Grove School

Mobile & Smart Technology Policy - Autumn 2026

Grove School: Review autumn 2027

1. Policy aims and scope

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- The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all stakeholders within our school community when using mobile devices and smart technology.
    - Grove School recognizes that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and acknowledges its duty to ensure that all pupils and staff are protected from potential harm when using mobile and smart technology.
- This policy applies to all access to and use of all mobile and smart technology on site; this includes but is not limited to mobile/smart phones and personal devices such as tablets, e-readers, games consoles and wearable technology, such as smart watches and fitness trackers, which facilitate communication or have the capability to record sound and/or images.
- This policy applies to pupils, parents/carers and all staff, including the governing body, leadership team, teachers, support staff, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for, or provide services on behalf of the school (collectively referred to as “staff” in this policy).

2. Links with other policies

- This policy links with several other policies including but not limited to:
    - Anti-bullying policy
    - Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)
    - Behaviour policy
    - Child protection policy (including Online Safety)
    - Staff code of conduct
    - Curriculum policies, such as: Computing and RHE
    - GDPR and data protection policies

3. Safe use of mobile and smart technology expectations

- Grove School recognises that use of mobile and smart technologies is part of everyday life for many pupils, staff and parents/carers.
- Electronic devices of any kind that are brought onto site are the responsibility of the user. All members of our community are advised to:
    - take steps to protect their personal mobile phones or other smart devices from loss, theft or damage; we accept no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of such items on our premises.
    - use passwords/PIN numbers to ensure that unauthorised access, calls or actions cannot be made on personal phones or devices.
- Personal mobile devices and other forms of smart technology are not permitted to be used in specific areas on site; this includes changing rooms, toilets and swimming pools (if visiting other sites).
- The sending of abusive or inappropriate messages or content, including via personal mobile devices and/or smart technology is forbidden by any member of the community; any breaches will be dealt with in line with our anti-bullying, behaviour and child protection policies.
- All staff at Grove School are advised to ensure that their personal mobile and smart technology devices do not contain any content which may be offensive, derogatory or illegal, or which would otherwise contravene our behaviour or child protection policies.

4. School provided mobile phones and devices (e.g. laptops/tablets)

- Staff providing formal remote/online learning will do so using school provided equipment in accordance with our Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)/remote learning.
- School devices (laptops, tablets, phones) will be suitably protected via a passcode/password/PIN and must only be accessed or used by members of staff and/or pupils.
- School devices will always be used in accordance with our staff code of conduct/behaviour policy, online safety, acceptable use of technology policy and other relevant policies.
- Where staff and/or pupils are using school provided devices, they will be informed prior to use via our Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that activity may be monitored for safeguarding reasons and to ensure policy compliance.

5. Staff use of mobile and smart technology

- Members of staff will ensure that use of any mobile and smart technology, including personal phones, wearable technology and other mobile/smart devices, will take place in accordance with the law, as well as relevant school policies and procedures, including confidentiality, child protection, data security, staff behaviour/code of conduct and Acceptable Use Policies.
- Staff will be advised to:
    - Keep personal mobile devices in a safe and secure place (locked in a locker/drawer) during lesson time.
    - Keep personal mobile phones and smart technology devices switched off during lesson times.
    - Ensure that Bluetooth or other forms of communication, such as 'airdrop', are hidden or disabled during lesson times.
    - Not use personal mobile or smart technology devices during teaching periods, unless permission has been given by SLT, such as in emergency circumstances.
    - Ensure that any content bought onto site via personal mobile and smart technology devices is compatible with their professional role and our behaviour expectations.
- Members of staff are not permitted to use their own personal mobile and smart technology devices for contacting pupils or parents and carers.
    - Any pre-existing relationships or circumstance, which could compromise staff's ability to comply with this, will be discussed with the DSL or the Headteacher.
- Staff will only use school provided equipment (not personal devices):
    - to take photos or videos of pupils in line with our image use policy.
    - to work directly with pupils during lessons/educational activities.
    - to communicate with parents/carers.
- Where remote learning activities take place, staff will use school provided equipment. If this is not available, staff will only use personal devices with prior approval from the Headteacher, following a formal risk assessment. Staff will follow clear guidance outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy and/or remote learning AUP.
- If a member of staff breaches our policy, action will be taken in line with our staff code of conduct and child protection policies.
- If a member of staff is thought to have illegal content saved or stored on a personal mobile or other device or have committed a criminal offence using a personal device or mobile phone, the police will be contacted, and the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) will be informed in line with our allegations policy.

6. Pupils use of mobile and smart technology

- Pupils will be educated regarding the safe and appropriate use of mobile and smart technology, including mobile phones and personal devices, and will be made aware of behaviour expectations and consequences for policy breaches.

- Safe and appropriate use of mobile and smart technology will be taught to pupils as part of an embedded and progressive safeguarding education approach using age-appropriate sites and resources. Further information is contained within our child protection, online safety and relevant specific curriculum policies.
- Personal mobile or smart technology devices are not permitted on site for pupils.
    - Grove School will allow children to bring a personal device or mobile phone in if requested by parents for safety reasons when children/young people are transporting to and from school. Parents must seek permission from the head teacher prior to this arrangement commencing.
    - In this case, devices should be turned off and handed into the school office in the morning where the device will be kept secure. They can then be collected at the end of day.
- If a pupil needs to contact their parents or carers whilst on site, they will be allowed to use the school office phone.
    - Parents are advised to contact their child via the school office who will pass a message on to the child.
- If a pupil requires access to personal mobile or smart technology devices in exceptional circumstances, for example medical assistance and monitoring, this will be discussed with the Headteacher prior to use being permitted and will be used under the supervision of an adult.
    - Any arrangements regarding access to personal mobile or smart technology devices in exceptional circumstances will be documented and recorded by the school.
    - Any specific agreements and expectations (including sanctions for misuse) will be provided in writing and agreed by the pupil and their parents/carers before use is permitted.
- Where pupils' personal mobile or smart technology devices are used when learning at home, this will be in accordance with our Acceptable Use Policy.
- Personal mobile or smart technology devices must not be taken into examinations. Pupils found in possession of a mobile phone or personal device which facilitates communication or internet access during a SATS test will be reported to the appropriate examining body. This may result in the withdrawal from either that SAT test or all SAT tests.

