



# KICKSTART ACADEMY

## Mobile Phone Policy

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| <b>Date</b>          | September 2026 |
| <b>Version</b>       | 1              |
| <b>Circulation</b>   | All staff      |
| <b>Owner</b>         | Headteacher    |
| <b>Date approved</b> | September 202  |
| <b>Approved by</b>   | Governors      |
| <b>Review date</b>   | September 2027 |
| <b>Status</b>        | Live           |

# Contents

|                                                  |   |
|--------------------------------------------------|---|
| Policy Statement .....                           | 3 |
| Rationale .....                                  | 3 |
| Mobile Phone-Free School Day .....               | 4 |
| Daily Procedures .....                           | 4 |
| Exceptional Circumstances .....                  | 4 |
| Safeguarding .....                               | 5 |
| Searching and Confiscation .....                 | 6 |
| Contact Between Parents and Pupils .....         | 6 |
| Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities ..... | 6 |
| Smartwatches and Wearable Technology .....       | 6 |
| Staff Responsibilities .....                     | 7 |
| Responsibilities of Pupils .....                 | 7 |
| Responsibilities of Parents and Carers .....     | 7 |
| Monitoring and Review .....                      | 7 |
| Links to Other Policies .....                    | 7 |

## Policy Statement

At Kickstart Academy, we are committed to creating a calm, safe, purposeful and disruption-free learning environment where pupils can fully engage in education, develop positive relationships and remain safe.

In line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance Mobile Phones in Schools (June 2026) and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE), Kickstart Academy operates as a mobile phone-free environment throughout the school day.

This policy applies to:

- Mobile phones
- Smartphones
- Smartwatches
- Earbuds and headphones
- Tablets with communication functions
- Any device capable of:
  - Making calls
  - Sending messages
  - Accessing social media
  - Recording photographs, video or audio
  - Receiving notifications from communication apps

This policy should be read alongside the academy's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. A list of related policies is included at the end of this policy.

## Rationale

Research and national guidance identify significant benefits from restricting access to mobile phones in schools, including:

- Improved behaviour and engagement.
- Reduced distraction and disruption.
- Improved attendance and concentration.
- Reduced opportunities for bullying and online abuse.
- Better safeguarding outcomes.
- Improved face-to-face communication and social interaction.

As a Key Stage 4 Pupil Referral Unit, many of our pupils are vulnerable to:

- Online exploitation.
- Criminal exploitation.
- Child-on-child abuse.
- Cyberbullying.
- Exposure to harmful online content.
- Recording and sharing incidents without consent.

The academy therefore maintains a strict mobile phone-free approach as a safeguarding measure.

## **Mobile Phone-Free School Day**

From arrival until departure, pupils must not have access to a mobile phone or smart device.

This includes:

- Lessons
- Lesson changeovers
- Social times
- Breaks
- Lunchtimes
- Educational visits
- Alternative provision placements (unless alternative arrangements are agreed).

The DfE states that schools should prohibit access to mobile phones throughout the entire school day and that schools should be "mobile phone-free by default."

## **Daily Procedures**

### **On Arrival**

All pupils must:

- Hand their mobile phone to a member of staff.
- Place smartwatches into secure storage if requested.
- Remove earbuds and headphones.

Phones will be:

- Switched off.
- Stored securely.
- Returned at the end of the school day.
- Where a pupil refuses to hand over a device, this will be treated as a failure to comply with a reasonable staff instruction and managed through the Behaviour, Belonging and Relationships Policy.

## **Exceptional Circumstances**

The Headteacher may authorise an exception where:

- There is a documented safeguarding need.
- The device forms part of an agreed reasonable adjustment.
- Safeguarding professionals recommend an alternative arrangement.

Any exception must:

- Be risk assessed.

- Be recorded in writing.
- Be reviewed regularly.

## Safeguarding

### Protecting Pupils

The restriction of mobile phones forms part of Kickstart Academy's safeguarding arrangements.

The academy recognises that unrestricted access to mobile devices can increase risks associated with:

- Cyberbullying.
- Online grooming.
- Sexual harassment.
- Sharing of harmful content.
- Sharing of nude or semi-nude images.
- AI-generated imagery.
- Recording and distributing incidents involving pupils or staff.

The academy will take immediate action where a device is believed to have been used in a manner that places a young person at risk.

### Recording Images and Video

No pupil may:

- Photograph another pupil without permission.
- Photograph staff.
- Record lessons.
- Share academy content online.
- Create or distribute images intended to embarrass, humiliate or harm another person.

Any such behaviour may result in:

- Confiscation.
- Safeguarding investigation.
- Parent/carers involvement.
- Police involvement where appropriate.

### AI and Image-Based Abuse

In line with KCSIE 2026, Kickstart Academy recognises emerging safeguarding risks associated with:

- AI-generated imagery.
- Deepfakes.
- Digitally altered images.

The creation, possession, sharing or requesting of such content will be treated as a serious safeguarding concern.

## **Searching and Confiscation**

Where staff reasonably suspect that a pupil possesses or is using a mobile phone in breach of this policy, they may require the pupil to surrender the device in line with the academy's Behaviour, Relationships and Belonging Policy.

Where appropriate, staff may exercise powers available within legislation and DfE guidance to search for prohibited items in accordance with the academy's Searching Policies.

Confiscated devices may be:

Held until the end of the day.

Collected by a parent or carer.

Retained during an investigation where safeguarding concerns exist.

## **Contact Between Parents and Pupils**

Parents and carers should not contact pupils directly during the school day.

Where urgent contact is required:

- Parents should telephone the academy office.
- Messages will be passed to pupils promptly.
- Pupils may use academy telephones where necessary.

This ensures communication is safely managed and supports safeguarding.

## **Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities**

Mobile phone arrangements for educational visits will be risk assessed.

Staff may permit supervised use where phones support:

- Navigation activities.
- Educational projects.
- Photography linked to curriculum outcomes.
- Emergency communication.

Any permitted use remains subject to this policy and in agreement with the Headteacher and DSL.

## **Smartwatches and Wearable Technology**

Smartwatches must:

- Be removed if they can receive messages, notifications or calls.
- Be handed in alongside mobile phones where directed.

Basic watches without communication capability may be worn.

## **Staff Responsibilities**

All staff must:

- Consistently enforce this policy.
- Challenge unauthorised use in line with the guidance in the Behaviour, Relationships and Belonging Policy.
- Report safeguarding concerns.
- Record serious incidents.
- Escalate concerns relating to online harm or exploitation.

Under KCSIE 2026, all staff share responsibility for safeguarding and must understand the risks associated with online safety and emerging technologies.

## **Responsibilities of Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Hand devices in on arrival.
- Comply with staff instructions.
- Use technology responsibly.
- Respect the privacy and dignity of others.
- Report online safety concerns.

## **Responsibilities of Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Support the academy's mobile phone-free approach.
- Avoid contacting pupils directly during the school day.
- Reinforce expectations regarding safe online behaviour.
- Work with the academy where concerns arise.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Headteacher and Safeguarding Team will review:

- Incidents involving mobile phones.
- Emerging safeguarding risks.
- Compliance with KCSIE.
- Compliance with DfE statutory guidance.
- Feedback from staff, pupils and parents.

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where national guidance changes.

## **Links to Other Policies**

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy  
Behaviour, Relationships and Belonging Policy  
Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy  
Online Safety Policy  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Acceptable Use Policy  
Data Protection Policy