



Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy

Responsible Staff	HSE & ACO
Governors Committee Responsible	Full Governing Board
Date Approved	13/07/26
Review Term	Annual

Mobile Phone Policy

Contents

1. Purpose.....	1
2. Scope:	1
3. Aim of the policy:	1
4. Policy Statements:.....	1
5. Rationale:.....	2
6. All pupils - Primary, Secondary, Post 16 and Pod.	2
7. Searching for devices.....	3
8. Immediate confiscation.....	4
9. Consequences.....	4
10. Trips and Residential.....	5
Appendix 1: Consequence Flow Diagram	6
Appendix 2: Smartphone-Free School: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).....	7

1. Purpose

To establish clarity around expectations for a Smartphone Free School and to ensure a safe, focused, and conducive learning environment for all pupils at Exhall Grange Specialist School.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to all pupils of Exhall Grange Specialist School.

3. Aim of the policy:

To allow all our children to flourish in our environment by:

- Maintaining the highest standards of education through distraction and disruption-free school environments
- Ensure the maximum level of safeguarding, health and wellbeing of pupils on the school site and in our wider community

4. Policy Statements:

We are a Smartphone Free School.

We make a clear distinction between a basic phone (without the potential for internet access) and a smartphone or any smart device (with internet or potential internet access).

Pupils are prohibited from bringing any smartphone or smart devices into school.

The policy mitigates the safeguarding, health and safety risks related to early access to smart devices and supports the school site being a safe environment for all pupils.

Mobile Phone Policy

The policy supports families to take responsibility for the crucial decision of when it is appropriate for their child to have access to smart technology.

The policy is enforced with significant consequences for pupils who bring smartphones into school.

Please note that throughout this policy smartphone refers to any electronic device with potential access to the internet. This includes Kindles, tablets and smart watches.

Smartphones and other pocket smart devices that access the internet are prohibited from Exhall Grange. This policy has been introduced to minimise disruption to the school environment and to ensure every young person has the opportunity to acquire the social and learning skills, and good habits of communication and physical activity to lay down the foundation for being their best self for life.

By this policy the school is working with parents to tackle cyber bullying, sexting, sharing of indecent images, online grooming and device addiction. The impact of smartphones on children's mental health and development is well documented. Excessive exposure to social media platforms increases anxiety, depression and even leads to suicidal ideation.

5. Rationale:

Over the past two years a significant number of studies have been completed providing robust evidence of the harm of smartphones on the learning, behaviour, wellbeing and safety of children when provided with access at an early age.

Many of our parents/carers have expressed their concern about the amount of time their children spend on their smart phone or other tech devices. Many pupils estimate their screen time is more than three hours per day. They are worried, themselves, about the amount of time they spend on their devices, their social media addiction, the impact on their mental health, taking time away from their social activities and hobbies and the adverse effect phones have on their concentration.

The school is responsible for safeguarding pupils during the school day; this has become increasingly difficult due to pupils coming into school with smart devices that potentially have harmful or inappropriate content on them and functions that enable inappropriate behaviour or cyberbullying e.g. access to social media, photo and video capability.

6. All pupils - Primary, Secondary, Post 16 and Pod.

Parents/carers who wish their child to carry a mobile phone to school must adhere to the following:

The phone must be one of the following types: Nokia 105 (approx. £13.50), Samsung E1200 (approx. £69) or Alcatel 10.16G (approx. £19.99) or other phone that must have:

- No potential to access the internet

Mobile Phone Policy

- No photo or recording capability
- No access to any apps.

Any non-approved phone will be classified as a 'prohibited phone' and confiscated (see below).

The phone must be clearly marked with the pupil's name

The phone must be switched off before the pupil enters the school site and placed in their school bag or Post 16 locker. Phones should not be in pockets.

The phone must not be brought out of a pupil's bag or locker at any point during the school day and should only be used after school when the pupil is away from the school site.

The phone remains the responsibility of the pupil at all times and the school will not take action if it is lost or stolen.

In addition to smartphones, all smart watches and any other devices that can enable a pupil to access the internet are prohibited. If such devices are discovered/seen, then the same sanction will be given as for a prohibited phone on the school site.

Any phone that is seen outside of a school bag or locker or heard during the school day, whether school approved or otherwise will automatically be confiscated (please see consequences section for information on confiscation periods)

Air tags or the equivalent are permitted if parents or carers want to track their child's location.

Reasonable adjustments and flexibility will be made for certain disabilities or medical conditions. In each instance this needs to be prearranged with the school and the school will work with parents and carers to determine the specific needs of each pupil on an individual basis. Only the Headteacher may exempt a pupil from this policy.

7. **Searching for devices**

There may be occasions where a member of staff is required to search a pupil's personal belongings to look for a mobile phone or other banned item, if this is deemed necessary to maintain high standards of behaviour and a safe environment. Any such search will be conducted in accordance with the DfE guidance on searching and screening.

