LDST
Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust

Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy

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1. Policy Statement

LDST is committed to providing calm, safe and purposeful learning environments where pupils can thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

In line with Department for Education statutory guidance, all LDST schools will operate as **mobile-phone-free environments throughout the school day.** Pupils must not use personal mobile phones or smart devices during lessons, transitions, breaktimes or lunchtimes unless a specific exemption has been approved by the school.

This policy supports LDST's commitment to:

- High standards of behaviour
- Effective safeguarding
- Positive wellbeing and mental health
- Online safety
- Data protection and privacy
- Consistent expectations across all schools

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Minimise distractions to learning
- Promote positive social interaction
- Reduce safeguarding risks associated with personal devices
- Prevent unauthorised photography, filming or recording
- Support pupils' wellbeing and mental health
- Create consistency across our Trust

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Pupils
- Staff
- Parents and carers
- Agency workers
- Volunteers
- Governors
- Trustees
- Contractors
- Visitors

The policy covers:

- Mobile phones
- Smartphones
- Smart watches
- Tablets with communication capability
- Wearable technology
- Any device capable of messaging, calling, recording, photographing, filming or accessing the internet.

4. Principles

LDST expects all members of the school community to use technology safely, responsibly and respectfully.

The safety, wellbeing and privacy of pupils will always take priority over the personal use of mobile technology.

5. Expectations for Pupils

5.1 General Expectations

Pupils must not use personal mobile phones or smart devices during the school day.

Schools will maintain a mobile-phone-free environment and pupils must comply with local arrangements for storage and security.

5.2 Pupils Requiring a Mobile Phone for Travel to and from School

LDST recognises that some pupils, particularly older primary pupils, may walk to and from school independently and parents may wish them to carry a mobile phone for safety reasons.

Where this applies:

- Parents must notify the school in writing
- Permission may be granted by the Headteacher or delegated member of staff
- The device must be switched off before the pupil enters the school site
- The device must not be used on school premises unless authorised by a member of staff
- The device must be handed in or stored in accordance with the school's storage arrangements immediately upon arrival
- The device will be returned to the pupil at the end of the school day

Permission may be withdrawn where a pupil repeatedly breaches this policy.

5.3 Storage of Authorised Devices

Any pupil authorised to bring a device onto school premises must place it in the school's designated secure storage system immediately upon arrival.

Schools may operate:

- Secure school office storage
- A collection system managed by staff
- Locked storage facilities
- Another secure arrangement approved by the Headteacher

Authorised devices must not remain:

- In pupils' pockets
- In trays accessible during the day
- In desks
- In school bags retained by pupils throughout the school day

LDST recommends that devices are held securely by the school for the duration of the school day.

Liability

LDST will take reasonable steps to store authorised devices securely. However, personal devices remain the responsibility of the owner. LDST cannot accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage unless negligence has occurred.

5.4 Prohibited Activities

Pupils must not:

- Make or receive calls
- Send or receive messages
- Access social media
- Browse the internet
- Take photographs
- Record audio or video
- Use communication functions on smart watches
- Share digital content using personal devices

6. Exemptions and Reasonable Adjustments

LDST recognises that some pupils may require access to technology for medical, SEND or safeguarding reasons.

All exemptions must be approved by the Headteacher and appropriately documented.

6.1 Medical Needs

Some pupils may require a mobile phone or smart device to manage a diagnosed medical condition.

Examples may include:

- Continuous glucose monitoring systems
- Diabetes management applications
- Medical alert technology
- Epilepsy monitoring devices
- Other clinically prescribed technology

Where a medical exemption is approved:

- The device may be used only for the agreed medical purpose
- Arrangements will be documented within the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan
- Access to non-medical functions remains prohibited
- Social media, photography, messaging and other personal use remain subject to this policy

The school may request supporting evidence from an appropriate healthcare professional.

6.2 SEND Requirements

An exemption may be granted where the use of technology forms part of:

- An EHCP
- A SEND Support Plan
- An agreed reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010

Any approved usage must be proportionate to the identified need.

