

Emmanuel Anglican/Methodist Junior Academy



‘Be Respectful, Be Courageous, Be Safe’

Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy 2026-2027

Approved by:	DSAT Trust Board
--------------	------------------

Last reviewed on:	Summer 2026
-------------------	-------------

Next review due by:	Summer 2027
---------------------	-------------



THE
DIOCESE OF
SHEFFIELD
ACADEMIES
TRUST

Contents

1. Introduction and aims
2. Scope and definitions
3. Legal and guidance framework
4. Roles and responsibilities
5. Staff use of mobile phones and smart technology
6. Pupil use of mobile phones and smart technology
7. Exceptions and reasonable adjustments
8. Breaches, sanctions, confiscation and searching
9. Parents, carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors
10. Educational visits, clubs and activities outside the normal day
11. Safeguarding, privacy, data protection and online incidents
12. Loss, theft and damage
13. Communication, education and implementation
14. Monitoring, equality impact and review
15. Related policies

Appendices 1-4

Key principle

Emmanuel Junior Academy is a mobile phone-free environment by default. Pupils must not have access to or use mobile phones (including smart technology) at any point throughout the school day. Any exception is individual, documented, necessary and tightly controlled.

1. Introduction and aims

The Diocese of Sheffield Academies Trust (DSAT) and Emmanuel Anglican/Methodist Junior Academy are committed to providing a calm, safe and supportive environment in which pupils can learn, flourish and build positive relationships. This policy supports the school's Christian vision and the Emmanuel Way: *Be Respectful, Be Courageous, Be Safe*.

In accordance with statutory Department for Education guidance effective from 1 September 2026, the academy is mobile phone-free by default. The use of mobile phones and other included smart technology is prohibited throughout the school day, including lessons, transitions, breaktimes and lunchtimes. This policy is aligned with the school's **Behaviour Policy 2026-2027**.

The aims are to:

- remove digital distraction and protect teaching, learning and social time;
- reduce opportunities for bullying, harassment, unauthorised recording and access to harmful content;
- set clear, consistent and practical expectations for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors;
- ensure that exceptional access is available where required for medical needs, disability, SEND, safeguarding or other compelling individual circumstances;
- provide lawful, fair and proportionate arrangements for responding to breaches;
- support responsible, safe and lawful use of technology beyond the school day.

2. Scope and definitions

This policy applies on the school site, during the school day, at Breakfast Club and after-school clubs, on school transport where applicable, and during school-organised activities, educational visits and residentials, subject to any specific written arrangements communicated in advance.

For this policy, "mobile phone" includes any personal communication or smart device with similar functionality. This includes, but is not limited to:

- mobile and satellite phones;
- smartwatches and wearable devices capable of messaging, calling, notifications, internet access, location sharing, audio recording, image capture or video recording;
- smart glasses, including devices with cameras, microphones, voice assistants or live-streaming capability;

- tablets, personal computers, handheld gaming devices, earbuds or other devices where they can communicate, record, connect to networks or receive notifications;
- any emerging technology with comparable communication, capture, tracking, recording or live-streaming functions.

A conventional watch without communication, recording or internet capability is not included. Academy-owned equipment used under staff direction is governed by the academy's acceptable-use, online-safety and data-protection arrangements.

3. Legal and guidance framework

This policy has been prepared with regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, section 36](#)
- [DfE statutory guidance: Mobile phones in schools, updated 29 June 2026](#)
- [DfE guidance: Behaviour in schools, February 2024](#)
- [DfE guidance: Searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)
- [UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Education and Inspections Act 2006, including sections 91 and 94](#)

The February 2024 Behaviour in Schools guidance is non-statutory advice, while the mobile phone guidance became statutory on 29 June 2026 and schools should follow it from 1 September 2026. This policy must be read with the school Behaviour Policy and safeguarding arrangements.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 DSAT Trust Board

- approves the Trust policy framework and ensures it reflects statutory guidance and legal duties;
- assures itself that academies have clear implementation arrangements and appropriate safeguarding, equality and data-protection controls;
- receives assurance through established trust governance and safeguarding arrangements.

4.2 Headteacher

- implements this policy consistently and ensures alignment with the Behaviour Policy;
- decides whether an individual exception or reasonable adjustment is necessary and ensures it is recorded and reviewed;
- authorises staff who may search for devices in accordance with law and DfE guidance;
- ensures staff, pupils and families understand the rules and consequences;
- monitors incidents, patterns, equality impact and the effectiveness of arrangements;
- reports relevant information to DSAT and the Local School Board.

4.3 Local School Board

The Local School Board provides support and challenge, monitors implementation and impact, and seeks assurance that the policy is fair, consistent and compliant with safeguarding, equality and SEND duties.

