

BEREWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL



Mobile Phone Policy

(Updated to reflect 2026 DfE Guidance)

Spring 2026

Revised by School	March 2026
Responsible Person	Headteacher
Responsible Committee	Full governing body
Ratified by GB	March 2026
Next Review	Spring 2029



BEREWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Introduction

This policy outlines the expectations for mobile phone use across our school community. It reflects the most recent Department for Education (DfE) guidance (updated February 2026), which states that all schools should be mobile-phone-free environments by default throughout the entire school day, including breaktimes and transitions.

Our aim is to maintain a calm, safe and focused learning environment, support safeguarding, and ensure that children interact positively with one another without digital distractions.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or school mobile phones on site. This includes staff, governors, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

Aims

Our aim is that all practitioners:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- know how to minimise risk.
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use.
- are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours.
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

Berewood Primary School acknowledges that rigid rules are not always effective; however, we rely on mutual trust and clear expectations to safeguard pupils and staff.

School Recommendation for a 'Smart-Phone-Free Childhood'

As a school, we **strongly recommend** that families consider supporting a '**smart-phone-free childhood**' for as long as possible. This recommendation is rooted in:

- The growing body of evidence about the impact of smartphones on wellbeing, behaviour, and social development (which underpins recent DfE guidance urging tight restrictions on mobile phone use in school environments).
- National guidance promoting reduced access to mobile phones to support improved behaviour, safety and learning.

We cannot enforce this recommendation, as decisions about personal devices rest with families. However, we encourage parents to consider whether smartphones are necessary at all in primary school and to explore simpler, safer alternatives when needed for communication.

Guidelines

1. Staff Mobile Phone Expectations

1.1 General Use

- Staff must not use, make or receive calls or messages during contact time with children.
- Personal mobile phones should only be used during non-contact time when no children are present.
- Phones must be switched off or on silent and kept out of sight (bag, drawer, pocket) during class time.
- Phones must not be used in areas where children are present unless in an emergency (e.g., Forest School, PE emergencies, offsite visits).

1.2 Safeguarding and Professional Conduct

- Staff must not use personal devices to photograph, video or record children; only school devices may be used.
- Staff must not contact pupils or parents using personal numbers.
- Staff must not send or accept inappropriate images or messages; any incident must be reported to the Headteacher or DSL.
- Staff must never photograph children's injuries.

1.3 Reporting

- Any mobile-phone-related concerns must be reported to the Headteacher.
- Breaches may result in action under the Whistleblowing Policy.

2. Mobile Phones for Work-Related Purposes

- Phones may be used on off-site school activities, but only professionally and **never** to photograph pupils (except on school devices).
- Staff must not contact parents directly from personal phones during trips except in an emergency; communication should go through the office.
- Parents joining trips must be informed (via the risk assessment) that they may not use phones to contact others or take photographs of children.

3. Pupil Mobile Phone Expectations

The DfE guidance states that schools should prohibit mobile phone use entirely throughout the school day and create environments where phones are **never used, seen or heard**.

3.1 Year 5 and Year 6 Pupils

Year 5 and 6 pupils may bring a mobile phone *only when necessary* (e.g., independent travel). Phones must:

1. Be switched off before entering school grounds.

2. Be out of sight at all times.
3. Be handed to the class teacher upon entering the classroom.

Phones will be stored securely and returned at home time.

3.2 Year Groups R–4

Pupils in Nursery to Year 4 must not bring mobile phones to school.

Where an exceptional circumstance exists (e.g., after-school transport needs):

- The phone must be switched off before entering the school site, and
- Handed into the school office on arrival and collected at the end of the day.

3.3 Misuse and Consequences (All Pupils)

- A phone seen or used on site will be confiscated and stored in the office; parents will be informed.
- Taking photos or videos of pupils or staff is a serious offence and will result in consequences in line with the behaviour policy.
- Any images taken must be deleted in the presence of a senior teacher and, where appropriate, a parent.
- If mobile phones are used to bully or intimidate (on or off site), the school may intervene as part of its behaviour responsibilities, consistent with DfE guidance on regulating behaviour beyond school premises.

4. Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

- All visitors must follow staff expectations regarding mobile phone use.
- Phones may not be used in the presence of pupils.
- No photography or recording of pupils is permitted.

5. Parents and Carers

- Mobile phones must be **switched off** when visiting school unless at authorised events (e.g., performances, sports day).
- When permitted to take photos/videos of their own child, parents must not share images of other children online or on social media.
- Usage on school site must remain respectful, discreet, and appropriate.
- Staff will challenge inappropriate mobile phone use and report it to senior staff.

Dissemination

- The policy will be shared during induction with staff and volunteers.
- It will be available to parents on the school website.

Monitoring and Review

The school will consider:

- Feedback from staff, parents and pupils
- Behaviour and safeguarding records
- Relevant DfE guidance updates, including the most recent 2024–2026 publications encouraging mobile-phone-free school environments and inspected policy enforcement