CAMBRIAN

Nurturing Growth - Inspiring Minds

Mobile Phone Policy

V1

This document applies to all academies and operations of Cambrian Learning Trust.

www.cambrianlearningtrust.org

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1. Introduction and aims

The Trust is committed to calm, safe and focused schools where pupils can learn, socialise and develop without the distraction, disruption and safeguarding risks associated with mobile phones and similar devices.

The Department for Education guidance Mobile phones in schools became statutory on 29 June 2026. Schools are expected to begin following it from 1 September 2026. The guidance states that schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default and that anything else should be by exception only.

This policy sets out a common, trust-wide approach to the use of mobile phones and similar communications and smart devices by pupils, staff, parents, carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors during the school day and, where relevant, during school-organised activities outside the school day.

The aims of this policy are to:

- prohibit student access to mobile phones and similar devices throughout the school day unless a written exception applies;
- support other trust and school policies, especially those related to safeguarding, behaviour, and use of technology.
- ensure staff, pupils, parents, visitors and contractors understand the rules and their responsibilities;
- provide proportionate arrangements for reasonable adjustments, medical needs and safeguarding concerns;
- support schools by aligning our approach trust-wide.

Each school adopts this policy in full and completes the Local Annex at Appendix A to set out the specific arrangements for its site (storage location, named approver, permitted sixth-form spaces, and school office contact details).

2. Scope and context

This policy applies to all Trust academies, all pupils, all staff, governors, volunteers, contractors, parents, carers and visitors on school sites, and school-organised activities off site.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Statutory guidance - Mobile phones in schools (Department for Education, 2026)
- Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents (Department for Education, 2026)

- Searching, screening and confiscation in schools (Department for Education, 2023)
- School Behaviour Policies
- Safeguarding Policies
- Use of Technology Policies
- Keeping children safe in education (Department for Education, 2026)

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Mobile phone	Any portable device capable of calls, messages, notifications, data access or communication over a mobile network, Wi-Fi or linked device.
Similar device or smart device	Includes smart watches, smart glasses, tablets with cellular capability, wireless earbuds or headphones, personal audio devices, and any personal device able to communicate, notify, record audio, take photographs or record video.
School day	means the period from a pupil's arrival on site until they leave the school site at the end of the day, including breakfast provision, lessons, movement time, break, lunch and tutor time.
Secure mechanism	means the school's approved method for preventing pupil access to phones during the school day. This may be a lockable pouch, locked hand-in box, secure cabinet, locker or another secure arrangement recorded in the Local Annex.
Exception	means a written permission or reasonable adjustment agreed under Section 8 or, for sixth-formers, Section 6.

4. Principles

4.1. Students should not access, use, see, hear or respond to a mobile phone or similar device at any point during the school day unless this policy expressly permits it.

4.2. Students may bring a phone to school for travel to and from school only where permitted by the school. Once on site, the phone and any similar device must be secured through the school's secure mechanism.

4.3. Mobile phones are not part of any Trust "Bring Your Own Device" arrangement for students. Tablets or laptops permitted for learning are governed by ICT Acceptable Use and BYOD procedures and must not be used to circumvent this policy.

5. Student use of mobile phones

5.1. Secure storage during the day

5.1.1 Each school must operate a secure mechanism for students up to Year 11. The method is recorded in Appendix A and communicated to pupils and parents.

5.1.2 The secure mechanism may include a lockable pouch, a locked hand-in box, a secure cabinet or a locker process. The method must prevent pupil access during the school day, be supervised consistently and include arrangements for safe storage of confiscated devices.

5.1.3 Where lockable pouches are used, phones and similar devices must be locked in the pouch on arrival and kept in the pupil's bag until the end of the school day. Pouches must not be tampered with or bypassed.

5.1.4 Where hand-in, box or cabinet storage is used, pupils must hand in the device at the published time and location. Devices will be returned at the end of the school day through the school's published routine.

5.1.5 Bringing a second phone, using a decoy, bypassing the secure mechanism or encouraging another pupil to do so will be treated as a serious breach.

