Mobile Phone & Smart Technology Policy

Date Agreed	September 2026
Date to be Reviewed	September 2029 (or sooner if required)
Signed	YET TO BE RATIFIED BY THE GOVERNING BODY

Seascape Primary School: Mobile Phone & Smart Technology Policy

1. Introduction and Rationale

At Seascape Primary School, we are committed to providing a calm, safe, and focused environment for our pupils. In line with the Department for Education's updated guidance (*January 2026*) and available here, our schools are **mobile phone-free environments by default**.

We recognise that mobile phones and smart devices can:

- **Create Safeguarding Risks:** Risks include cyberbullying, the taking of unauthorised images, and access to inappropriate content.
- **Distract from learning:** Even the presence of a phone in a pocket can reduce cognitive capacity.
- **Impact Wellbeing:** High usage is linked to increased anxiety and decreased social interaction during break times.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all pupils, staff, parents, and visitors while on school premises or participating in school-led activities (e.g., educational visits). **"Mobile devices"** includes smartphones, "brick" phones, smartwatches with messaging/calling capabilities, tablets, and any other internet-enabled wearable technology.

3. Pupil Policy: "Never Seen, Never Heard"

As a primary school, it is our position that pupils do not require mobile phones during the school day.

3.1 On-Site Rules

- **General Rule:** Pupils are prohibited from using mobile phones or smartwatches throughout the school day, including during lessons, break times, and lunchtimes.
- **Arrival/Departure:** We recognise that parents/carers of older pupils may want their child to carry a mobile phone for their own safety while walking to/from school, and are happy to support this by providing safe storage from the time a pupil arrives on the school premises. In these cases:
    - Phones must be switched **off** (not on silent) before entering the school gates.

    - Phones must be handed to the designated school office point immediately upon arrival.
    - Phones will be stored securely and returned at the end of the day.

3.2 Smartwatches

- Devices that can receive notifications, record audio/video, or access the internet are **not permitted** to be worn.
- A standard watch is permitted: please see our uniform policy.

4. Implementation and Enforcement

The implementation of this policy should be read in conjunction with the school's behaviour policy. The Headteacher (or authorised staff) have the statutory power to search pupils they suspect of having a phone on the school premises, as it is a prohibited item identified in our behaviour policy.

- **Confiscation:** If a pupil is found in possession of a phone or smart device during the school day, it will be confiscated by a member of staff and stored in the school office.
- **Collection:** Confiscated devices must be collected by a parent/carer at the end of the school day. They will not be returned directly to the pupil.
- **Sanctions:** Breaches of this policy will be managed under the school's **Behaviour Policy**. Persistent breaches may result in a total ban on the pupil bringing a device onto the premises.

The effective implementation of this policy will be considered by Ofsted during inspection.

5. Staff, Parents, and Visitors

To maintain a phone-free culture, we expect all adults to act as role models.

- **Staff:** Personal phones must not be used in the presence of pupils. There are a limited number of exceptions:
    - where a staff member uses the device as a medical aid,
    - where the device is needed for two-factor authentication to access secure systems,
    - during lockdown procedures,
    - where the Headteacher deems it appropriate for a staff member to use on an agreed, limited basis for a specific event.
    - Devices should be safely secured in appropriate places (locked cupboards/lockers/staffrooms etc). Where classroom use is unavoidable for teaching staff (in examples mentioned above) then the device should be immediately locked in a drawer/cupboard after use.
    - Mobile phones may be used in offices, but only when there are no pupils present.

    - There may be exceptional circumstances where other staff (site manager, visiting Head Office staff) may need to use mobile phones. This may be to photograph premises damage, or for authentication purposes in server rooms etc. In such situations staff are expected to have their phones securely stored when not in use.
    - Headteachers can authorise use in examples such as the following: home visits, forest school, educational visits, use in cars when transporting pupils. Similarly, the Headteacher may deem it appropriate to use such a device to take notes when speaking to parents/carers at the beginning and end of the school day for example.
- **Parents/Visitors:** We kindly request that parents **do not use mobile phones while in the school building**, particularly in areas where children are present, to ensure the privacy and safety of all pupils.
- **Educational visits:** Staff leading trips will carry mobile phones for emergency/contingency situations only. Pupils are not permitted to bring phones on day trips or residentials.

6. Exceptions

We follow the DfE guidance that exceptions should be **rare and specific**:

- **Medical Needs:** We recognise that we have a responsibility under the Children's and Families Act 2014 to support pupils with medical needs. We follow the statutory guidance here. For example, pupils who require a device for medical monitoring (e.g., blood glucose monitoring for Type 1 Diabetes) will have this outlined in their Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP). The device must only be used for the specified medical purpose.
- **SEND:** Adjustments may be made for pupils with specific Special Educational Needs, where the device is an essential assistive technology for communication.
- The Headteacher has the authority to determine any other **rare and specific** use which may be appropriate.
- **Staff use**: exceptions for staff use have been identified above.

7. Communication with Parents

- **Emergency Contact:** Parents are reminded that in an emergency, they must contact the **School Office**. Staff will ensure messages are delivered to pupils immediately.
- **Pupil Safety:** We encourage parents to delay the age at which children are given smartphones and to consider non-smart phones if a device is necessary for the walk home.

8. Online Safety

We recognise the importance of teaching children about online safety. Guidance for parents to support their child with safe social media use can be found here.

9. Liability

Seascape Primary School accept no responsibility for the loss, theft, or damage of any personal mobile device brought onto the school premises.