



Limehurst Academy Policy Document

Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Policy

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Headteacher's signature:

Chair of Governors' signature:

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1. Introduction and aims

This policy outlines Limehurst’s stance on the use of mobile phones/electronic devices by students.

At Limehurst Academy we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones/watches, are an important part of everyday life for our students, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school’s other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

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

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

Note: throughout this policy, ‘mobile phones’ refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education’s non-statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy.

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 Assistant Headteacher Pastoral is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and students 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

The Governor with safeguarding jurisdiction is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and students accountable for its implementation.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

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, while children are present and/or during lesson time. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where students are not present (such as the staffroom).

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, 01509 263444, as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process 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 Bard).

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found at [Data Protection Policy 25/26](#).

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or students, including 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/carers or students.

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

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Calling the remove phone
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

This is in conjunction with our Education Trips and Visits policy [Education Trips and Visits Policy](#).

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 students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4.5 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by students

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance states that students should not use mobile phone throughout the school day.

Limehurst has not implemented an outright ban of mobile phones or electronic devices (such as tablet computers, kindles and so on). We are aware that students have phones for emergency reasons but have preferred a **"No See, No Hear"** approach. It is required that mobile phones/electronic devices are switched off and out of sight during the school day. (8.30am - 3.10pm). Mobile phones/electronic devices must not be seen or heard once students enter the school gates in the morning, until they leave the school gates at the end of the day.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [non-statutory mobile phone guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

Like our stance on mobile phones, smartwatches must not be used to replace a mobile phone.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

The following are special circumstances in which a student may be allowed to use their mobile phone in school:

- Students travelling to school by themselves
- Young carers who need to be contactable
- Students with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar

The school may permit students to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, students or parents/carers should contact their relevant Head of Year.

5.3 Sanctions

If a mobile phone/electronic device is seen or heard in school (including break and lunch time) then the following sanctions will occur:

1st log in a half term = warning to student. A note will be added to their Arbor profile, and an email informing the parent/carer will also be sent home.

2nd log in a half term = 1st confiscation. The device will be collected by students Head of Year and passed to reception, where the student can collect it at the end of the school day. A note will be added to their Arbor profile, and an email informing the parent/carer will also be sent home.

3rd log in a half term = 2nd confiscation. The device will be collected by students Head of Year and passed to reception for 1 week. A note will be added to their Arbor profile, and an email informing the parent/carer will also be sent home.

4th log in a half term = 3rd confiscation. The device will be collected by students Head of Year and passed to reception for the remainder of the half-term. A note will be added to their Arbor profile, and an email informing the parent/carer will also be sent home.

Any refusal to hand a phone over to members of staff will result in a sanction for defiance, as this would constitute the refusal of a reasonable request by a member of staff.

In addition to the above, staff do have the power to search students' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows schools to search a student's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

If inappropriate content is found on a phone, or if it is suspected that inappropriate behaviour with the use of a mobile phone has taken place, the item will be confiscated and parents/carers contacted to arrange a meeting to discuss.

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

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, disability)
- The student'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 Part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

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:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- 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/carers, volunteers and visitors

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 students, 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, or when working with students

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/carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for students using their phones, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

Parents/carers 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

Students bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are switched off and out of sight.

Students must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

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 students are travelling to and from school. This will be highlighted by signs being on display in the school entrance and/or office.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked cabinet. Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents/carers and students
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents

- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of Mr Smith, Assistant Headteacher, in a timely manner.