



King's College
TAUNTON

PREP SCHOOL

Mobile Phone Policy (incl. Smart Watches)

Policy Date: September 2025

Responsibility

Individual: Deputy Head Pastoral

Review Cycle: (Annual)

Next scheduled review: September 2026

Last interim review: September 2025



1. Introduction and aims

1.1. Aims

At King's College Prep we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for some of our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community. We also, however, recognise the problems that can be a part of smart phone use, especially for pupils and teenagers, and therefore understand that King's College Prep, like all schools, has an important role to play in protecting our pupils from the problems of smart phones and social media, while also educating pupils in their use.

Our policy therefore aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents, volunteers and visitors.
- Protect pupils from online harms, including cyberbullying and inappropriate content.
- Support the school's other policies, including, but not limited to, the Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy (which includes our Rewards and Sanctions Policy), and the School Rules.

1.2. Rationale

Every school has a duty to create an environment that is calm, safe and free from distraction, so all pupils, whatever their background, can learn and thrive. One of the greatest challenges facing schools is the presence of mobile phones.

In studies, three in ten pupils say that making and keeping friendships, and the state of their mental health are a cause of worry, anxiety or depression.

By restricting the use of mobile phones, children and young people can spend more time staying active, and socialising face to face with their peers, activities which have been proven to have a positive impact on wellbeing.

We have a responsibility to help children and young people develop these habits, which will in turn help them to thrive outside of school.

By the age of 12, 97% of pupils own a mobile phone, but the use of mobile phones in school can lead to distractions, disruption and can increase the risk of online bullying.

The government has introduced guidance ([Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mobile-phones-in-schools)) which encourages all schools to introduce rules which prohibit the use of phones at school, to help pupils focus on their education, and the friends and staff around them.

The new guidance says that:

- Schools should prohibit the use of mobile phones, but they will have autonomy on how to do this
- Some may allow phones to be brought onto the premises but not to be used during school hours.



The government guidance sets out that there will be some limited cases where pupils should be exempt from the rules because they have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This will include situations where, for example, a diabetic pupil may need to use their phone as a monitoring device.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. Staff

All staff (and volunteers) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

The Senior Management Team (SMT) is responsible for monitoring the policy, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

All staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly, and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

3. Use of mobile phones by pupils

3.1. Pupil Phone Use in the Prep

No phones are allowed to be used in school for pupils.

Some older pupils bring phones into school, as they may have evening commitments outside of school. When this happens, they hand their phone into the front office on arrival, where it is kept all day until they go home.

The phone must be switched off.

Pupils are not allowed to use the phone unless they are given specific permission by their Tutor teacher or by one of the Deputy Heads.

After they have finished using the phone it has to be returned to the Office.

The School reserves the right to allow phones for selected pupils given individual circumstances, for example a medical condition (diabetes) or for pupils with SEND.

SMART WATCHES

Pupils wearing smart watches should ensure that smart features (eg calling, recording, camera capability) is disabled during the pupil's time in school. Misuse will result in confiscation until parents can collect.

BOARDING HOUSE

The Boarding House is a pupil's home overnight. Boarding pupils keep their phone in locked cabinets and are allowed to use their phones on certain device nights under supervision under the direction of the House Parent and boarding staff.

Pupils who need to contact their parents/carers in an emergency should speak to the Head of Boarding or her Assistant, and together they will decide if the call can be made.



TRIPS AND SPORTS MATCHES

- Phone use on a trip away from school or to a sports match will be at the discretion of the trip organiser and the Assistant Head Co-Curricular and/or Deputy Head Pastoral. Unless permission is expressly given, phones should not be used.

3.2. Sanctions

If a phone is seen or found by a member of staff it will be confiscated by them. Once confiscated, this will be stored in the Front Office locked away. A parent will need to collect the phone at the end of the school day.

School rules on online safety and acceptable use of mobile phones remain in full effect, and where appropriate will be sanctioned accordingly.