5.2 Sixth-form students

5.2.1 Sixth-form students may carry a mobile phone during the school day, but it must be silent and out of sight except in designated sixth-form spaces.

5.2.2 Sixth-form students may use phones all day within the designated sixth-form spaces unless the Local Annex records a stricter local rule.

5.2.3 Sixth-form students must not use, display or be heard using a phone in shared areas, in front of younger pupils, in lessons, in toilets, changing rooms, examination areas or while supervising or supporting younger pupils.

5.2.4 Misuse is dealt with under the Behaviour Policy. Repeated misuse may lead to the student being required to follow the same secure mechanism as Year 11 and below for a defined period.

5.3 Smart watches, earbuds and similar devices

5.3.1 Smart watches are treated as mobile phones for the purposes of this policy. They must be secured through the academy's secure mechanism unless a written medical or reasonable-adjustment plan authorises a different arrangement.

5.3.2 Wireless earbuds, earphones, personal audio devices and similar devices must not be worn, used, seen or heard during the school day unless a written reasonable adjustment applies. Where brought to school, they must be stored through the secure mechanism.

5.3.3 Analogue watches that do not communicate, notify or record are permitted unless otherwise restricted by the academy.

5.4 Adaptations, reasonable adjustments and medical needs

5.4.1 Each school manages exceptions at local level through a documented register. The named approvers are recorded in the Local Annex and should include the DSL and SENCO where the exception concerns safeguarding, SEND, disability or medical need.

5.4.2 Exceptions may be considered for pupils who need access because of a disability, medical condition, SEND need, young-carer responsibility, safeguarding circumstance, travel risk or another exceptional individual circumstance.

5.4.3 A pupil who needs a phone or linked smart device for continuous glucose monitoring, seizure monitoring or similar medical purposes must have an Individual Healthcare Plan or equivalent written plan. The plan must record who holds the device, when it may be checked, what staff training is required and how alerts are handled.

5.4.4 Permission is limited to the specific purpose, time and location recorded in writing. It is not general permission to call, message, use social media, take photographs, play games or access unrelated apps.

5.4.5 Exceptions are reviewed annually and whenever circumstances change. Schools should ensure relevant staff know the agreed arrangement on a need-to-know basis so that authorised medical or reasonable-adjustment use is not mistaken for a breach.

6 Staff use of mobile phones

6.1. Staff must not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. This will empower staff to better challenge pupils to meet the school expectations and effectively enforce the prohibition of mobile phones throughout the school day.

6.2. Staff may use a mobile phone or similar device for an authorised business reason, such as school systems, rewards or sanctions, safeguarding, multi-factor authentication, medical response, premises management, trips or emergency

communication. Such use must be professional, brief and capable of explanation if challenged.

7. Emergency communications

7.1. Mobile phones, including a personal phone, may be used to summon help or contact emergency services where there is an imminent risk, medical emergency, safeguarding emergency, violent incident, lockdown, fire or other serious incident.

8. Parent, carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors

8.1. Parents, carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors must keep phones on silent while on academy sites and must not have phones out in pupil-facing areas.

8.2. Contractors may use phones or similar devices for official site-safety, premises, delivery or work-order purposes where this is necessary for their role and agreed by the school. They must not photograph or record pupils and must follow safeguarding instructions from reception or the site contact.

8.3. Visitors, parents and volunteers must not take photographs or recordings of pupils other than their own child, except at public events where the academy has expressly permitted photography. Images or recordings of other pupils must not be posted online.

8.4. Parents and carers must contact their child during the school day through the school office or the route stated in the Local Annex. They must not attempt to contact pupils directly on a personal mobile during the school day. Each academy will publish its local message-handling protocol.

8.5. Volunteers working with pupils must follow the staff rules in Section 6 – Staff use of mobile phones. Parents, carers and volunteers assisting with trips must refer any pupil breach to a member of staff and must not search or sanction pupils themselves.

