



Priory Junior School

Mobile Phone and Smart Devices Policy

2026/27

Policy owner	Governing Body / Headteacher
Operational lead	Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Effective date	1 September 2026
Governing Body approval	To be confirmed
Review date	September 2027, or sooner if guidance changes
School	Priory Junior School

This policy should be read alongside the Behaviour Regulation Policy, Child Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy, Data Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Visitors and VIP Policy, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and Educational Visits Policy.

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Contents

1. Purpose and statutory position
 2. Scope and definitions
 3. Priory's mobile phone-free approach
 4. Roles and responsibilities
 5. Pupils bringing phones or smart devices to school
 6. Exceptions, medical needs and reasonable adjustments
 7. Staff use of mobile phones and smart devices
 8. Parents/carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors
 9. Educational visits, clubs and residentials
 10. Misuse, sanctions and confiscation
 11. Searching devices and safeguarding harmful content
 12. Online harm, child-on-child abuse and AI-generated content
 13. Data protection, loss, theft and damage
 14. Communication, monitoring and review
- Appendix A: Pupil mobile phone agreement and exceptional permission request
- Appendix B: Visitor / parent mobile phone information slip
- Appendix C: Staff quick-reference guide

1. Purpose and statutory position

Priory Junior School is a mobile phone-free environment throughout the school day. The purpose of this policy is to protect pupils' learning, relationships, wellbeing, privacy and safeguarding by ensuring that personal mobile phones and similar smart devices are not accessible to pupils during lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes or other school activities, except where an individual medical or reasonable-adjustment arrangement applies.

From 1 September 2026, schools are expected to follow the Department for Education's statutory guidance on mobile phones in schools. Section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 requires schools to have regard to that guidance when exercising functions relating to pupils having and using mobile phones and other personal interactive communication devices at school.

Priory's core rule

Pupils do not have access to personal mobile phones during the school day. Years 5 and 6 may bring a phone for use before or after school, but it must be switched off and handed to the school office on arrival, where it remains until the end of the day. Years 3 and 4 should not normally bring a phone unless an exceptional arrangement has been agreed.

2. Scope and definitions

This policy applies to pupils, staff, supply staff, volunteers, governors, contractors, parents/carers and visitors while on the school site or taking part in school-organised activities.

For this policy, 'mobile phone' includes smartphones and basic phones. 'Smart devices' includes personal devices with communication, notification, internet, camera, audio/video recording or similar interactive functions, such as communication-enabled smartwatches and smart glasses. School-owned devices used for education are managed through the Online Safety and Acceptable Use arrangements and are not treated as personal mobile phones.

- Ordinary watches with no communication or recording functions are not restricted by this policy.
- Medical or assistive technology may be permitted where required by a pupil's individual needs and agreed plan.
- The school may update the devices covered by this policy as technology changes.

3. Priory's mobile phone-free approach

Priory's established practice allows pupils in Years 5 and 6 to bring a mobile phone to school where families consider this useful, particularly for the journey to and from school. This does not give pupils access to the phone during the school day. Phones are switched off and handed to the school office for secure storage, then returned at the end of the day. Years 3 and 4 should not normally bring a mobile phone unless an exceptional arrangement has been agreed.

Situation	Priory arrangement
During the school day	No pupil uses or accesses a personal mobile phone during lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes or other school activities, unless a specific individual arrangement applies.
Years 5 and 6	Pupils may bring a mobile phone to school for use before/after school. Individual prior permission is not required under the standard arrangement.
Years 3 and 4	Pupils should not normally bring a mobile phone. An exceptional arrangement must be agreed in advance by the Headteacher or delegated senior leader.

Situation	Priory arrangement
On arrival / storage	The phone is switched off and handed to the school office for secure storage. It remains inaccessible to the pupil throughout the school day.
End of day	The phone is returned to the pupil at the end of the school day or at the agreed departure time.
Contact with home / clubs	Parents/carers contact the school office during the day. The same no-access rule applies during school-organised clubs unless a member of staff has agreed a specific arrangement.