6.3 Safeguarding and Welfare Needs

The Headteacher may approve an exemption where there is a clearly identified safeguarding or welfare need.

Examples may include:

- Young carers
- Pupils subject to safeguarding arrangements
- Exceptional family circumstances

These arrangements will be reviewed regularly.

7. Consequences for Misuse

LDST expects all pupils to comply with this policy.

Responses to breaches will be proportionate and may be adapted according to age, circumstances and seriousness.

7.1 Minor Breaches

Examples include:

- Device visible during the school day

- Failure to switch off a device
- Failure to follow storage arrangements

Possible consequences include:

- Reminder of expectations
- Temporary confiscation
- Recording on behaviour systems
- Contact with parents or carers

7.2 Repeated Breaches

Repeated breaches may result in:

- Parent meetings
- Behaviour sanctions in line with the Behaviour Policy
- Withdrawal of permission to bring a device onto school premises
- Individual behaviour support measures

7.3 Serious Misuse

Serious misuse includes:

- Taking photographs without permission
- Recording staff or pupils
- Sharing images or recordings
- Accessing social media during the school day
- Cyberbullying
- Harassment
- Sharing inappropriate content
- Activity giving rise to safeguarding concerns

Consequences may include:

- Confiscation of the device
- Requirement for a parent or carer to collect the device
- Formal behaviour sanctions
- Safeguarding referrals
- Police involvement where appropriate

7.4 Refusal to Hand Over a Device

Refusal to hand over a device when instructed by a member of staff may be treated as a separate breach of the school's Behaviour Policy and may result in additional sanctions.

8. Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Staff may confiscate devices where they reasonably believe there has been a breach of this policy.

Any searching or confiscation will be carried out in accordance with:

- Relevant legislation
- DfE guidance
- School safeguarding procedures

9. Communication During the School Day

Parents who need to contact their child during the school day should do so via the school office.

Pupils who need to contact home should do so through school staff using approved school systems.

Personal devices must not be used for routine communication during the school day.

10. Staff Use of Mobile Phones and Smart Devices

10.1 Expectations

Staff are expected to model safe and professional behaviour.

Personal mobile devices:

- Must be on silent mode whilst on duty
- Must not be used whilst supervising pupils
- Must be kept out of sight during teaching and duty periods
- May only be used during breaks in staff-only areas unless authorised

10.2 Photography and Recording

Staff must not:

- Photograph pupils on personal devices
- Record pupils using personal devices

Only approved Trust equipment may be used for school purposes unless otherwise agreed.

10.3 Contact with Pupils

Staff must not:

- Share personal mobile numbers with pupils
- Use personal messaging applications to communicate with pupils
- Connect with pupils through personal social media accounts

11. Governors and Trustees

Governors and Trustees must:

- Comply with this policy during visits and meetings
- Maintain confidentiality
- Not record meetings without permission
- Not photograph or record pupils without authorisation
- Follow all safeguarding and data protection procedures

12. Volunteers

Volunteers must:

- Follow school safeguarding procedures
- Keep personal devices on silent
- Avoid personal use of phones whilst working with pupils
- Not photograph, film or record pupils
- Report concerns regarding device misuse

13. Contractors

Contractors must:

- Follow site safeguarding procedures
- Use mobile devices only where operationally necessary
- Not photograph, film or record pupils
- Respect confidentiality and privacy requirements
- Follow instructions from school leaders regarding device use

14. Visitors

Visitors must:

- Follow school visitor procedures
- Keep mobile devices on silent
- Refrain from photographing or recording pupils or staff without permission
- Support the school's safeguarding expectations

The school reserves the right to ask visitors not to use mobile devices whilst on site.

15. Parents and Carers

15.1 General Expectations

Parents and carers are expected to use mobile technology responsibly whilst on school premises.

They should:

- Respect the privacy of pupils, staff and families
- Follow safeguarding procedures
- Avoid recording staff without consent

15.2 Photography and Recording at School Events

LDST recognises that parents and carers may wish to capture memories of school performances, concerts, sports days, assemblies and celebrations.

Parents and carers may take photographs or videos of their own child during such events unless otherwise advised by the school.