3.3 Loss, Theft or Damage

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or on school transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

In the unlikely event of a phone being found in school, confiscated phones will be stored in the school office until collected by a parent.

Any phones found should be taken to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

4. Pre-Prep Policy for the use of Devices with imaging and sharing capabilities and mobile phones

To ensure the safety and welfare of the children in our care, this section of the policy outlines the protocols for the use of personal mobile phones and devices in the Pre-Prep.

We recognise that staff, students and volunteers may wish to have their mobile phones at work for use in case of emergency.

However, safeguarding of children within the school is paramount and it is recognised that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and therefore we have implemented the following policy:

- Personal mobile phones, cameras and devices with imaging and sharing capabilities cannot be used when in the presence of children either on school premises or when on outings. **ONLY school equipment should be used.** *There are two dedicated trip phones to allow communication between staff on minibuses as well as when at the location should groups be in different areas. These phones are stored in the Head of Pre-Prep's office.*
- Personal mobile phones must be turned off and left with personal belongings during contact time with children. Staff must ensure that their personal devices are password protected and do not contain any illegal or inappropriate content. It is our policy that staff do not use any personal electronic devices, or anything with recording capability in the setting e.g. tablets, cameras, laptops, smart watches etc.



- Smart watches should have phone links disabled.
- If a staff member, student or volunteer must use their mobile phone during working hours (such as in a family emergency) this should be away from the children and ensuring the staff supervision levels are not compromised.
- The Pre-Prep's main telephone number can be used for emergencies by staff or volunteers or by people who need to contact them.
- The iPads staff use to take photos/videos for the children's digital Learning Journals will not be allowed off the site, apart from being taken on dedicated school outings. Photos are to be printed in the school by staff and images may be stored on the school drives before being deleted from the iPad.
- All staff have been issued with a work laptop. These are password protected and kept with the staff members at all times. They are solely for the use of work purposes. Each staff member takes responsibility for their own equipment and must ensure it does not contain any illegal or inappropriate content.
- Staff can access Seesaw from any device in the setting or at home via a secure username and password, this is to allow staff to update observations. No personal details can be seen by any member of staff.
- When taking photographs, we will ensure children are properly dressed; photos will not show intimate views of children and where possible we will avoid group photographs i.e., multiple children.
- **Devices with imaging and sharing capabilities and mobile phones are prohibited in the toilet or nappy changing area.**
- We will only use photographs according to permissions given by parents, e.g. website, observations, social media. If parents haven't given permission, their child's photograph will not be used.
- King's College Prep has its own social media accounts. Photographs will only be used on social media if consent is given by parents and never with a child's name. These are public pages and parents are made aware of this.
- **Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors:** All Volunteers, Visitors, Council Members and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises. On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones when they sign in at Reception.
- **Parents:** While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as essential means of communication at all times. We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is *courteous* and *appropriate* to the school environment. We also allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones – **but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.**

5. Use of mobile phones by staff in the Prep School

5.1. Personal mobile phones

Prep Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise involved/employed by the school) are expected to set an example and, *wherever possible*, adhere to the principle that they do not use their phone in front of pupils, unless for a clearly designated work purpose, such as:



- Authentication Apps
- Educational Apps (eg VMT teacher with a music recording)
- Emergency situations eg injured pupil at a games lesson or during a break duty when a pupil is injured.
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Use of TEAMS for boarding staff to communicate with each other

In these circumstances, staff will use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner and will adhere to the Staff Code of Conduct.

Staff should refrain from using their personal phones to contact parents / carers where possible and instead use one of the several landlines found throughout the school. Staff must secure their personal phones. Failure to do so could result in data breaches.

5.2. Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes. Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our Staff Code of Conduct.

6. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) are asked to adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day. This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it is a public event (such as a Sports Day) or of their own child
- Only using any photographs or recordings for personal use
- Not posting photographs or recordings on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils.

Parents, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

7. Monitoring and review

King's College is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on our pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and other relevant organisations and external agencies.