Hope Learning Community

Lexden Springs Special School

Mobile Phones

This policy was approved by the trustees on 1.10.2026

This policy will be reviewed annually on or before 1.10.2027

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1 Introduction

1.1 Hope Learning Community's ("the Trust") strategy is aimed at creating a culture with high expectations of behaviour and establishing calm, safe, and supportive environments conducive to learning across its schools.

1.2 This policy outlines the requirement that pupils will not have access to a mobile phone during school time. In drawing it up, the Trust has considered the Department for Education's statutory guidance on mobile phones.

1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust's behaviour policy, safeguarding and child protection policy, online safety policy, SEND policy, supporting pupils with medical conditions policy and acceptable use of IT policy. It will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.

2 Aims and objectives

By establishing a mobile phone-free environment, the Trust and its schools aim to:

- Maximise the quality of teaching and learning by removing digital distractions during the school day.
- Reduce the risks associated with mobile phone use, including loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption, and an increase in bullying.
- Protect the wellbeing, mental health, and online safety of all pupils and staff.
- Provide an ethos and environment within which everyone feels safe.
- Safeguard pupils from harmful online content, exploitation, and child-on-child abuse facilitated through mobile devices.
- Encourage pupils to see a mobile phone-free environment as desirable and valuable, creating intrinsic motivation to support the school culture.
- Support staff in consistently enforcing expectations and modelling responsible behaviour around technology.
- Comply with the Trust's legal duties, including under the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

3 Application of policy

3.1 References to mobile phones in this policy should also be taken to refer to other communications and smart technology which the school has decided to include, including smart watches, wireless earbuds connected to a mobile phone, and any other device with the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or

the ability to record audio and/or video. Further detail on the scope of the policy is set out in the Annex.

3.2 This policy applies to all pupils on the school roll. It also applies to all adults on site, including staff, governors, and volunteers, in so far as the provisions concerning role modelling apply (see section 4.4). It applies:

- On Lexden Springs premises during the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes, and lunchtime.
- On Lexden Springs organised trips and residential visits (see also section 9).
- In any context where a pupil is wearing school uniform or is otherwise identifiable as a pupil of the school.

3.3 Where the school operates a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) scheme to facilitate the use of laptops or tablets for learning, such devices should be used in accordance with the school's BYOD policy and ICT acceptable use policy. BYOD policies do not include mobile phones.

4 Roles and responsibilities

All members of the Trust community are expected to follow this policy and treat one another with dignity, kindness, and respect. Roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each section of the Trust community are set out in detail below.

4.1 Board of trustees

The trustees will work with the central team and each school's senior leadership team to set the ethos and a set of core values that promote high standards of expected behaviour from pupils attending its schools. Trustees will monitor and evaluate the impact of the policy and will hold the CEO and Headteachers to account for its implementation.

4.2 The Chief Executive Officer

The CEO will ensure that this policy is applied consistently across the schools within the Trust and will report back to the trustees on educational outcomes, behaviour management, support strategies, and early intervention for pupils requiring additional support.

4.3 Headteacher

The Headteacher, with support from their senior leadership team, will ensure that staff are supported and up to date with policy changes. They will monitor how staff implement this policy to ensure sanctions are applied fairly and consistently, and that searches are carried out lawfully.

4.4 **Staff**

All staff will:

- Consistently enforce this policy in a fair, proportionate, and non-discriminatory manner, taking account of any adaptations or reasonable adjustments agreed for individual pupils.
- 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's expectations and effectively enforce the prohibition of mobile phones throughout the school day.
- Confiscate mobile phones and devices in accordance with section 6 of this policy where a pupil breaches this policy.
- Record all confiscations and sanctions in accordance with the school's behaviour recording system CPOMS.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, as required.

4.5 **Parents**

Parents have an important role in supporting the school's policy on the use of mobile phones during the school day. Parents are expected to:

- Support the school in the application and enforcement of this policy.
- Where they need to contact their child during the school day, contact the school office rather than the pupil's mobile phone directly, where staff will be aware of the school's policy on relaying messages and facilitating contact.
- Inform the school in writing of any medical condition, disability, or other exceptional circumstance that may require their child to access a mobile phone during the school day (see section 8).

4.6 **Pupils**

All pupils are expected to:

- Comply with the approach set out in section 5 of this policy.
- Not use or display a mobile phone or device covered by this policy during the school day, unless expressly authorised to do so under an agreed adaptation (see section 8).

- Understand the risks associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, including loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption, and an increase in bullying.
- Hand over a device immediately when asked to do so by a member of staff.
- Not attempt to circumvent this policy, including by concealing a device or passing it to another pupil.

5 Prohibiting use

5.1 Pupils may bring mobile phones or devices within the scope of this policy onto school premises but must secure them to the school receptionist at the start of the school day. Phones must remain secured throughout the entire school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

Pupils will hand their phone to the school receptionist at the start of each school day. Phones will be stored securely in a locked box. Phones will be returned to pupils at the end of the school day.

6 Sanctions & confiscation

6.1 Schools can use a range of sanctions for breaching the mobile phone policy appropriate to their context as set out in the school's behaviour policy. All sanctions will be proportionate to the circumstances, and due consideration will be given to the pupil's age, any SEND, and any agreed adaptations under section 8.

7 Searching

7.1 The Headteacher and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item, or any item identified in the school rules as an item that may be searched for. Details are set out in the school's behaviour policy, however, mobile phones and similar devices within the scope of this policy are identified as items that may be searched for.

8 Adaptions and reasonable adjustments

8.1 Whilst the school prohibits the use of mobile phones throughout the school day to reduce distraction and disruption; we will consider and make reasonable adjustments where necessary under the Equality Act 2010.

8.2 There may be other exceptional circumstances where adaptations to this policy for specific pupils may be made, however, these are expected to be genuinely exceptional. This section does not provide an exhaustive list of exceptional circumstances, and the school will assess each case on its own merits.

9 Outside of the school day

9.1 Where pupils are taking part in school-organised activities outside the normal school day on school premises (such as after-school clubs or school trips), this policy will apply unless the member of staff leading the activity has expressly confirmed otherwise for a specific and legitimate educational purpose.

10 Complaints and review

10.1 If parents have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy, they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the Headteacher in the first instance.

10.2 Any parent who believes that this policy has been applied unlawfully, or that a reasonable adjustment has been wrongly refused, may raise a complaint through the Trust's complaints procedure.

Annex Definitions and scope of "mobile phone"

Device type	In scope?
Mobile phone (smartphone or otherwise)	Yes
Smart watch with mobile connectivity	Yes
Wireless earbuds/headphones connected to a mobile phone	Yes
AI powered smart glasses	Yes
Personal tablet/iPad with mobile connectivity (SIM-enabled)	Yes
Personal tablet/iPad (Wi-Fi only)	Yes
School-issued device	No
Medical monitoring device	No - subject to section 8