8.6. Reception will provide or display a visitor information slip to communicate the policy to parents, carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors.

9. Sanctions and confiscation

9.1. Sanctions are applied under the school Behaviour Policy and must be lawful, reasonable, proportionate and consistent. Staff must consider age, SEND, disability, medical need, safeguarding information and any agreed exception before deciding the sanction.

9.2. Where a phone or similar device is seen, heard, used, accessed or found outside the secure mechanism without permission, it will normally be confiscated immediately.

9.3. Confiscation should normally last until the end of the school week, or for at least 3 school days (whichever is longer). Schools may apply local sensitivity, including earlier parent collection, longer holds for repeated breaches, or a formal meeting before return.

9.4. Repeat breaches, refusal to hand over a device, tampering with pouches or storage arrangements, bringing a decoy or second phone, recording others, bullying, or using a phone for harmful or unsafe conduct may lead to escalation under the Behaviour Policy, including detention, internal reflection, suspension or other proportionate sanctions.

9.5. Confiscated devices must be switched off where possible, stored in a locked cabinet or other secure location, logged in and out, and signed for on return. The location and process are recorded in Appendix A.

9.6. Where a pupil needs to contact home or requires support for the journey home during a confiscation period, the school may facilitate a call from reception, offer an alternative school device where available, or agree a supervised collection arrangement with parents.

10. Searching pupils and devices

10.1. Mobile phones, smart watches, wireless earbuds, personal audio devices, secure pouches and other devices within this policy are identified as school-rule items that may be searched for under the school Behaviour Policy. Schools must add these items as school-rule items in their behaviour policy.

10.2. The Headteacher and staff authorised by the Headteacher have statutory powers under section 550ZA of the Education Act 1996 to search a pupil or their possessions without consent where they have reasonable grounds to suspect the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item or an item identified in the school rules as searchable. Staff must follow DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

10.3. Any concern about material on a phone should be referred to the DSL or deputy DSL without delay. Where nude or semi-nude imagery is alleged or suspected, staff must not view, copy, forward or save the image unless directed by police or safeguarding guidance. The police should be contacted for advice where required.

10.4. All actions must be recorded on school's safeguarding or behaviour system. Parents should normally be informed, unless doing so would create or increase safeguarding risk or prejudice an investigation.

11. Loss, theft and damage

11.1. Pupils who bring phones or similar devices to school do so at their own risk. Neither the school, nor Cambrian Learning Trust accepts any responsibility for loss, theft or damage to devices brought onto site, onto school transport or to school activities, except that the academy will take reasonable care of a device once it has been confiscated or formally handed into staff.

11.2. Pupils should label devices where practical and protect them with a password, PIN or biometric lock.

11.3. When a device is confiscated or formally stored by the academy, staff must use the secure storage and logging process in Appendix A

11.4. This disclaimer should be included in parent communications, local annexes, visitor information and any permission form.

12. Trips, residentials and off-site activities

12.1. Day trips mirror the in-school policy by default. Pupils must not access, use, see or hear phones during the trip unless the Educational Visits Co-ordinator or Headteacher has approved a specific variation in the written risk assessment.

12.2. Residential visits are phone-free by default. Pupils must not bring or access phones unless the risk assessment records a specific reason, such as medical monitoring, safeguarding, travel, international contact or another exceptional circumstance. Where access is permitted, the risk assessment must state the timing, location, supervision and storage arrangements.

12.3. Staff on trips and residentials should use school phone system via Softphone apps, work SIMs, or work phones where available. Personal phone use for trip business must be authorised, professional and consistent with section 6.

12.4. Parents will be told before the visit how routine and emergency contact will work.

13. Communication and implementation

13.1. This policy will be published on each school website alongside the Local Annex. It will be issued to parents, pupils and staff before implementation and again at admission or induction.

13.2. Schools lead local communication. Communication should explain the reasons for the policy, how parents can contact pupils through the school office, what exceptions process exists, what sanctions apply and how pupils with medical or SEND needs will be supported.