If during a search an 'approved basic phone' is found it will not be confiscated provided it is found switched off.

All prohibited phones and approved basic phones that are not switched off and in a school bag will automatically be confiscated as part of a search. This confiscation will follow the consequence process. (Indicated later in the policy).

Mobile Phone Policy

Pupils that have previously brought banned items into school including smart phones are subject to periodical bag searches as part of their ongoing risk assessment to always ensure the highest levels of safeguarding.

8. Immediate confiscation.

Any phone that is seen outside of a school bag or heard during the school day (approved or otherwise) will automatically be confiscated.

Any prohibited phone which is seen before or after school, within sight of the school entrances will automatically be confiscated.

9. Consequences

Any phone (excluding phones used for certain disabilities or medical conditions) that is seen outside of a school bag or heard during the school day (school approved basic phone or otherwise) will automatically be confiscated. This includes phones that have been heard from within a pupil's uniform or bag.

When a phone is confiscated, it will be handed in at reception and locked away.

When an approved basic phone is confiscated, it will be securely locked away until collection by a parent/carer.

Prohibited phones will be securely locked away and returned after two weeks of term time.

If the two weeks ends during a school holiday, pupil will receive their phone back on return to school.

There will be no option for the SIM card to be removed – it will be confiscated and kept along with the phone.

If needed, the pupil will be allowed to use a school phone to contact their parents/carers before they leave the school.

A pupil refusing to hand over their phone will be immediately taken to internal isolation and parent/carer will be requested to support the confiscation of the phone.

A pupil that continues to refuse to hand over their phone by the end of the day will be given a 1-day fixed term exclusion and will have to hand over their smartphone for confiscation on return from the exclusion. Failure to do so will result in further exclusions until the phone is handed over.