These images and recordings must be for personal use only[1].

Parents and carers are requested to:

- Respect the privacy of other families
- Avoid photographing children other than their own wherever possible
- Not publish images or videos containing other children on social media platforms or publicly accessible forums without the appropriate consent
- Not share recordings where other children are clearly identifiable
- Comply with any event-specific instructions issued by the school

LDST reserves the right to restrict or prohibit photography or recording at any event where safeguarding, privacy, court orders, data protection requirements or parental preferences make this necessary.

15.3 Social Media

Parents and carers are expected to use social media responsibly.

Content relating to school activities should not:

- Compromise safeguarding
- Identify vulnerable pupils
- Breach privacy
- Harass, intimidate or defame members of the school community

LDST may request removal of content where concerns arise.

[1] Information Commissioners Office: *If you post photos or videos taken at a school event to your private social media account, only viewable by friends or family, this is likely to fall within the definition of personal use. This means data protection law does not apply. However, if you post photos or videos to a public account, viewable by an indefinite number of people, this is likely to go beyond personal use. In this instance, you will need to be aware of your obligations under data protection law.*

16. Educational Visits

The Visit Leader will determine whether mobile phones are appropriate during educational visits.

Any arrangements must:

- Be risk assessed
- Support safeguarding
- Be communicated to parents in advance

School-issued devices should be used by staff wherever possible.

17. Monitoring and Review

Headteachers are responsible for implementation and monitoring within their schools.

LDST will review the policy annually to ensure compliance with legislation, safeguarding requirements and Department for Education guidance.

18. Equity and Reasonable Adjustments

LDST will implement this policy fairly and consistently.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered in accordance with:

- The Equality Act 2010
- SEND legislation
- Medical requirements
- Safeguarding needs

No pupil will be disadvantaged where a legitimate need for access to technology has been identified and appropriately authorised.

Appendix A - Mobile Phone and Smart Device Incident Report Form

Recording Thresholds

- **Low-Level Incident:** Device visible, forgotten hand-in, phone rings.
- **Moderate Incident:** Messaging, internet use, social media access, repeated breaches.
- **Serious Incident:** Photography, filming, sharing content, cyberbullying, refusal to hand over device, safeguarding concerns.
- **Critical Incident:** Inappropriate images, online harassment, criminal activity, significant safeguarding concerns.

Schools should record all moderate, serious and critical incidents on CPOMS and retain records in accordance with LDST's Data Retention Schedule.

Pupil Details

Pupil Name	
Year Group	
Class	
Date of Incident	Click or tap to enter a date.
Time of Incident	
Location	
Reporting Staff Member	

Type of Incident

Select all that apply:

☐ Mobile phone visible during school day

☐ Mobile phone used during school day

☐ Smart watch used for communication

☐ Failure to hand device in for storage

☐ Device rang or received notifications

☐ Accessed social media

☐ Sent or received messages

☐ Accessed internet

☐ Took photographs

☐ Recorded audio

☐ Recorded video

☐ Shared images or recordings

☐ Cyberbullying

☐ Inappropriate content

☐ Refused to hand over device

☐ Breach of agreed medical exemption

☐ Breach of agreed SEND exemption

☐ Other (please specify)

Description of Incident

Provide a factual description of what was observed.

Device Details

Type of Device				
Make/Model (if known)				
Device Owner				
Device Confiscated?	☐	Yes	☐	No
Time Device Confiscated				
Stored By				

Investigation Findings

Were any of the following identified?

