The Park Federation
ACADEMY TRUST

Mobile Phone Policy

Approved by	Helen Abell, CEO		
Date	July 2026	**Next review due**	July 2027

1. Introduction and aims

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

This policy sets out the school's approach to mobile phones and other smart technology. The primary aim is to establish a calm, safe, and supportive environment conducive to teaching by ensuring the school is a mobile free environment by default. Anything other than this should be by exception only.

This policy applies to:

- Mobile phones
- Smart technology, including smart watches, with similar functionality, such as the ability to send/receive notifications or messages via mobile networks, or the ability to record audio and/or video.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers.
- Support the school's other policies, especially the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

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

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

2. Relevant guidance

This policy is based on the following guidance and legislation:

- **Mobile phones in schools**, Department for Education (DfE), updated February 2026.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**, 2025.
- **Searching, screening and Confiscation in schools**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Children and Families Act 2014**, regarding support for pupils with medical conditions.
- **Data Protection Act 2018** and **UK GDPR**
- **Education and Inspections Act 2006**
- **JEA Staff Code of Conduct Policy 2025-2026**
- **JEA Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**
- **JEA Positive Behaviour Policy**
- **JEA Online Safety Policy**
- **TPFAT Relationships and Education Policy**

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and volunteers) are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy. Staff must model high standards of professional conduct and challenge pupils who do not meet expectations. 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 **school office** is responsible for the secure collection and storage of pupil mobile phones. 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 Academy Council

The Academy Council is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy and reviewing its impact on school culture and pupil behaviour.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones: Modelling Behaviour

Staff should not use their own mobile phones, including smart watches, for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day. The use of mobile phones for personal reasons must be approved by the Principal and used in areas of the school where children are not present. This empowers staff to effectively enforce the prohibition and challenge pupils who do not meet expectations.

4.2 Professional Use

It may be appropriate for staff to use a device for specific professional purposes, such as issuing rewards and sanctions, setting homework, using multi-factor authentication (MFA), or communicating in the event of an emergency, or on school trips. If in these circumstances, staff will use their phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with the staff code of conduct.

4.3 Consistent Enforcement

School leaders will be clear with staff regarding expectations for phone use during the day to ensure consistency. Staff must not share personal contact details with parents or pupils.

4.4 Data protection and Safeguarding

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).

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 personal mobile phones or devices to take photos or recordings of pupils, or anything that could identify a pupil. Any photographs or recordings must be done using school equipment. Any safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (Rebecca Pinkney)**.

More detailed guidance on data protection and safeguarding can be found in the school's Data Protection Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Online Safety Policy.

4.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

4.6 Sanctions

Failure to adhere to these expectations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the school's **Staff Code of Conduct and TPFAT Disciplinary Policy**.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

5.1 Prohibiting the Use of Mobile Phones and Smart Technology

The school prohibits the use of mobile phones throughout the entire school day. This includes:

- During all lessons.
- The time between lessons.
- Breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- At breakfast club and during after school clubs.
- School trips

This prohibition ensures that potential distractions are removed entirely, supporting high standards of behaviour. All pupils must be clear on the school's policy regarding the prohibition of mobile phones and the consequences for not following it. Pupils should be reminded of the schools policy on the use of mobile phones annually and then again at regular intervals.

For the same reasons listed above, we do not permit the use of smartwatches in school. These devices must be left at home. If parents/carers are considering providing a mobile phone for their children then it is advised to consider a 'brick phone' that does not have access to the internet or social media as a safeguarding measure.

5.2 Year 5 and 6 Exceptions and Storage

The school permits Year 5 and Year 6 pupils to bring a phone for safety when walking to and from school.

- **Handing In:** Phones must be turned **OFF** and handed to **the office** upon arrival.
- **Storage:** Devices will be locked away securely until the end of the school day.
- **Permission:** A signed **Mobile Phone Parental Consent Form** (Appendix 2) must be provided.

5.3 Sanctions and Searching

Lawful Sanctions:

The school may use a range of sanctions for breaches of this policy, including confiscation of mobile phones and smart technology used during school hours. All sanctions will be applied in accordance with the school's positive behaviour policy and legal duties. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Educations and Inspections Act 2006. - this line may be useful. If a mobile phone is confiscated, it will be locked away securely and given back to the child at the end of the school day. Parents and carers will also be informed that this has happened and all parties will be reminded of the school's mobile phone policy.

