



APPLEFORD SCHOOL

Mobile Devices inclusive of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy

This policy, which applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors working with pupils in education or the boarding provision publicly available on the school website, on the staff share and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office. This policy reflects current legislation, the new recording/parent-notification duties and emerging DfE/Ofsted/ISI expectations for residential special schools

We have a whole school approach to safeguarding, which is the golden thread that runs throughout every aspect of the school. All our school policies support our approach to safeguarding (child protection). Our fundamental priority is our children and their wellbeing; this is first and foremost.

Statement of intent: Appleford believes that it is important to establish a safe, secure and stable environment to enable pupils to grow, develop and learn. The school takes a proactive approach to anticipating, managing and minimising potential triggers of distressed behaviour that may cause harm. The aim of this policy is to ensure that mobile devices inclusive of BYOD are used in a correct and safe manner, which is in accordance with the relevant legislation and national guidance. Where this policy refers to “must”, it reflects legal duties or statutory guidance; “should” reflects best practice.

This policy applies in:

- classrooms and learning spaces;
- residential accommodation and during boarding routine and
- on-site and off-site activities, including trips, transport and work experience.

The school is committed to:

- promoting positive relationships, de-escalation and non-restrictive approaches as the norm;
- minimising, and where possible eliminating, the use of restraint and other restrictive interventions;
- ensuring any use of force is lawful, necessary, proportionate, in the child’s best interests and a last resort.

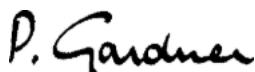
This includes situations in boarding houses or during night-time routines where pupils’ behaviour presents an immediate and significant risk. Restraint must be avoided where risk can be safely managed via:

- verbal de-escalation and negotiation;
- adjusting demands, environment or sensory load and
- offering time and space, including supervised withdrawal to a low-stimulus area which the pupil can freely leave.

Monitoring and Review: The text of this policy is necessary and proportionate to meet the needs of Appleford School, supporting those who work with our pupils, making clearer the responsibilities of school staff, volunteers, proprietor and the Advisory Board. This policy is designed to support the Appleford School staff who work with our pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) making clear the responsibilities of school staff, and the proprietor. These arrangements are subject to continuous monitoring, refinement, and audit by Dr Peter Gardner (Proprietor and Managing Director), and Mr David King (Headmaster and Non-Executive Director).

The Proprietor and Headteacher is committed to regularly reviewing and updating our policies to ensure they remain relevant and effective in supporting our school's mission and values, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been implemented. Any amendments, where appropriate, will be made in consultation with staff, the Proprietor, and/or the wider school community to reflect our ongoing commitment to excellence in education. This review will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed arrangements, and it will be made available to them in writing or electronically.

Signed



Dr Peter Gardner
Proprietor and Managing Director

Mr James Langan
Headmaster

Statement of intent: Mobile phones, tablets and other personal electronic devices have become widely available and accessible to pupils. This policy is designed to prohibit the use of mobile phones and similar smart technology throughout the school day, including break and lunch times. Prohibiting use by 'default' aligns this policy with 2026 regulatory guidance on *Keeping children safe in Education*. Appleford School accepts that personal mobile phones and tablets are often given to pupils by their parents to ensure their safety and personal security; however, such devices pose inherent risks and may jeopardise the learning environment. accepts that personal mobile phones and tablets are often given to pupils by their parents to ensure their safety and personal security; however, such devices pose inherent risks and may jeopardise the learning environment.

Appleford in compliance with The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 (Royal Assent 29 April 2026) takes account of national guidance on mobile phone use, which contains an enabling power for further regulations on smartphones which has not yet been exercised. The DfE confirmed on Royal Assent that "all schools will be required to follow that guidance." KCSIE 2026 contains a new dedicated paragraph reinforcing the default position.

Appleford must strike a balance between personal safety and a suitable educational setting. We understand that parents may wish for their child to carry a mobile phone for their personal safety, whilst pupils may wish to bring additional devices to school for other reasons. This policy establishes how personal electronic devices should be used by pupils in school to ensure both personal safety and an appropriate learning environment. To ensure that the school remains in control of the environment, pupils do not control access to devices during lessons or when moving between lessons. The school does not treat the management and prohibition of mobile device use as a standalone issue, but as rooted in the school's responsibilities towards safeguarding, the filtering of inappropriate material, and online safety and behaviour. Searching, screening and confiscation procedures cover phones (DfE *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* guidance applies).