Issue	**Yes**	**No**
Safeguarding Concern	☐	☐
Bullying Concern	☐	☐

Inappropriate Image	☐	☐
Inappropriate Video	☐	☐
Data Protection Concern	☐	☐
Social Media Misuse	☐	☐
Medical Exemption Relevant	☐	☐
SEND Adjustment Relevant	☐	☐

Additional notes:

Action Taken

Select all that apply:

☐ Verbal reminder issued

☐ Device confiscated

☐ Behaviour system entry

☐ Parent informed

☐ Meeting arranged with parent/carer

☐ Device held until end of school day

☐ Device collected by parent/carer

☐ Permission to bring device reviewed

☐ Safeguarding referral completed

☐ Internal sanction applied

☐ Suspension considered/applied (where appropriate)

☐ Police advice sought

☐ Other action

Details:

Parent/Carer Contact

Parent/Carer Contacted	Yes / No
Date	
Time	
Contacted By	
Method	Telephone / Email / Meeting / Letter
Summary of Discussion	

Follow-Up Required

☐ No further action

☐ Monitor pupil

☐ Behaviour support plan

☐ Review exemption arrangements

☐ Safeguarding follow-up

☐ Meeting with parent/carer

☐ Headteacher review

☐ Other

Details:

Outcome

Signatures

Reporting Staff Member:

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Headteacher SLT Review:

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Appendix B - Request for permission for a Pupil to bring a mobile phone or smart device to school

Section 1 – Pupil Details

Pupil Name	
Date of Birth	
Year Group	
Class	
School	

Section 2 – Parent/Carer Details

Parent/Carer Name	
Relationship to Pupil	
Telephone Number	
Email Address	

Section 3 – Reason for Request

Please select the primary reason for the request:

☐ Travel (eg independent travel by public transport/walking to and from school alone)

☐ Medical requirement

☐ SEND requirement

☐ Safeguarding/welfare needs (incl. young carer responsibilities)

☐ Other (please specify – you can contact school directly if this matter is sensitive)

Details:

Section 4 – Device Details

Device Type	Mobile Phone / Smart Watch / Other

Manufacturer	
Model	
Mobile Number (if applicable)	

Section 5 – Primary Reason for Request

- ## Travel Request

Parent declaration

I confirm that:

☐ My child travels independently to and/or from school

☐ The device is required primarily for safety purposes

☐ My child understands they must not use the device during the school day

☐ My child will hand the device into school on arrival in accordance with school procedures

☐ I understand permission may be withdrawn if the policy is breached

- **Medical Request :** School does not require you to confirm the medical condition or provide supporting documentation via this form. We will invite you to school to discuss your request should we require further information.

  Parent Declaration

  I confirm that:

  ☐ The request relates to a genuine medical need

  ☐ The device is required to support my child's health and wellbeing

  ☐ My child understands that non-medical functions remain prohibited unless specifically authorised

- **SEND Request:** School does not require you to confirm your child's needs or provide supporting documentation via this form. We will invite you to school to discuss your request should we require further information.

Parent Declaration

I confirm that:

☐ The request relates to a SEND-related matter

☐ The device is required to support my child

☐ My child understands use beyond SEND support will remain prohibited unless specifically authorised

- **Safeguarding / Welfare Request (incl. young carers):** School does not require you to provide further detail or supporting documentation via this form. We will invite you to school to discuss your request should we require further information

Parent Declaration

I confirm that:

☐ The request relates to a Safeguarding/Welfare-related matter

☐ The device is required to support my child

☐ My child is a young carer

☐ The device is required to stay connected (eg reassurance, emergency contact)

☐ My child understands that other use of the device will remain prohibited unless specifically authorised

Section 9: Parent / Carer Declaration

I have read the school's Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy and understand that:

- Permission may be granted only under the conditions agreed by the school.
- Devices must not be used during the school day unless specifically authorised.
- Devices must be switched off and stored in accordance with school procedures.
- Failure to comply with the policy may result in permission being withdrawn.
- The school cannot accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage to personal devices except where negligence can be demonstrated.

Parent/Carer Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

School Decision

Outcome

☐ Approved

☐ Approved with Conditions

☐ Not Approved

Storage Arrangement

☐ School Office Storage

☐ Collection by Staff

☐ Secure Locked Storage

☐ Other

Details:

Approved Use

☐ Travel only

☐ Medical monitoring only

☐ SEND support only

☐ Safeguarding/welfare arrangement only (incl young carer)

☐ Other

Details (including any conditions of use)

Review Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Additional Conditions:

Authorisation

Headteacher/ Authorised Leader

Name:

Signature:

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Appendix C - Mobile Phone Agreement for Pupils and Parents

Where permission is granted, both the pupil (subject to age) and parent should sign the following agreement:

Pupil Agreement

I understand that:

- My school is a mobile-phone-free environment
- My device must be switched off when I arrive at school
- I must hand it in for secure storage immediately
- I must not use it during the school day unless specifically authorised
- If I misuse my device, I may lose permission to bring it to school

Pupil Name:

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Parent Agreement

I agree to support the school's Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy and understand that permission may be withdrawn if my child does not follow the agreed arrangements.