14. Monitoring and review

14.1. Each Headteacher monitors implementation through confiscation records, behaviour data, safeguarding records, feedback from pupils, parents and staff, spot checks, exceptions-register review and incident analysis.

14.2. Each LGC receives assurance that the Local Annex is in place, published and implemented. The Trust Board receives an annual report on policy compliance, exceptions, significant incidents, safeguarding themes and any recommended changes.

14.3. This policy is reviewed annually and sooner if statutory guidance, inspection expectations or Trust risk assessment changes.

Appendix A – Local Annex

Purpose: This annex records the local arrangements required to implement the Trust Mobile Phone Policy at school level. It must be completed by each school, approved locally, published with the policy and kept under review.

St	St Nicholas C of E Primary School
Policy implementation date	01/09/2026
Headteacher	Mrs Michelle Rooke
Senior Leader responsible for implementation	Mrs Michelle Rooke
Local Governing Committee approval / noting date	01/10/2026
Next local review date	01/10/2026

1. Secure mechanism for pupils up to Year 11

Approved secure mechanism	N/A
Arrival routine	N/A
Storage location during the school day	N/A
Supervision arrangements	N/A
End-of-day return routine	N/A
Arrangements for late arrivals or early departures	N/A
Procedure for lost, damaged or tampered pouches / storage items	N/A

2. Sixth-form arrangements

Does the school have sixth-form provision?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Designated sixth-form spaces where phone use is permitted	N/A
Local restrictions stricter than the Trust policy, if any	N/A
Arrangements for repeated sixth-form misuse	N/A

3. Exceptions, reasonable adjustments and medical needs

Named approver for general exceptions	Mrs Michelle Rooke
Named approver for safeguarding exceptions	Mrs Michelle Rooke
Named approved for SEND, disability or medical exceptions	Mrs Anna Merryweather
Location of exceptions register	Bromcom
How staff are informed on a need-to-know basis	Internal telephone system
Review frequency for exceptions	«At least annually and whenever circumstances change»
Medical monitoring arrangements, where applicable	Secured on school system and monitored/updated with the support of parents.

4. Parent, carer and emergency contact arrangements

Main school office telephone number	01235 763858
Main school office email address	officesn@snc.cambrianlt.org
Route for parents/carers to pass urgent messages to pupils	Telephone/Dojo/email
How pupils may contact home during the school day, where authorised	N/A
Emergency communication process	Emergency services where appropriate

5. Confiscation, logging and return of devices

Secure location for confiscated devices	Heads Office
Device logging system	CPOMs
Information recorded when a device is confiscated	Name, class, reason, date
Standard confiscation period	End of school day
Return process	Return to pupil/parent
Escalation for refusal, repeat breach, decoy device or harmful use	Refer to Behaviour Policy

6. Searching and safeguarding records

Staff authorised by the Headteacher to search for school-rule items	School staff only
Behaviour recording system	CPOMs
Safeguarding recording system	CPOMs
Process for concerns about images, recordings or harmful content	Refer to Headteachr/DSL

7. Trips, residentials and off-site activities

Default position for day trips	No phones permitted for children
Default position for residential visits	No phones permitted for children
Who approves visit-specific variations?	Headteacher
Storage and supervision arrangements where phones are permitted	N/A

8. Visitor, volunteer and contractor arrangements

Where visitor information is displayed or issued	Sign-in system
Local instructions for contractors who need phone access for site-safety or work-order purposes	Use a school office or leave the school site.
Photography or recording rules for public events	No photographs to be taken and shared by parents

9. Publication, communication and monitoring

Where the policy and Local Annex are published	School Website
How pupils are informed	Assemblies, PSHE, newsletters
How parents and carers are informed	Newsletters, Dojo
How staff are trained or briefed	Staff Development and further briefings
Monitoring evidence reviewed by the Headteacher	N/A
Local Governing Committee assurance route	Termly LGC meetings

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Completed by	Michelle Rooke
Date completed	01/10/2026
Headteacher signature	
Date approved	06/10/2026