Pupils will be taught why a mobile phone-free environment is valuable, including the benefits for concentration, play, friendships, privacy, emotional wellbeing and reducing online conflict and bullying.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Governing Body

- Ensures the policy reflects statutory guidance and the school's safeguarding, behaviour, equality and medical duties.
- Monitors implementation through safeguarding/behaviour information and policy review.
- Supports the Headteacher in maintaining a clear and consistent mobile phone-free culture.

4.2 Headteacher

- Has overall responsibility for implementing and enforcing this policy consistently.
- Approves exceptional arrangements for Years 3 and 4, any request for pupil access to a device during the school day, and staff special arrangements where needed.
- Ensures this policy is communicated to pupils, parents/carers, staff and visitors.
- Authorises staff who may search pupils or possessions in accordance with statutory guidance.

4.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Provides safeguarding oversight where device use raises concerns about abuse, exploitation, bullying, sexual imagery, harassment, radicalisation or other online harm.
- Ensures safeguarding concerns are recorded and managed through Priory's child protection procedures.
- Works with senior leaders, parents/carers, police or children's social care where required.

4.4 All staff

- Model the school's expectations and enforce them calmly and consistently.
- Challenge and report breaches; do not ignore visible, audible or suspected misuse.
- Follow safeguarding procedures where mobile phone behaviour may indicate harm or risk.
- Do not search the content of a device unless specifically authorised and acting within current statutory guidance.

5. Pupils bringing phones or smart devices to school

Priory's normal pupil arrangements are:

- Years 5 and 6 may bring a mobile phone to school. Families should only send a phone where there is a genuine practical reason, for example travel to or from school.
- Years 3 and 4 should not normally bring a mobile phone to school. An exception may be agreed by the Headteacher or delegated senior leader for a safeguarding, medical, disability-related, young-carer or other significant individual need.

- All routine pupil phones must be switched off before or immediately on arrival and handed directly to the school office. They are stored securely and are not accessible to pupils during the school day.
- Phones are returned at the end of the school day, or at the agreed departure time for a school-organised activity. Parents/carers who need to contact their child during the day must contact the school office rather than the child's personal phone.

Years 5 and 6 do not require individual Headteacher permission simply to bring a phone under this standard office-storage arrangement. However, bringing a phone is a privilege subject to this policy and may be restricted or withdrawn following misuse. Any pupil who needs to access a phone or smart device during the school day must have a specific agreed arrangement, normally linked to medical, disability, safeguarding or another exceptional need.

5.1 Smartwatches and wearable devices

A smartwatch or wearable that can send or receive messages/calls, access the internet, take photographs or recordings, or receive live notifications is treated as a communication-enabled smart device. Unlike the routine Year 5 and 6 mobile-phone arrangement, pupils should not normally wear or retain a communication-enabled smartwatch during the school day unless an individual arrangement has been agreed.

Where a wearable device is required for health monitoring or assistive technology, the school will agree appropriate arrangements through the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan, SEND support or other written plan.

6. Exceptions, medical needs and reasonable adjustments

The mobile phone-free rule will never be applied in a way that prevents the school meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014 or statutory guidance on supporting pupils with medical conditions.

- A pupil may need access to a phone or connected device to monitor or manage a medical condition, for example continuous glucose monitoring.
- A disabled pupil may require a device as an assistive communication or accessibility tool.
- A pupil's home or safeguarding circumstances may justify a specific, limited arrangement.
- Any exception will be tailored to the purpose, time and location needed; it does not create unrestricted access to the device.

Where appropriate, the arrangement will state who holds the device, when it may be accessed, which functions may be used, who supervises use and how privacy is protected. Medical arrangements will align with Priory's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and Administration of Medicines Policy.

7. Staff use of mobile phones and smart devices

Staff are important role models. Consistent with DfE guidance and Priory's Staff Handbook, personal mobile phones must not be used for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day or during staff meetings unless an SLT-approved exception applies.