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to the following items:

- mobile phones
- smart watches
- personal digital assistants (PDAs)
- handheld entertainment systems, e.g. video game consoles, iPods
- portable internet devices, e.g. tablets, laptops and
- wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems, e.g. devices used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture and/or recording, sound recording, and information transmitting, receiving and/or storing

Legal framework: This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory and good practice guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Mobile phones in schools (DfE February 2026) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools>
- Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents (DfE February 2026) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/communicating-your-policy-for-prohibiting-the-use-of-mobile-phones-in-schools-to-parents>
- Behaviour in Schools (DfE February 2024) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2>

- Keeping children safe in education 2026 (DfE September 2026) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- Searching, screening and confiscation at school (DfE July 2022) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation#full-publication-update-history>
- UK Data Protection Act 2018 (HM Gov June 2018) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents>
The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) (HM Gov May 2026) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2016/679/contents>
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 (HM Gov April 2019) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2019/2>
- Protection of Children Act 1978 (HM Gov 1978) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1978/37/2023-10-26>
- Sexual Offences Act 2003 (HM Gov) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents>
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff' (DfE 2014) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges (DfE: Filtering and monitoring: core standards)
- ISS Guidance (DfE: April 2026), paragraphs 3.21 to 3.23 (embedded in Standard 9)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026: legislation.gov.uk which provides he have regard to duty on mobile phones

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy (Staff Code of Conduct)

Roles and responsibilities

The Proprietor will be responsible for:

- the implementation of the policy and procedures;
- evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and procedures;
- ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds and
- reviewing the policy annually.

The Headmaster will be responsible for:

- handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy;
- the day-to-day implementation and management of the policy;
- informing parents and pupils of the Personal Electronic Devices Agreement;
- communicating this policy to the relevant staff members and the wider school community;
- communicating what devices can be brought to school and when they can and cannot be used and
- deciding how best to achieve a mobile phone-free school environment.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- negotiating incidents of cyberbullying in conjunction with the headteacher, in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy;
- applying this policy consistently and proportionately, including confiscating devices where appropriate;
- reporting any safeguarding concerns to the DSL, or deputy, where misuse indicates risk of harm;
- avoiding use of their mobile phones in front of pupils for any non-work-related issues and
- teaching pupils about the risks associated with mobile phones, other devices and social media, both in school and more broadly.

The DSL will be responsible for:

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- initiating and managing responses to incidents of upskirting with relevant staff members and in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and
- liaising with and reporting the relevant information to children's social care and/or the police, when it is necessary to do so.

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, the act known as “upskirting” is a criminal offence. Despite the name, anyone (including both pupils and teachers) of any gender, can be a victim of upskirting. Upskirting is namely:

- obtaining sexual gratification (either for themselves or for the person they are enabling to view the victim's genitals, buttocks or underwear) and
- to humiliate, distress or alarm the victim.

Any incidents will not be tolerated by Appleford.

Ownership and responsibility: Pupils are responsible for adhering to the provisions outlined in this policy. Pupils are responsible for their own belongings. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing property that is lost, stolen or damaged either on school premises or travelling to and from school, and at school events. Staff will be protected against liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to personal devices that have been confiscated as an appropriate sanction, if they have acted lawfully.

Pupils must replace any school property they lose, damage or steal, including electronic devices. Pupils and staff should protect all devices brought to school with a PIN or passcode to safeguard personal data, images and videos if a device is lost, stolen or accessed by an unauthorised person.

Acceptable use: Where pupils are bringing personal electronic devices into school, they will be expected to make their parents aware of this. Pupils will remain responsible for the safety and security of any personal devices brought into school and the school will not accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage. Pupils are responsible in these cases for keeping devices charged, secure, and free from unsuitable material.

Personal devices will not be used at any point during the school day, including during break and lunch times, unless an agreed exception applies. Where an agreed exception is in place, use of a personal device will be limited strictly to the specific purpose outlined within that exception and will be subject to any conditions set by the school. Exceptions are expected to be rare and will be tied to welfare and/or clearly defined operational needs. Authorised exceptions must not distract or disrupt lessons, private study, movement between lessons, or supervision routines.