4.4 All staff

- model the academy's expectations and actively enforce the policy promptly, predictably and consistently;
- do not use personal phones for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day;
- report breaches, safeguarding concerns, suspected criminal conduct and data-protection incidents without delay;
- apply reasonable adjustments and agreed individual arrangements;
- use only academy-approved systems and equipment for pupil information, images and recordings.

4.5 Pupils and parents/carers

Pupils must follow the school's rules and comply with a reasonable request to switch off or hand over a device. Parents/carers are expected to reinforce the policy, ensure permitted devices are labelled and switched off, and contact pupils through the school office during the school day.

5. Staff use of mobile phones and smart technology

5.1 Personal use

Staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors must not use personal mobile phones or included smart technology for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day.

Devices must be stored securely and used only during non-contact time in staff-only areas where pupils are not present.

In exceptional personal circumstances, such as urgent contact concerning an acutely ill dependent, the Headteacher may agree a time-limited arrangement. The school office number, 0114 248 3048, should ordinarily be used for emergency contact.

5.2 Work-related use and academy devices

A personal device may be used in front of pupils only where the use is necessary for an authorised professional purpose, such as multi-factor authentication, emergency evacuation or an agreed educational-visit arrangement, and where no suitable academy device is reasonably available. Use must be brief, transparent and professional.

- Staff must never use a personal device to photograph, film or make audio recordings of pupils, pupils' work or information that identifies a pupil.
- Staff must not use personal contact details to communicate with pupils or parents/carers, connect through social media or messaging apps, or give families personal telephone numbers.
- Personal devices must not be used to process or store personal data or confidential school information, including entering such information into unapproved generative AI tools or chatbots.

- Academy-owned devices must be used only by authorised staff, secured with appropriate access controls and used in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use Policy and data-protection requirements.

5.3 Staff breaches

A staff breach may be managed under the Staff Code of Conduct, safeguarding procedures, data-breach procedures and, where appropriate, DSAT disciplinary arrangements.

6. Pupil use of mobile phones and smart technology

Academy rule

Pupils must not have access to or use a mobile phone or included smart technology at any point from arrival on the school site until they have left the site at the end of their school day or school activity, unless an individual written exception expressly permits a specific use.

6.1 Bringing a phone to the school

Wherever possible, devices should remain at home. A pupil in Year 5 or Year 6 may bring one mobile phone only where it is essential for the journey to or from the school, for example where the pupil travels independently. Any other arrangement requires the Headteacher's prior written agreement.

6.2 Daily hand-in and collection procedure

1. The phone must be switched off before the pupil enters the school site. Silent, vibrate, airplane mode or "do not disturb" is not sufficient.
2. On entering the classroom, the pupil must immediately hand the switched-off, clearly labelled phone to the class teacher.
3. The device will be placed in the class's secure zip-locked storage bag and transferred by an adult to the school office after registration for secure storage.
4. Pupils attending Breakfast Club must hand the device to the Breakfast Leader on arrival. These are stored in a secure zip-locked bag and handed over to the school office for secure storage.
5. The device will be returned when the pupil leaves at the end of the school day. Pupils attending an after-school club collect it from the office when leaving the club.
6. The phone must remain switched off until the pupil has left the school site.

Pupils must not bring smartwatches, smart glasses or other included smart technology to the school unless the Headteacher has authorised an individual exception. A device used solely for an authorised medical purpose will be managed under section 7.

6.3 Learning about safe and responsible use

Pupils will be taught, in age-appropriate ways, about distraction, disrupted learning, bullying, harmful content, privacy, location sharing, scams, image sharing, online reputation and the impact of online actions. They will also be taught the benefits of a mobile phone-free

environment and encouraged to value focused learning, conversation, play and positive relationships.

7. Exceptions and reasonable adjustments

Exceptions are not automatic and will be considered case by case. The school will comply with the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014, its duties to support pupils with medical conditions, and its safeguarding responsibilities.

An exception may be considered where access is necessary for:

- a disability-related reasonable adjustment;
- management of a medical condition, for example continuous glucose monitoring linked to a smart device;
- a documented safeguarding need;
- a young carer or compelling home circumstance;
- another exceptional circumstance where the Headteacher judges that restricted access is necessary and proportionate.

Any agreed plan will specify the device, purpose, permitted times and location, supervision, storage, review date and steps to protect privacy. Permission may allow only the minimum access needed and does not create a general exemption from the policy. The SENDCo, DSL, healthcare professional and parent/carers will be consulted where appropriate. Emergency access will never be unreasonably delayed.

