of connecting to a mobile network or sending/receiving messages/notifications;
- any device capable of audio/video capture where this creates safeguarding or behavioural risk.

## Core rules for pupils

- Pupils should not bring mobile phones to school without signed authorization from the Headteacher.
- Only pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are permitted to bring mobile phones into school following Headteacher’s authorisation.
- Should there be an emergency and/or exceptional circumstance, parents/carers of younger pupils (not in years 5 and 6) should write to the Headteacher in the first instance seeking permission for their child to have a mobile phone in school.
- If permission is granted, the phone must be clearly labelled with the child’s name; it must be switched off as the child enters the school site and given to the class teacher on arrival in the classroom. The class teacher will undertake to store the mobile phone in a safe area.
- The phone must be collected at the end of the school day and must not be switched on until the child has left the school site.
- The phone must not be visible and be kept in a bag or pocket whilst arriving at and leaving the school premises.
- Where a pupil is found with an unauthorised mobile in school, including in the playground, the phone will be taken from the pupil and placed in the office. Parents will be contacted to collect the phone at the end of school day.
- If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and the Headteacher will decide on appropriate action. In certain circumstances, the pupil may be referred to the Police. If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by an appropriate person and the parent contacted.
- If a pupil needs to contact his/her parents/carers they will be allowed to use a school phone. If parents need to contact children urgently they should phone the school office and a message will be relayed promptly.
- A record of pupils’ mobile phone numbers will be stored confidentially and securely in school in case they are required for safeguarding purposes.

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- Parents are advised that Rush Common accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into the school.
- Mobile phones are not allowed on trips or residential.
- Additional information can be found in Rush Common’s Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, Anti-bullying Policy and Managing Allegations Against other Pupils Policy (Peer or Peer abuse)

## Roles and responsibilities

### Trust Board & LAC

Ensures the Trust has a clear policy framework aligned across schools and to DfE guidance and safeguarding requirements and receives assurance on implementation and impact. The LAC ensures the Policy is appropriate for the school setting.

### Headteacher (and Sixth Form Lead where applicable)

- Adopts the Trust baseline policy and determines the school’s phase module choices (within Trust parameters).
- Ensures the policy is communicated to pupils/students, staff and parents/carers and applied consistently.

### Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Advises on safeguarding implications (e.g., online abuse, sexual harassment, harmful content).
- Supports evidence handling and reporting routes in line with the Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE.
- Enforce the policy consistently and model expected behaviour.
- Follow searching/confiscation procedures where relevant.

### Parents/carers

- Support the school approach and use school channels for urgent contact during the day.
- Reinforce safe and respectful use of technology outside school hours.

### Visitors/contractors

- Must not photograph or record pupils/staff on site.
- Must follow site instructions for phone use.

### Staff/ Volunteers use of mobile phones whilst in school

Staff and volunteers must not use mobile phones in areas that children use in the school, unless in an emergency or an exception agreed with the Headteacher.

## Sanctions, confiscation and return

Sanctions are applied under each school’s Behaviour Policy, with a clear staged approach and consideration of SEND/individual circumstances.

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## Confiscation

- Any member of staff may require a pupil/student to hand over a device if seen/heard/used contrary to policy.
- Refusal to comply is treated as a behavioural incident and may escalate in line with the Behaviour Policy.

## Storage and chain-of-custody (Trust minimum standard)

- Confiscated devices are labelled/logged and stored securely.
- Phones are given to the class teacher at the start of each day. Phones are collected by the pupil from the class teacher at the end of each day.

## Repeated breaches

Schools implement an escalated plan (e.g., sign-in/sign-out, parent collection, temporary prohibition from bringing the device), proportionate to age and need.

## Searching, screening and confiscation (summary)

- Staff follow DfE “Searching, screening and confiscation” guidance and the school’s local procedure, including authorised searchers, recording and safeguarding considerations.
- A search may be considered where there are reasonable grounds to suspect a device is being used in breach of policy, where safeguarding concerns exist, or where the pupil/student is believed to be concealing a device contrary to an agreed plan.

## Electronic devices and content

If concerns relate to harmful/illegal content or safeguarding risk, staff do not circulate material. The DSL must be involved and evidence handled according to safeguarding procedures and DfE guidance.

## Safeguarding and wellbeing (KCSIE linkage)

- Mobile phone misuse can be associated with online bullying, sexual harassment, harmful content, coercion, and peer-on-peer abuse; concerns are managed under safeguarding procedures and KCSIE.
- Pupils/students are supported through curriculum/PSHE and pastoral systems to understand risk, consent, respectful communication, and reporting routes.

## Equality, reasonable adjustments and exceptions

The Trust recognises that some pupils/students may require exceptions (e.g., medical monitoring, travel safety arrangements, SEND-related needs). DfE guidance anticipates reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

Exceptions must be:

- agreed in writing, time-limited where possible, and reviewed;
- specific about where/when the device can be accessed;
- communicated to relevant staff on a need-to-know basis.

(Template: Mobile Phone Authorisation Form— see Appendix A below.)

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## Communication and training

- Trust-wide Policy is shared with Headteachers.
- Policy is published and explained to pupils/students and parents/carers through the school.
- Staff receive annual briefing, including searching/confiscation and safeguarding escalation.

## Monitoring, review and assurance

- Schools monitor incidents, repeat breaches, and safeguarding referrals linked to devices.
- The policy is reviewed annually by the Education Standards Committee or as guidance changes and reports to Trust Board as required.

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## Appendix A – Mobile Phone Authorisation Form (For Year 5 and Year 6 only)

I confirm that my child and I have read, understood and agree to the terms of use (Mobile Phone). I give permission for my child’s mobile phone number to be used and stored securely.

Name of Parent/Carer:.....

Signed by Parent/Carer:..... Date: .....

I understand that I must not use my mobile phone for any reason whilst on school premises and it should be switched off as I enter the grounds and handed to my class teacher for safekeeping. I understand I will be able to turn it back on when I've left the school grounds. If I do not do this I understand that the result may be my mobile phone privilege being removed.

Name of Pupil: ..... Class:.....

Mobile Phone Number .....

Signed by Pupil: ..... Date: .....

### Office Completion Only

I understand that the above pupil has read and agreed to the terms of the Mobile Phone PPD and therefore agree that they can have their phone in school.

..... Date: .....

Signed by Kristen Fawcett, Headteache

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## Appendix B - External Guidance and Statutory Sources Referenced

The ALT Mobile Phone & Smart Technology Policy is informed by and aligned to the following national guidance and statutory frameworks:

- Department for Education (DfE) – *Mobile phones in schools*  
Non-statutory guidance setting the national expectation that schools should be mobile phone-free by default and should implement clear policies to prevent access during the school day. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools>
- Department for Education (DfE) – *Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff*  
Non-statutory guidance outlining expectations for behaviour policies, consistent implementation, and sanctions, including the management of mobile phone use. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2>
- Department for Education (DfE) – *Searching, screening and confiscation*  
Statutory guidance on the legal powers, procedures and safeguards for searching pupils and confiscating items, including electronic devices and the handling of digital content. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>
- Department for Education (DfE) – *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*  
Statutory safeguarding guidance informing expectations around online safety, peer-on-peer abuse, recording and sharing images, evidence handling, and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) – *Instructions for conducting examinations*  
National requirements governing possession and use of mobile phones and smart devices during examinations (referenced within secondary and sixth form expectations). <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/>
- Equality Act 2010  
Statutory framework underpinning reasonable adjustments and non-discrimination duties, informing the policy’s approach to SEND, medical needs and individual exceptions. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

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