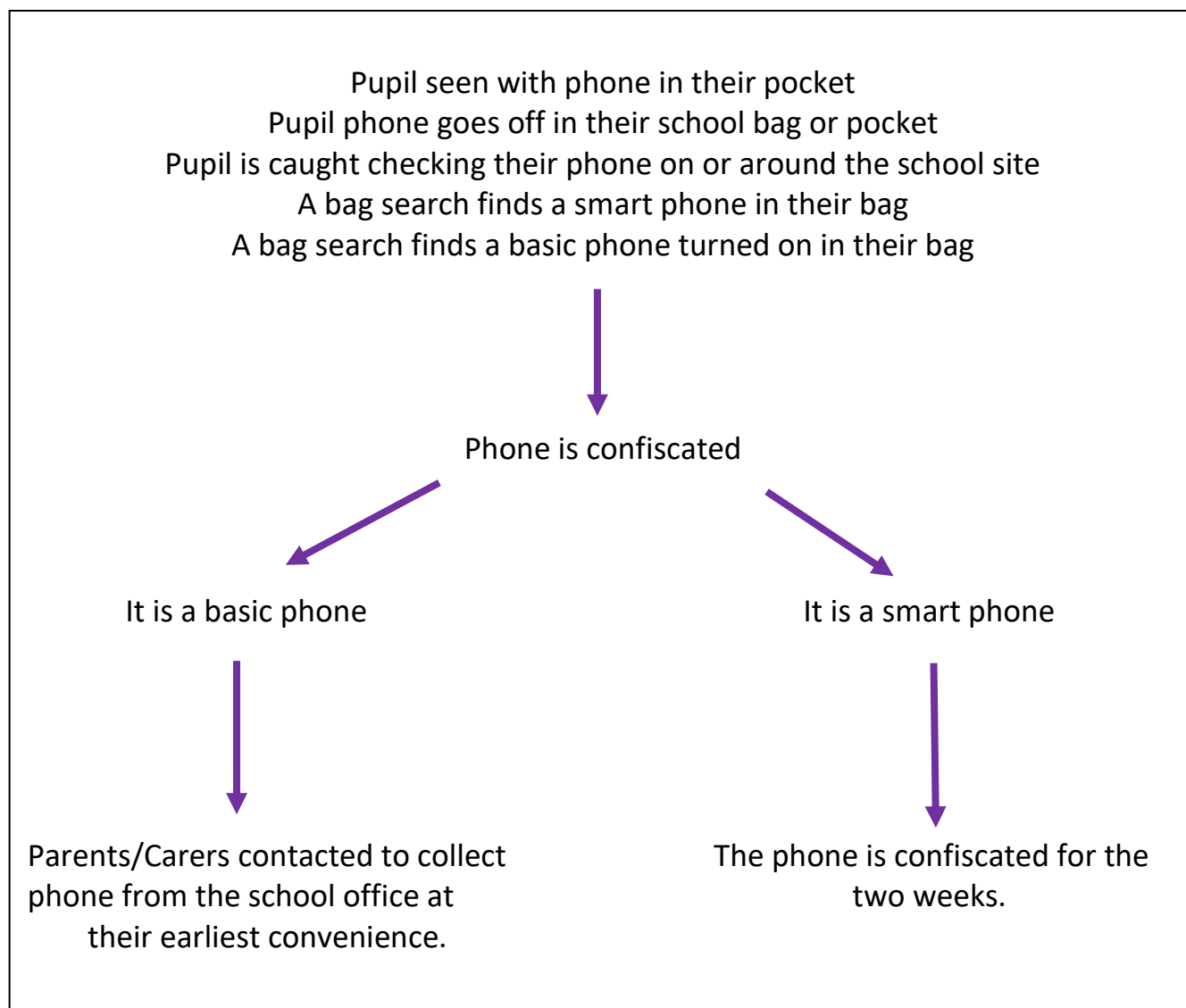
Mobile Phone Policy

10. Trips and Residentials

The school's smartphone policy remains the same on all enrichments and residentials.

On residentials pupils can have access to their non-smartphone during social times. However, 'family rules' apply overnight with all basic phones being handed to the staff member to keep overnight.

Appendix 1: Consequence Flow Diagram



Mobile Phone Policy

Appendix 2: Smartphone-Free School: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How other schools across the UK have successfully implemented a 'basic phones only' policy and addressed common concerns

1. Do schools have a legal right to keep a child's phone?

Yes, the DfE guidance encourages schools to remove smartphones from the school day and allows schools to confiscate property. As part of the consultation process, we have spoken to our local police team who have confirmed we have a legal right to do so and that they support our right to confiscate property as this is a civil matter and supported by DfE guidance. Ofsted supports schools' rights to confiscation of banned items in line with the DfE guidance.

[DfE documentation: Searching, Screening and Confiscation](#)

2. How can I contact my child if they do not have a smartphone?

There will be no change during school hours, as pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones during this time. If communication is required, it should be directed through the school office, as per existing protocols. Importantly, this is not a total ban on mobile phones. If you feel it is necessary for your child to have a means of communication during their journey to and from school, a basic (non-smart) phone enables this while avoiding the risks associated with smartphone use. This approach supports a safer and more focused school environment by reducing exposure to potential harms from both their own and others' smartphones.

3. I want to be able to track my child.

Tracking solutions are available that do not involve smartphones. Devices such as Apple AirTags or similar alternatives allow parents and carers to monitor a child's location at school and to and from school using Bluetooth connectivity. These only work if within 30m of an internet-enabled device so are only suitable in urban or suburban settings. For rural settings a tracker using GPS or cellular connectivity allows parents to track their children without exposing them to the harms of mobile internet access, cameras, social media and other addictive-by-design technology.

4. My child's smartphone has parental controls— isn't that safe enough?

While parental controls can be helpful, they are not foolproof. A recent Parentkind poll revealed that 47% of children with parental controls had managed to bypass them. Schools cannot verify or monitor the settings on every pupil's device and must consider broader risks, including exposure to appropriate content via other pupils' phones, being photographed or filmed without consent at school and having the content shared or uploaded to the internet. Smartphones are designed to be engaging and, in many cases, addictive. With children receiving hundreds of notifications daily, it is unrealistic to expect parents and carers to monitor all activity. A smartphone-free school environment minimizes these risks and helps protect children's mental well-being and development.

Mobile Phone Policy

5. Do I have to buy a basic phone for my child?

No, there is no obligation to provide your child with any phone. However, if you wish to maintain communication with your child after they have left the school site, a basic mobile phone is an affordable option. These devices typically cost between £15– £50 new, and under £10 second-hand. Pay-as-you-go SIM cards are often free, and contracts offering unlimited calls and texts can be found for as little as £3–£4 per month. As they do not use mobile data, ongoing costs remain low.

6. I want to decide when my child gets a smartphone.

Absolutely. Parents and carers know their children best and should make decisions about smartphone use based on their own judgment. A smartphone-free school policy supports this by maintaining a neutral environment. Parents and carers who feel their child is ready for a smartphone can introduce one at home, while those who feel their child is not yet emotionally prepared can send them to school with the confidence that they won't be exposed to inappropriate content or peer pressure from other pupils' devices or be photographed or filmed without consent. This approach not only helps to safeguard children at school, it helps level the playing field, reducing social pressure and preventing any pupil from feeling excluded—whether they have a smartphone or not.

7. My child has a medical condition or special educational need and requires a phone.

If there are exceptional circumstances that necessitate your child having access to a phone during the school day, please contact the school directly to discuss appropriate arrangements. The Headteacher will make the final decision.

8. Don't pupils need smartphones for homework?

This is a common misconception. There is no requirement for pupils to own a smartphone in secondary school. If homework requires internet access, parents and carers are free to choose the most appropriate device for home use. This may be a smartphone, tablet, or computer—whichever suits your household best. Pupils also have daily access to computers before school, break, lunchtime and homework club after school in the library. However, to clarify: no pupil is required to have a smartphone to complete school work during the school day or on their journey to and from school.