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 pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

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:

- Harassment or bullying
- 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

Power to Search:

Any member of school staff can search a pupil for any item with their consent. You don't need written consent – you can simply ask the pupil to turn out their pockets or to let you look in their bag or locker, and if the pupil agrees, you can go ahead. Without consent, Principals, and identified senior leaders authorised by the Principal, have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions if there are reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil has a "prohibited item" or an item banned by the school rules, which includes mobile phones (prohibited items in SG and CP Policy do not include mobile phones. There are no banned items listed in the SG and CP Policy. For more information on searching and confiscation, please refer to the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation and the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

5.4 Safeguarding and Online Safety

- **Harm Risk:** Children can access harmful content via 3G/4G/5G mobile networks, even when on school premises. If misbehaviour involving a mobile phone gives cause to suspect a pupil is at risk of harm e.g. sexual harassment, bullying, image sharing and pornography access, staff must immediately follow the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and steps will be put in place to protect and support both those who were impacted by the harm (commonly known as the victim) and those who instigated the harm (commonly known as the perpetrator).

- **DSL Involvement:** In such cases, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed to consider if pastoral support, early intervention, or a referral to children's social care and or the Police is required.

- **Vigilance:** The school remains vigilant to risks relating to online safety, ensuring these are reflected in all relevant school policies.

5.5 Adaptations and Reasonable Adjustments

The school recognises its duty under the **Children and Families Act 2014** to support pupils with medical conditions. Adjustments will be made where the use of a mobile phone is necessary for a pupil to manage a medical condition for example, pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar. All adjustments will be made with regard to statutory guidance on supporting pupils with medical conditions at school. Parents/carers will be expected to complete the mobile phone permission slip in Appendix 2.

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

- **Parental Communication:** Parents and carers are encouraged to support the school in providing a mobile phone-free environment. This includes limiting mobile phone use as much as possible whilst on site.

- **Using mobile phones to take photographs and videos at events:** Parents and carers may use mobile phones and digital devices or cameras to take photographs and videos but these must be for personal use, include their own children as much as practicably possible and must not be uploaded to social media.

- **Contacting Pupils:** If a parent needs to contact their child during the school day, they must do so via the school office. Office staff are responsible for relaying messages and facilitating necessary contact.

- **Addressing Concerns:** Staff will address parental questions or concerns in a timely manner, clearly communicating the reasons and benefits of the policy.

- **Use of mobile phones in the classroom:** Visitors and volunteers are not permitted to use mobile phones or devices in lessons, or when working with the pupils.

- **School trips:** Parents, carers or volunteers supervising trips must uphold the school's mobile phone policy. They must not use their mobile phone to make contact with other parents and carers. Photos and recordings of pupils and their work, or anything that can identify them, are not permitted. Parents who are accompanying their own child may take photos but these must include only their own child and must not be shared or posted onto social media. Parents, carers and volunteers are not permitted to issue sanctions, confiscate items or search pupils who they believe have a mobile phone in their possession. In this case, they must refer the concern onto a class teacher.

7. Loss, theft or damage

The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of mobile phones that are not handed in for safe keeping. Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure they are appropriately labelled with full name and class. Pupils bring devices to school at their own risk.

8. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains in line with DfE statutory guidance and school needs.

Appendix 1: Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement for pupils

(Reference the school's Pupil Acceptable Use Policy and provide an example)

Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

(To be completed by school and Year 5 and 6 parents/carers, or pupils with a medical condition)

The school has agreed to allow the pupil named below to bring their mobile phone to school because *they travel to and from school alone/they have a medical condition that permits the use of a mobile phone/other _____ (*delete as appropriate).

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer name(s):	

Parental Agreement:

- I understand the phone must be switched **OFF** and handed to the **school office** upon arrival.
- I will ensure the phone is labelled with my child's full name and class.
- I understand that my child must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones and its acceptable use agreement.
- I have discussed this policy, the benefits of a mobile free environment, online safety and the importance of parental controls with my child.
- I understand the school accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to phones.
- I understand the school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by this policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____ Date: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____ Date: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for parents, carers and visitors

Welcome to James Elliman Academy,

To maintain a calm and safe environment, we promote a mobile-free environment. Please ensure your device is switched to silent and kept out of sight while pupils are present.

- Parents and carers may use mobile phones, digital devices or cameras to take photographs and videos but these must be for personal use, include their own children as much as practicably possible and must not be uploaded to social media.
- The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones, or devices, that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.
- Confiscated phones will be stored in the the year leaders classroom in a locked cupboard. The Year Leader is responsible for the mobile phone or device during this time. Mobile phones and devices will be returned to the pupil, parent or carer at the end of the school day.
- Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.