- Personal phones should be kept secure and out of sight during directed/contact time. Staffroom lockers are available and are the recommended secure location.
- Personal use should be limited to non-contact time and staff-only areas.
- A Headteacher/SLT-approved exception may be made for an urgent family situation, a medical need, multi-factor authentication, an emergency, or another specific work requirement.
- Smartwatch notifications should be disabled during pupil contact time, except for agreed medical alerts.
- Staff must not use a personal device to photograph, film or audio-record pupils or their work.
- Staff must not use personal phones to store, process or transmit pupil personal data, safeguarding information or other confidential school information.
- Staff must not enter identifiable or sensitive school information into AI tools from a personal device or unapproved account.

- Personal numbers or social-media/messaging accounts must not be given to pupils or parents/carers. Communication should use approved school channels.

7.1 Educational visits and emergencies

School-owned devices should be used for visit communication wherever practicable. Where the Visit Leader has agreed that a member of staff may carry a personal phone for emergency communication, it must be used professionally, only for the agreed purpose, and must not be used to photograph pupils or to create direct personal contact with parents/carers. This must be reflected in visit planning and the Educational Visits Policy.

Failure by a member of staff to follow this policy may be addressed under the Staff Code of Conduct and, where appropriate, disciplinary or safeguarding procedures.

8. Parents/carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors

Adults on the school site are expected to support Priory's mobile phone-free culture and safeguarding arrangements.

- Phones should be on silent and kept out of use while working with pupils or while in lessons and pupil activity areas.
- Parents/carers needing to contact their child during the school day must contact the school office on 0115 952 6100.
- Visitors, volunteers and contractors must not take photographs, video or audio recordings of pupils or staff unless this has been specifically authorised in advance.
- At school performances or public events, the school will state whether personal photography is permitted. Any permission will be subject to safeguarding, privacy and data-protection expectations; images of other children must not be posted publicly without appropriate consent.
- Volunteers accompanying visits must not use personal phones to contact other parents/carers or to photograph pupils.
- Media, VIP and professional photography visits are managed through Priory's Visitors and VIP Policy.

A short visitor/parent information slip is included at Appendix B and can be used at reception or school events.

9. Educational visits, clubs and residentials

Priory's mobile phone-free expectations continue during school-organised activities. The Visit Leader, EVC and Headteacher will decide any visit-specific arrangements as part of the Educational Visits planning process.

- Pupil phones are not normally taken on educational visits.
- Where a Year 5 or 6 pupil brings a phone to school on the day of a visit, it will normally remain switched off and stored at school unless the Visit Leader has specifically planned otherwise. Where a phone is required for an exceptional travel, medical or safeguarding reason, the visit-specific arrangement must be agreed in advance.
- For residential visits or activities outside the normal school day, any pupil access to a personal phone must be specifically planned, limited and communicated to parents/carers in advance.
- Medical and reasonable-adjustment needs always take priority and will be planned individually.
- Emergency contact should be through the school/visit contact arrangements rather than personal pupil phones.

10. Misuse, sanctions and confiscation

Breaches will be addressed consistently and proportionately through Priory's Behaviour Regulation Policy. The school's first priority is to restore a calm, safe learning environment and understand whether the behaviour also raises a safeguarding concern.

Situation	Likely Priory response
Phone/device is seen, heard or accessed without permission	Member of staff requires the pupil to hand over the device. It is taken to the school office and parent/carer is informed. The device is normally returned at the end of the day, subject to the circumstances. Follow the behavior policy.
Repeated breach	Parent/carer may be required to collect the device. For a Year 5 or 6 pupil, the school may require the pupil not to bring a phone for an agreed period. An appropriate behaviour response will also be applied.
Refusal to hand over a device	Senior leader support is sought. Refusal is a separate breach of the Behaviour Regulation Policy and may require a stronger response.
Use to photograph/record, bully, harass, intimidate or access harmful content	Device is secured; DSL/SLT is informed. Behaviour and safeguarding procedures are followed.
Possible criminal or serious safeguarding content	Preserve evidence. Do not investigate beyond your role. DSL/Headteacher will consider police, children's social care or other agency involvement.