Parent Name:

Parent Signature:

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Appendix D - Mobile Phone and Smart Device Exemption Risk Assessment

Pupil Details

Pupil Name	
Year Group	
Assessor	
Assessment Date	Click or tap to enter a date.
Review Date	Click or tap to enter a date.

Reason for Request

☐ Travel to and from school

☐ Medical requirement

☐ SEND requirement

☐ Safeguarding/welfare need

☐ Young carer responsibilities

☐ Other

Details:

Evidence Considered

Tick all evidence reviewed.

☐ Parent request form

☐ Medical evidence

☐ Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP)

☐ EHCP

☐ SEND Support Plan

☐ Safeguarding records

☐ Professional recommendation

☐ Other

Details:

Benefits of Allowing the Device

What need is being met?

Risks Identified

Potential Risk	Low	Medium	High
Distraction to learning	☐	☐	☐
Safeguarding concerns	☐	☐	☐
Social media misuse	☐	☐	☐
Bullying/cyberbullying	☐	☐	☐
Photography/recording misuse	☐	☐	☐
Impact on other pupils	☐	☐	☐
Data protection concerns	☐	☐	☐
Loss or theft of device	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐

Details:

Control Measures

What measures will be put in place to reduce risk?

Examples:

- Phone switched off during school day

- Phone stored in school office
- Medical functions only enabled
- Restricted access arrangements
- Staff supervision
- Parent/pupil agreement signed

Control Measures:

Agreed Storage Arrangements

☐ School office storage

☐ Collected by staff each morning

☐ Locked cabinet

☐ Other

Details:

Agreed Conditions of Use

☐ Travel only

☐ Medical monitoring only

☐ SEND support only

☐ Safeguarding arrangement only

☐ Emergency use only

☐ Other

Details:

Decision

☐ Approved

☐ Approved with conditions

☐ Not approved

Reason:

Review Arrangements

Review Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Review Notes:

Signatures

Assessor:

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Headteacher:

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Parent/Carer:

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Appendix E - Visitor Mobile Device Notice

[This can be displayed at reception or included in visitor packs]

Mobile Phones and Smart Devices

Welcome to [School Name]

To support safeguarding and maintain a calm learning environment, visitors are requested to follow our Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy whilst on site.

Please:

✓ Keep mobile phones and smart devices on silent

✓ Follow all safeguarding and visitor procedures

✓ Use devices discreetly and appropriately

✓ Respect the privacy of pupils, staff and families

✓ Follow instructions provided by school staff

Photography and Recording

Unless specifically authorised by the Headteacher:

✗ Do not take photographs of pupils

✗ Do not film pupils

✗ Do not make audio recordings

✗ Do not record members of staff

Contractors and Volunteers

All contractors, volunteers and regular visitors are expected to comply with LDST's safeguarding requirements and Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy.

Thank You

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe, respectful and secure environment for all pupils and staff.

Optional Reception Sign (Short Version)

Safeguarding Notice

This school operates a mobile-phone-free environment for pupils.

Visitors are asked to:

- Keep phones on silent
- Refrain from photographing, filming or recording pupils
- Follow all safeguarding and visitor procedures

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix F – Policy Review and Revision Schedule

Review Schedule

Policy Author	Data Protection Officer
Policy Approver	Audit and Risk Committee
Current Policy Version	2.0
Policy Effective From	1 September 2026
Policy Review Date	31 August 2028

Revision Schedule

Version	Revisions	By whom
2.0	New policy reflecting DfE Guidance which came into effective on 29 June 2026.	DPO