HIGHAM LANE
NORTH ACADEMY

Mobile Phone Policy



Policy Number	40
Approval Date	February 2026
Review Date	February 2028
Chair of Governors	K Hobbs
Statutory Policy	No

CONTENTS **PAGE**

1. Introduction 3
2. Guidance 3
3. Roles and Responsibilities 3
4. How will we ensure our school remains a mobile-phone-free zone 3-4
5. Use of mobiles phones by students 4
6. Use of smart watches by students 4
7. Use of AI Glasses by anyone on school premises 4
8. Safeguarding Information for Parents 5
9. Reasonable Adjustment 5
10. The Role of Parents/Carers 6
11. Sanctions 6-7
12. Confiscation 7
13. Use of mobile phones by staff 8
14. Data Protection 8
15. Safeguarding Information for Staff 8
16. Using personal mobiles for work purposes 8
17. Failure to adhere to the policy 9

1. Introduction

Higham Lane North Academy is a **mobile phone free zone.**

Mobile phones now include many additional functions such as an integrated camera, video recording capability, instant messaging, mobile office applications and mobile access to the internet. These allow immediate access to email, searching for information on the internet and other functions such as access to social networking sites. These functions can pose a risk to the maintenance of good discipline, the focus on learning and, crucially, the wellbeing and effective safeguarding of students in schools.

2. Guidance

This policy has been developed in consideration of:

- DfE 'Mobile phones in schools' - Guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day (January 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- DfE guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation - Advice for Headteachers, School Staff and Governing Bodies (July 2022)
- Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights
- Education Act 1996

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 Deputy Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, and alongside the headteacher and the governing body, reviewing it, 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.

4. How we will ensure our school remains a mobile-phone-free zone

To maintain a calm, safe and focused learning environment, Higham Lane North Academy will enforce this policy consistently and fairly. We will ensure our school remains mobile-phone-free through the following actions:

4.1 Education for Students, Parents and Carers

We will regularly explain *why* this policy is in place so that students, parents and carers understand the risks associated with mobile phone use both in school and beyond. These risks include loss of focus in lessons, disruption to learning, safeguarding concerns and increased opportunities for bullying. Ensuring that the whole school community understands the reasons behind the policy supports high levels of compliance and safety.

4.2 Supportive Reminders

Staff will provide clear, calm reminders during line-up, transitions and tutor time to reinforce expectations that mobile phones must remain switched off and kept in bags at all times.

4.3 Sanctions and Reflection

Where students do not meet these expectations, appropriate sanctions will be applied in line with the school behaviour policy. Students will also complete reflection activities to help them understand why their actions were inappropriate and how to make better choices in future.

4.4 Spot Checks

House Champions and members of the Senior Leadership Team will carry out routine spot checks to ensure that mobile phones are switched off and stored correctly out of sight. These checks help maintain consistency and reinforce the mobile-free culture across the school.

5. Use of Mobile Phones by students

Mobile phones and electronic devices are banned from use on the school site. Any that have been brought to school must be switched off and placed in the student's bag before they enter the school site until they have left the school site. It is not acceptable for phones merely to be put on silent; they must be switched off. Phones must also not be visible at any point. Any student who fails to turn their mobile phone off and place it in their bag while on the school site will have their phone confiscated.

Students should not need to use a mobile phone whilst on school premises. In exceptional circumstances if a student should need to make a phone call within the school grounds, they can either:

- ask a member of office staff if they can use the school phone network
- report to the school office (before school, break time or after school) and ask if they can switch their mobile phone on to make the call.

DfE Guidance is clear that schools should have a 'never used, seen or heard' approach to mobile phones and that the consequence for breaking this expectation is at the discretion of the school but that it should be "sufficient to act as an effective deterrent".

6. Use of Smart Watches by students

It is expected that Smart Watches, watches with functionality beyond just 'telling the time', are kept on 'flight mode' in school. If a student is suspected of using a smart watch during a lesson, they will be asked to show that it is in flight mode. If it is not, the watch will be confiscated. Similarly, they will be asked to confirm that their mobile phone is off. If the phone is not off, then the phone will also be confiscated.

7. Use of AI glasses by anyone on school premises

Higham Lane North Academy recognises that emerging technologies - including AI-enabled glasses - may pose similar risks to mobile phones in terms of distraction, safeguarding, and misuse.

AI glasses can record, photograph, or analyse information discreetly. To protect the privacy and wellbeing of students and staff, the recording, scanning, or capturing of images or data is strictly forbidden.

AI glasses (including any glasses with built-in cameras, microphones, display screens, augmented-reality features, or internet-enabled functions) are **not permitted** to be worn or used by anyone on the school premises, anywhere on the school site at any point during the day.

8. Safeguarding Information for Parents

Parents and carers often express concern that the confiscation of a mobile phone creates a safeguarding risk. A safeguarding risk means that a child is at risk of abuse or harm as a result of a known concern. It is highly unlikely that a child having their phone confiscated increases the risk of harm or abuse occurring.

Higham Lane North Academy recognises that the presence of a phone can provide reassurance for a parent / carer on the journey to or from school. For this reason, students will receive regular reminders about the importance of compliance with this policy. If a child is concerned about getting home on the day the phone is confiscated, they will be able to use school phone lines, via Reception to contact home.

9. Reasonable Adjustments

Higham Lane North Academy recognises its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the requirement to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities or additional needs. Where a pupil has an identified need recorded in their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or supported by medical evidence, the school may permit specific adjustments to the mobile phone policy to ensure the pupil's safety, access to learning, and wellbeing.