Confiscation will be for a period the Headteacher considers reasonable and proportionate. Individual circumstances, including age, SEND, disability, medical needs and safeguarding factors, will be considered.

11. Searching devices and safeguarding harmful content

Headteachers, and staff specifically authorised by the Headteacher, have statutory powers to search a pupil or possessions in defined circumstances. Mobile phones and similar devices are identified by Priory as items that may be searched for where there are reasonable grounds and the conditions in current DfE searching, screening and confiscation guidance are met.

- Routine classroom staff should not browse or investigate the contents of a pupil's phone.
- Before any search, staff must consider urgency, risk, the pupil's welfare and whether DSL/SLT advice is needed.
- If material may be evidence of an offence, it must not be deleted and the device should be preserved for police where appropriate.
- If a device may contain a nude or semi-nude image of a child, including an AI-generated or digitally altered sexual image, staff must not intentionally view, copy, forward or print the image. Confiscate the device and report immediately to the DSL.
- Any search or examination of data must follow current statutory guidance, Priory's Online Safety Policy and safeguarding procedures.

12. Online harm, child-on-child abuse and AI-generated content

Mobile phones can be a route for online abuse even when the original activity occurred outside school. Priory will respond where online behaviour affects a pupil's safety, relationships, attendance, wellbeing or education.

- cyber-bullying, threats, harassment, hate-based or discriminatory abuse;
- coercive or controlling messages and harmful group-chat behaviour;
- sharing or soliciting nudes or semi-nudes;
- upskirting or other non-consensual recording;
- sexual harassment or sexual violence with an online element;
- grooming, exploitation, radicalisation, scams or harmful content;
- AI-generated or digitally altered images/audio/video used to humiliate, sexualise, impersonate, threaten or harm another person.

These concerns will be managed in line with the Child Protection Policy, Child-on-Child Abuse Policy, Online Safety Policy and Behaviour Regulation Policy. Staff must report safeguarding concerns on the school's safeguarding system the same day and speak directly to the DSL/deputy DSL where the concern is urgent.

13. Data protection, loss, theft and damage

13.1 Data protection and privacy

- Personal devices must not be used as an alternative to approved school systems for storing or processing personal data.
- Staff and adults must not use personal devices to create informal records of pupils, including photos, video, audio or screenshots.
- School-owned devices must be secured and used in line with the Data Protection and Online Safety policies.
- A loss, theft or suspected compromise of a school device or a device containing school data must be reported immediately as a potential data breach.

13.2 Private devices brought to school

Pupils and staff bring privately owned devices to school at their own risk. The school cannot accept responsibility for loss, theft or accidental damage where a device has not been formally handed into school custody.

Where a Year 5 or 6 phone, an exceptionally approved pupil phone, or a confiscated device is handed to the school office, the school will take reasonable care of it and store it securely. Devices should be switched off and, where practicable, clearly labelled or placed in a named envelope/pouch. Lost property should be handed to the school office.

14. Communication, monitoring and review

- This policy will be published and communicated to staff, pupils and parents/carers.
- Pupils will be reminded of the mobile phone rules at the start of each academic year and when necessary.
- New staff, supply staff, volunteers and visitors will be made aware of the relevant expectations.
- Parents/carers will be encouraged to support a mobile phone-free school day and to use the school office for contact.
- SLT and the Governing Body will review behaviour and safeguarding information linked to mobile devices and consider whether implementation is consistent and effective.
- The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if national guidance, legislation, school practice or emerging technology changes.

Key national guidance and legislation

- [DfE: Mobile phones in schools \(statutory guidance, updated June 2026\)](#)
- [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 - section 36](#)
- [DfE: Keeping children safe in education 2026](#)
- [DfE: Behaviour in schools](#)
- [DfE: Searching, screening and confiscation at school](#)
- [DfE: Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)

Appendix A - Pupil mobile phone agreement and exceptional permission request

Years 5 and 6 may bring a mobile phone under Priory's standard arrangement without individual Headteacher approval: the phone must be switched off, handed to the school office on arrival and collected at the end of the day. This form may be used to record the pupil/parent agreement. For Years 3 and 4, or where any pupil needs access to a device during the school day, the exceptional permission section must be completed and approved.