6.1 Searching, screening and confiscation of electronic devices

Children should not have any personal mobile or smart technology devices in school, unless in extenuating circumstances agreed by the Headteacher, however if they have brought them into school, this section applies.

- Electronic devices, including mobile phones, can contain files or data which relate to an offence, or which may cause harm to another person. This includes, but is not limited to, indecent images of children, pornography, abusive messages, images or videos, or evidence relating to suspected criminal behaviour.

- Where there are any concerns regarding pupils' use of mobile or smart technology or policy breaches, they will be dealt with in accordance with our existing policies, including anti-bullying, child protection, online safety and behaviour.
- Staff may confiscate a pupils' personal mobile or smart technology device if they believe it is being used to contravene our school policies, for example our child protection or behaviour policy.
- Personal mobile or smart technology devices that have been confiscated will be held in a secure place- (the school office) and released to parents/carers at the end of the day.
- Where a concern involves potentially indecent images/videos of children, including images/videos generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI), on a pupil's personal mobile or smart technology device, staff will respond in line with our child protection policy; they will confiscate devices, avoid looking at any content and refer the incident to the DSL (or deputy) urgently.
- If there is suspicion that data or files on a pupil's personal mobile or smart technology device may be illegal, or may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the device will be confiscated and handed over to the police for further investigation.
- If deemed to be necessary and appropriate, searches of personal mobile or smart technology devices may be carried out in accordance with our behaviour policy and the DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' guidance.
- Staff will respond in line with our child protection policy and follow the most appropriate safeguarding response if they find images, data or files on a pupil's electronic device that they reasonably suspect are likely to put a person at risk.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will always be informed of any searching incidents where authorised members of staff have reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of prohibited items, as identified in our behaviour policy.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be involved without delay if staff believe a search of a pupil's personal mobile or smart technology device has revealed a safeguarding risk.
- In exceptional circumstances and in accordance with our behaviour policy and the DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' guidance, the headteacher or authorised members of staff may examine or request parents to attend a meeting to erase data or files if there is a good reason to do so:
    - In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to examine images, data or files, the Headteacher/DSL or an authorised member of staff will need to reasonably suspect that the images, data or files on the device has been, or could be used, to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.
    - In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to erase any images, data or files from the device, the member of staff should consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence. In those instances, the data or files should not be deleted, and the device must be handed to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.
    - If the data or files are not suspected to be evidence in relation to an offence, the headteacher or an authorised member of staff may request parents to attend a meeting and delete the images, data or files if

the continued existence of the data or file is likely to continue to cause harm to any person and the pupil and/or the parent refuses to delete the data or files themselves.

- If the Headteacher or a member of staff finds any data or files that they suspect might constitute a specified offence, they will be delivered to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable.

7. Visitors' use of mobile and smart technology

- Parents/carers and visitors, including volunteers and contractors, are expected to ensure that:
  - Appropriate signage and information are in place (posters/signage at entry points, leaflets, induction packs) to inform visitors of our expectations for safe and appropriate use of personal mobile or smart technology.
- Visitors, including volunteers and contractors, who are on site for regular or extended periods of time are expected to use mobile and smart technology in accordance with our acceptable use of technology policy and other associated policies, including child protection.
- If visitors require access to mobile and smart technology, for example when working with pupils as part of multi-agency activity, this will be discussed with the Headteacher prior to use being permitted.
- Members of staff are expected to challenge visitors if they have concerns about their use of mobile and smart technology and will inform the DSL of any breaches of our policy.

8. Policy monitoring and review

- Technology evolves and changes rapidly. Grove School will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any local concerns and/or any changes to our technical infrastructure.
- We monitor internet and technology use taking place via all school provided devices and systems and regularly evaluate online safety mechanisms to ensure this policy is consistently applied. Full information about the appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place are detailed in our Child Protection. Any issues identified as part of the implementation of our monitoring approaches will be incorporated into our action planning.

9. Responding to policy breaches

- All staff members are informed of the need to report policy breaches or concerns in line with existing school policies and procedures. This includes child protection, behaviour policy, whistleblowing and online safety policies.
- Where pupils breach this policy:
    - appropriate sanctions and/or pastoral/welfare support will be implemented in line with our behaviour policy.
    - concerns will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate.
    - we will respond in line with our child protection policy, if there is a concern that a child is at risk of harm.
- After any investigations are completed, leadership staff will debrief, identify lessons learnt and implement any policy or curriculum changes, as required.
- We require staff, parents/carers and pupils to work in partnership with us to resolve issues.
- All members of the community will respect confidentiality and the need to follow the official procedures for reporting concerns.
- Pupils' parents and staff will be informed of our complaints procedure and staff will be made aware of the whistleblowing procedure.
- If we are unsure how to proceed with an incident or concern, a DSL or the Headteacher will seek advice from the local authority or other agencies, as appropriate, in accordance with our child protection policy.