8. Breaches, sanctions, confiscation and searching

8.1 Response to a breach

Responses will be calm, consistent, lawful, reasonable and proportionate, and will align with the school's Behaviour Policy. Staff will consider the nature and impact of the breach, the pupil's age, SEND, disability, medical and communication needs, relevant safeguarding circumstances, and any agreed adjustment.

Example breach	Normal response
Phone or included device is seen, heard, used, not handed in, or found switched on	The pupil is instructed to switch it off and hand it over. It is stored securely by SLT/the office. Parent/carers is informed and collects it at the end of the day.
Repeated breach or attempt to conceal/circumvent the rules	Parent/carers meeting; permission to bring a device may be withdrawn; proportionate Behaviour Policy consequence and support to prevent recurrence.
Refusal to hand over the device or persistent defiance	Immediate referral to SLT and response under the Behaviour Policy for non-compliance/defiance. Staff must not use force merely to obtain a device.

Example breach	Normal response
Recording, photographing, live streaming, bullying, threats, harmful content, sharing personal data or suspected offence	Immediate safeguarding and risk assessment; device secured where lawful; DSL informed; parents/carers and, where appropriate, DSAT, police, children's social care or data-protection lead involved.

8.2 Confiscation

The school may confiscate a mobile phone or similar device as a disciplinary penalty where the policy is clearly breached. The length of confiscation will be no longer than the Headteacher considers proportionate to the intended disciplinary outcome. For Emmanuel Junior Academy pupils, the normal arrangement is secure retention until collection by a parent/carer at the end of the school day. A longer period may be used only where proportionate and clearly communicated.

A confiscated device will be switched off where practicable, labelled, recorded and secured in the school office or another locked location with access limited to authorised staff. The school will take reasonable care of a device while it is in its possession.

8.3 Searching pupils and possessions

Only the Headteacher or a member of staff authorised by the Headteacher may conduct a search without consent where the relevant legal conditions are met. Mobile phones and included smart technology are identified in the school rules as items for which a pupil and their possessions may be searched where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion. Any search will follow the current DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance and the school Behaviour Policy, including safeguards relating to authorisation, the pupil's needs, witnesses, recording and informing parents/carers.

8.4 Data on electronic devices

Staff must not routinely access or search the contents of a device. Where there is a lawful basis and a good reason to examine data, authorised staff will follow DfE guidance. If data may provide evidence of an offence or may cause harm, staff will not delete it and will give the device to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. Where a safeguarding concern arises, the DSL or deputy will be involved immediately. Evidence will be preserved and access kept to the minimum necessary.

9. Parents, carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors

- Parents/carers must contact their child through the school office on 0114 248 3048 and must not call, message or track-contact the child's personal device during the school day.
- Visitors, volunteers, governors and contractors must keep devices silent and out of sight in areas where pupils are present, and may use them only in a designated staff/visitor area or with staff permission.
- No person may photograph, record or live stream pupils, staff or visitors without school authorisation. At public events, any permitted photography must follow the event-specific notice and must not be posted or shared in a way that identifies other children without consent.

- Parents/carers and volunteers supporting visits must not contact other families directly, take images or recordings of pupils, or impose sanctions. Any concern must be referred to the staff member leading the activity.
- The school may require a person who breaches these expectations to stop using the device, delete material where appropriate and lawful, leave the site, or be subject to safeguarding, complaints, contractual or data-protection procedures.

10. Educational visits, clubs and activities outside the normal day

The mobile phone-free expectation ordinarily continues on educational visits, residentials, Breakfast Club, after-school clubs and other school-organised activities, including those outside normal hours. The trip or activity leader will complete a proportionate risk assessment and communicate any specific arrangements in advance.

If a device is permitted for a defined purpose, the written arrangements will state when, where and how it may be used and stored. Pupil educational experience, supervision, safeguarding and privacy will take priority. Academy devices should be used for staff communication and approved photography wherever practicable.

11. Safeguarding, privacy, data protection and online incidents

Unauthorised recording

Unauthorised photographing, audio recording, filming or live streaming of pupils, staff or visitors is prohibited. It may create a safeguarding risk and may amount to unlawful processing of personal data. Smart glasses and other less visible recording devices are included expressly in this rule.

Any image, audio or video recording of an identifiable person is personal data and must be handled in accordance with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and academy procedures. Recording without consent, or for a purpose not authorised by the academy, is not permitted.

Where misuse suggests bullying, abuse, exploitation, harassment, discrimination, harmful sexual behaviour, a criminal offence, risk of significant harm or a data breach, the behavioural response will operate alongside, and never replace, safeguarding and data-protection action. Staff will record and report concerns promptly to the DSL or deputy and follow Keeping Children Safe in Education and school procedures. The police or other agencies will be involved where appropriate.

