SIR JOHN THURSBY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Mobile Phone Policy

Reviewed:	September 2026
Date approved by Governors:	**To be reviewed 9th December 2026**
To be reviewed:	**September 2027**
Person Responsible:	Deputy Headteacher

AMBITION
RESPECT
BELONGING

www.sirjohnthursby.lancs.sch.uk

Contents

1. Introduction and aims....3
2. Relevant guidance....3
3. Roles and responsibilities....3
4. Use of mobile phones by staff....4
5. Use of mobile phones by pupils....5
6. Loss, theft or damage....7
7. Monitoring and review....8
8. Appendix 1: Code of conduct / acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances....9
9. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school....10
10. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors....11

1. Introduction and aims

At Sir John Thursby Community College our policy aims to:

- Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones, where applicable
- Provide clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour
- Ensure a safe and distraction-free learning environment

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Risk of theft, loss or damage
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes
- Mental health and social media use

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, and the Department of Education (DfE)'s mobile phone guidance and behaviour guidance. Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy includes Keeping Children Safe in Education, which sets out the expectation that all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are required to actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Deputy Headteacher (Standards and pupil experience) is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every 3 years and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

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

3.2 Governors

This policy is part of the general behaviour principles. Governors have delegated responsibility for this to the Headteacher.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. All schools should be mobile-free environments by default: anything other than this should be by exception only.

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone during the school day in any area used by students. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom or workrooms).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time, for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The Headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number (01282 682313) as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to provide personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Gemini).

The use of mobile phones is also covered under the acceptable use of IT agreement which staff are required to sign each year.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including by connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website to avoid unwanted contact by parents/cares or pupils.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school's equipment.

4.4 Work phones

Some staff are provided with a work-managed mobile phone to use for work purposes. These are used in conjunction with an app "Linkus" which connects mobile and desktop phones as a single network. These are centrally managed devices. These devices are used for:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Use of tracking behaviour apps
- Contact with families
- Internal contact through the "Linkus" system
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil
- If using phones to contact parents/carers, staff must maintain our usual professional standard of conduct.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that the use of mobile phones should be prohibited throughout the school day.

Pupils must not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

Pupils are expected to follow the following procedure if they bring a phone for use on the way to or from school.

- Pupils must place their phone in a sealable Yondr pouch and seal it before coming to their designated door
- The pouch is sealed using the magnetic release points on flag poles on the main drive
- All pupils are scanned at the door from 0820 and must show that their phone (if present) is in a sealed pouch
- Sharing pouches is not permitted
- Phones must be kept sealed throughout the school day
- Phones can get released from pouches on leaving the site using the release points on flagpoles
- If a phone is found during the school day it must be handed in and the appropriate sanction from the behaviour policy is followed. In most cases this would need to be collected by a family member at the end of the following day.

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to make sure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Pupils will be encouraged to see a mobile phone-free environment as desirable and valuable.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's statutory mobile phones guidance includes in the term "mobile phones" all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in its policy.

Smart watches are treated as mobile phones and are not permitted, managed as listed in section 5 above.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

There are limited circumstances where pupils may be permitted to have a mobile phone. This is managed on a case-by-case basis and kept under review from the pastoral teams. Under these circumstances some pupils will be permitted to possess, or use, a mobile phone/smart device in school.

For instance:

- Young carers who need to be contactable
- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood glucose levels

5.3 Sanctions

Mobile phones found in school will need to be handed in and may be confiscated (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

If they are confiscated, they are to be collected by a family member. In most cases this will be the same day or the following day. This is supported by the DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools

The sanctions for repeated mobile phone breaches are covered under the wider behaviour policy.

Pupils will also be searched under the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows for searching a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so – for example, if there is suspicion that is has been used in school for purposes such as sharing images, accessing inappropriate content or bullying other pupils.

In each case the sanction given will be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs (SEND), disability
- The pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in Keeping Children Safe

in Education. This will include speaking with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy, who will consider whether pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care in appropriate.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Making of or sharing nudes and semi-nudes including images that are digitally altered or wholly generated using AI (such as "deepfakes" or "deep nudes")
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

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

Parents and carers are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this policy at home as appropriate, including the risk associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must 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's at a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

Parents/carers, 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.

Parents/cares must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the school day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must make sure that their phones are locked in the Yondr pouch and they take full responsibility for the device.

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

Confiscated phones will be appropriately labelled and stored in the school safe in the school office until collection.

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to making sure that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the DfE, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

9. Appendix 1: Code of conduct / acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Pupil code of conduct / acceptable use agreement

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone throughout the school day, including lessons times, in between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, unless a teacher specifically allows you to for a specific reason
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent')
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent
6. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the school's behaviour policy. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating other pupils or staff via:
    a. Email
    b. Text/messaging app
    c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence. For instance, by making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes (including AI-generated images or deepfakes)
9. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

Use this form if you don't normally allow pupils to bring their phones to school but are granting an exception. It should be signed by parents/carers. In secondary schools it may also be appropriate to get pupils to sign.

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s)	

The school has agreed to allow ..... to bring their mobile phone to school because they:

- Travel to and from school alone
- Are a young carer
- Need the phone to support their medical needs
- Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed
- Attend a before or after school activity where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its code of conduct/acceptable use agreement.

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: .....

Pupil signature (where appropriate) .....

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to a staff workroom.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child) or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to a staff workroom.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child) or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to a staff workroom.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child) or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.