Pupil name	
Year group / class	
Parent/carers name	
Device type / phone number (if relevant)	

Reason for exceptional request (Years 3/4 or in-day access only)

Leave this section blank where a Year 5 or 6 pupil is simply following the standard office-storage arrangement. For an exception, tick or describe the reason:

- Safeguarding / journey safety need outside the standard Year 5 and 6 arrangement
- Medical or disability-related need
- Young-carer / exceptional family circumstance
- School trip, club or other agreed school activity
- Other exceptional reason (please explain below)

Pupil and parent/carers agreement

- We understand that Priory Junior School is mobile phone-free throughout the school day, even though Years 5 and 6 may bring a phone for use before or after school.
- The device will be switched off and handed directly to the school office on arrival, unless a specific medical or reasonable-adjustment plan says otherwise.
- The pupil will not use or access the device during the school day.
- The pupil will hand the device to a member of staff immediately if asked.
- The device will not be used to photograph, record, message, bully, harass or access harmful/inappropriate material.
- The school may restrict or withdraw the pupil's ability to bring a phone if these conditions are not followed.
- We understand that privately owned devices are brought to school at the owner's risk, subject to the school's reasonable duty of care while a device is in school custody.

Parent/carers signature	
Pupil signature	
Headteacher / SLT decision (exceptions only)	Approved / Approved with conditions / Not approved / Not required for standard Year 5/6 arrangement
Conditions / individual arrangement	

Authorised by / date	
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Appendix B - Visitor / parent mobile phone information slip

Priory Junior School is a mobile phone-free environment

Thank you for helping us keep pupils safe, protect privacy and maintain a calm learning environment.

- Please keep your phone on silent and avoid using it where pupils are present.
- Do not use your phone in lessons or while working with pupils.
- Do not photograph, film or audio-record pupils or staff unless the school has explicitly authorised this.
- At public events, follow the school's announced photography arrangements. Do not publish images of other people's children without appropriate consent.
- If you need to make an urgent call, please ask reception where you can use your phone privately.
- Volunteers and adults accompanying school visits must follow staff instructions and must not use personal phones to contact other parents or photograph pupils.
- The school office number is 0115 952 6100.

A full copy of the Mobile Phone and Smart Devices Policy is available from the school office and school website.

Appendix C - Staff quick-reference guide

Situation	What to do
A Year 3/4 pupil has a phone without approval, or any pupil still has a phone after arrival	Ask the pupil to hand it over; take it to the school office; follow the Behaviour Regulation Policy and inform SLT/parent as appropriate.
A Year 5/6 phone rings in a bag / is seen being used	Secure the phone in the office, remind the pupil of the hand-in rule, and inform parent/carer as appropriate. Repeated misuse may result in the privilege of bringing a phone being withdrawn.
A pupil refuses to hand over a phone	Do not get into a physical struggle for the device. Seek SLT support.
You suspect harmful sexual imagery	Do not view it. Confiscate/secure the device and inform the DSL immediately.
You need Multi-Factor Authentication or an urgent personal call	Use briefly and professionally, away from pupils wherever possible; follow SLT arrangements.
You need a photo of a pupil for school use	Use authorised school equipment and follow consent/data-protection procedures.
You are on a trip	Follow the visit plan. Use school communication equipment wherever practicable.
You are unsure	Ask the Headteacher, DSL or school office before acting.

Report safeguarding concerns the same day

If a phone or smart device is linked to bullying, exploitation, sexual imagery, threats, harassment, radicalisation, self-harm content, grooming, AI-generated sexual imagery or another safeguarding issue, follow Priory's Child Protection procedures. Record the concern on the school's safeguarding system and speak directly to the DSL/deputy DSL for urgent concerns.

When in doubt: keep pupils safe, preserve evidence, seek advice, report and record.