The school may respond to online behaviour outside the site or school day where it meets the tests in the Behaviour Policy, for example where it threatens a member of the community, adversely affects the school's orderly running or reputation, or has repercussions for safety, welfare, relationships or learning in school.

12. Loss, theft and damage

Devices are brought onto the school site at the owner's risk. The school does not accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage on the premises, in transport, on visits or during travel to and from the school, except to the extent that legal responsibility arises, including where loss or damage results from negligence.

Permitted devices must be clearly labelled and protected by a password or PIN. Lost devices should be handed to the school office, which will make reasonable efforts to identify the owner. Confiscated or handed-in devices will be stored securely, and reasonable care will be taken while they are in the school's possession.

13. Communication, education and implementation

- The policy will be published and cross-referenced from the Behaviour Policy.
- Pupils and parents/carers will receive clear information at the start of each academic year, on admission and at appropriate intervals, including the reasons for the policy and the consequences of breaches.
- Expectations will be explicitly taught and revisited through the behaviour curriculum, online-safety education, assemblies/collective worship and class discussion.
- Permanent, temporary and supply staff, volunteers and relevant contractors will be informed through induction, briefings and visitor information.
- Questions and concerns from families will be addressed promptly and respectfully. Accessible formats and reasonable communication adjustments will be provided where required.

14. Monitoring, equality impact and review

The Headteacher will monitor implementation and impact, including breaches, confiscations, searches, safeguarding incidents, complaints, exceptions, repeat patterns and relevant pupil characteristics. Leaders will look for disproportionate impact, inconsistent enforcement or unmet need and will take corrective action.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following material changes to legislation, statutory guidance, technology, safeguarding risks or school practice. Feedback from pupils, parents/carers and staff will inform review. Relevant assurance will be reported to the Local School Board and DSAT through established arrangements.

15. Related policies

- Behaviour Policy 2026-2027
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policies
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Educational Visits Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- SEND Policy

- Complaints Policy
- DSAT Staff Disciplinary Policy

Appendix 1: Pupil mobile phone agreement

This agreement applies when a pupil is permitted to bring a phone for the journey to and from the school or has an individual exception. The pupil agrees that:

- I will switch my phone off before entering the school site and hand it in immediately using the agreed procedure.
- I will not use or access it during lessons, transitions, breaktimes, lunchtime, clubs or visits unless a member of staff specifically authorises use under my written plan.
- I will never use a device in toilets or changing areas.
- I will not photograph, film, record or live stream pupils, staff or visitors.
- I will not use technology to bully, threaten, harass, discriminate, share harmful content or break the law.
- I will keep passwords and access codes private and will not share another person's contact details without permission.
- I will comply immediately with a reasonable request to switch off or hand over a device.
- I understand that online behaviour outside school may be addressed where it affects safety, welfare, relationships, learning or the orderly running of the school.
- I understand that permission may be withdrawn if I do not follow the agreement.

Pupil name	
Class/year group	
Parent/carer signature and date	
Pupil signature and date	

Appendix 2: Permission and individual exception form

Pupil name	
Year group/class	
Parent/carers	
Device type and identifying details	
Reason for permission	☐ Independent journey ☐ Medical ☐ Disability/SEND ☐ Safeguarding ☐ Young carer/home circumstance ☐ Other
Specific permitted use	
Permitted times and location	
Storage and supervision arrangements	
Safeguarding/privacy controls	
Authorised by/date	
Review date/outcome	

By signing, the parent/carers and pupil agree to follow this policy and Appendix 1. Permission is limited to the arrangements above and may be amended or withdrawn following review.

Parent/carers signature and date	
Pupil signature and date	

Appendix 3: Visitor information

Use of mobile phones and smart technology at Emmanuel Junior Academy

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment. Please keep devices silent and out of sight where pupils are present. Do not photograph, record or live stream pupils or staff. Do not use a device in lessons or while working with pupils. If you need to make a call, please ask reception for an appropriate location. Report any safeguarding concern or accidental recording immediately to a member of staff. The school accepts no responsibility for personal devices that are lost, damaged or stolen, except where legal responsibility arises.

Appendix 4: Staff response checklist

- ☐ Stay calm and state the rule and reason.
- ☐ Ask the pupil to switch off and hand over the device.
- ☐ Do not inspect content routinely and do not use force merely to obtain the device.
- ☐ Secure, label and record the device; inform SLT/office.
- ☐ Consider medical, SEND, disability, communication and safeguarding factors.
- ☐ Inform the parent/carers and arrange collection as directed.
- ☐ If recording, harmful content, bullying, suspected crime or risk of harm is involved, contact the DSL/deputy immediately and preserve potential evidence.
- ☐ Record the incident under the Behaviour Policy and review support to prevent recurrence.