In some cases, a pupil may require their mobile phone to be switched on during the school day for essential medical or disability-related purposes.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Pupils with Type 1 Diabetes who use a mobile phone as part of their glucose monitoring system
- Pupils who use an app-based medical alert or monitoring tool
- Pupils with additional needs where assistive technology is required and agreed through their EHCP

Where such an adjustment is authorised:

- The phone must be used solely for the agreed medical or accessibility purpose.
- The device should not be used for messaging, calls, camera use, notifications, games, social media, or any other non-approved function.
- The pupil must follow the arrangements agreed by the SENCo, medical team, and parents/carers.
- Misuse of the device may result in the school reviewing, amending, or withdrawing the adjustment.

Approval Process:

To ensure adjustments are fair, appropriate, and safe:

1. A parent/carer must request the adjustment through the **SENCo** or **Pastoral Team**.
2. The school will review medical evidence and the pupil's EHCP (where applicable).
3. A written plan will be recorded and shared with relevant staff so that expectations are clear.
4. Adjustments will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain necessary and effective.

10. The Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers have an important role in supporting the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and should be encouraged to reinforce and discuss the policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment. Where parents/carers need to contact their child during the school day, they should contact the school office, who are responsible for relaying messages and facilitating contact. Parents and carers should support the school and their child in following this policy by not contacting them on their mobile phone during the school day under any circumstances.

11. Sanctions

Any student mobile phone, electronic device, earphones or headphones that are visible inside the school grounds will be confiscated, placed in an envelope and securely locked away. If the mobile phone is not seen but it is evident that a student, however discretely, has used a mobile phone, or has not turned the phone off, we will confiscate the phone.

- Once a phone is confiscated, it will not be returned during the school day under any circumstances. The student will be expected to hand their mobile phone into a member of the Senior Leadership Team when they arrive on site or take it directly to the school office where it will be kept each school day until the student leaves the school site. If a child's phone has been confiscated for a second time in the academic year and they are reliant on their phone for communication with home, or for accessing their travel ticket, or online learning, this will only serve to reinforce why they must ensure they are compliant with school expectations.

- If a student has their phone confiscated for the first time in the half term, they will be able to collect their mobile phone/electronic device on Friday at 3.15pm (unless they are attending a club or have received a reflection) from the school reception.

- 'Headteachers are backed by the DfE to confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate' (extract from DfE 'Mobile phones in schools' - Guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day – January 2026). Confiscation until the end of the week is considered proportionate as the alternative of returning the phone on the same day would be no different to the student having followed the school rules in the first place.

- In the event of a second incident in an academic year, or in the case of serious misuse, an appointment must be made by a parent/carer to visit a member of the Pastoral Team in order to collect the phone. The phone will not be returned to the student in these cases. A longer confiscation will be issued, the length of which will be determined dependent on what the misuse involved.

- If there is a third incident in an academic year, or in the case of a first-time serious misuse, the Headteacher may impose either a lengthy fixed term or permanent ban on bringing a mobile phone into school.

- All mobile phones that have been confiscated will be clearly identified and stored in the school safe. A message will be placed on ClassCharts to inform parents/carers that the phone has been confiscated.

- If a student refuses to comply with any staff request for confiscation, they will receive a more serious sanction of an R3. If they continue to refuse to hand over their phone for any reason, the circumstances will be reviewed, and the student may be removed from mainstream learning until the period of confiscation is complete. Under these circumstances the student will also be banned from bringing their phone on to the school site.

- Any student banned from bringing a mobile phone on site will be subjected to occasional or regular searches in line with the Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance (2022). If a banned item is found, it will be confiscated.

- Any student failing to comply with the search may receive a suspension for persistent violation of school rules.

Examples of serious misuse of a phone include (but are not limited to):

- Making a phone call during the school day, including contacting parents or others without staff permission.
- Taking photos or videos of students or staff, including in lessons, corridors, or social spaces.
- Recording audio of students or staff, including recording classroom teaching or private conversations.
- Sharing, uploading, or distributing images, videos, or recordings of students or staff on social media, messaging apps, or any online platform.
- Using a phone to bully, harass, or intimidate others, including sending threatening or abusive messages.
- Accessing or sharing inappropriate, offensive, or illegal content, whether on school premises or during the school day.
- Using the phone to organise or encourage dangerous or disruptive behaviour, such as coordinating fights, truancy, or vandalism.
- Using the phone during an exam, assessment, or test, whether to access information, communicate with others, or store notes.
- Refusing to hand over a phone when instructed by staff or repeatedly ignoring school mobile phone rules.
- Using the device to bypass school safeguarding systems, such as hotspotting, using VPNs, or attempting to access restricted networks.
- Tampering with, unlocking, or accessing another student's or staff member's phone without permission.
- Using the phone to film or post incidents of poor behaviour, conflict, or disruption, including encouraging others to do the same.
- Using the phone in restricted areas that pose a safeguarding risk -such as changing rooms or toilets, under any circumstances.

12. Confiscation

The confiscating member of staff should take the phone to the school office immediately where it will be placed within the school safe. If they are unable to take it immediately, they should request On Call who will take it on their behalf.

13. Use of mobile phones by staff

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 / during contact time]. 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 the office).

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.

14. 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).

For more detailed information on Data Protection please see the school's Data Protection Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

15. Safeguarding Information for Staff

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, 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 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 equipment.

16. 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:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations

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
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

17. Failure to adhere to the policy

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

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