Where a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) scheme is operated to facilitate the use of laptops or tablets for learning, such devices will be used in accordance with this policy. Pupils will sign a [Device and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement](#) to ensure that devices are only used for the educational purpose intended. BYOD arrangements will not include mobile phones.

Unacceptable use

Pupils will be encouraged to avoid bringing phones to school. However, if phones are brought to school they will be switched off and stored securely. This will happen on arrival at school by handing it to their houseparent or at reception. They will be stored in a cabinet in a staff only room. A register is taken to acknowledge who has brought a device to school each day. Unless express permission is granted by a member of staff or adaptations and reasonable adjustments apply, mobile devices will not be seen, heard, or accessed at any time during the school day. Sanctions for non-permitted use of mobile devices will follow the school's behaviour management policy.

Any permitted use for specific pupils will be limited strictly to the specific purpose outlined in the agreed plan. All other use will be prohibited.

The school will consider the risks that may be posed to pupils who do not have access to their mobile phone when organising travel to and from school. Parents will be consulted with to consider ways to mitigate any concerns around the issue of travel to and from school. Pupils will be able to access their personal devices when travelling to and from school; however, they should not be used to arrange travel during the school day.

Where improper use of a pupil-owned mobile device damages or disrupts the school network, this will be treated as a very serious matter.

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When deciding whether to give permission for exceptional use of mobile devices, the school will consider if such use would create a Health and Safety issue, for example in practical lessons, kitchens, or swimming lessons.

- Staff members will be required to model expectations surrounding the use of personal devices when they are in front of pupils throughout the school day, and only use their personal devices where required for work or safeguarding purposes
- Staff and pupils will always adhere to the social media policy.
- Files will not be sent between mobile devices, and Bluetooth and Wi-Fi functions will be disabled while on school premises.
- If pupils fall ill during school hours, they will not use their mobile device to contact parents; they will use the agreed procedures.
- Under no circumstances will personal electronic devices be taken into examinations. Devices will be kept in bags or lockers or handed to a member of staff for safekeeping during the examination. Under no circumstances will mobile devices be used in changing rooms or toilets.
- Personal electronic devices will not be plugged into outlets on the school premises without the express permission of the headteacher, and they will have an up-to-date portable appliance test (PAT).
- Staff will not give out their personal contact details to pupils. If correspondence is needed between staff members and pupils for homework or exams, staff should provide their school contact details.

Adaptations and reasonable adjustments: The school will comply with its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments regarding this policy where necessary. Adaptations may be made in exceptional circumstances and in response to a pupil's specific needs. If it is deemed necessary due to the nature of a pupil's SEND, reasonable adjustments will be made to allow that pupil to use their mobile phone or similar device during the school day. The school will not prevent pupils from using their mobile phones to manage their medical condition effectively, e.g. if a pupil is using a monitoring app on their phone to manage their diabetes.

Beyond these specific duties, the school recognises that a need for mobile phone access for some pupils may depend on their individual circumstances. The school will allow limited flexibility for these pupils where an agreed exception is required in the best interests of the pupil's safety and welfare, for example where a pupil is a young carer. Where a pupil has an agreed adaptation or reasonable adjustment that requires access to a mobile device, this will be permitted only for the specific purpose and within the limits set out in the agreed plan.

Cyberbullying: All personal electronic devices will be used in line with our Online Safety Policy. Incidents of cyberbullying will be dealt with and reported in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy. As part of the school's ongoing commitment to the prevention of cyberbullying, regular teaching and discussion about online safety will take place as part of PSHE lessons.

Searching pupils: As part of a stepped response, the school uses a variety of sanctions for mobile device use if such use goes against this policy, depending on factors such as the severity of the breach. In some cases, however, that response may mean searching a pupil or their possessions, where this permitted by statutory guidance. However, that response may mean searching a pupil or their possessions, where this permitted by statutory guidance.

Pupils have a right for their private life to be respected under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). This right is not absolute, and the school can interfere with this right if it is justified, proportionate, and aligns with the powers to search in the Education Act 1996.

All searches will be conducted in line with the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.

The headteacher, and other authorised staff members, will have the power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item. Mobile phones and similar devices will be deemed as prohibited items that may be searched for in line with the Behaviour Policy.

In all cases the authorised member of staff will always:

- seek the co-operation of the pupil before conducting a search;
- ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted;
- give the pupil the opportunity to ask any questions so that their agreement is informed and
- have due regard to the DfE's '[Searching, screening and confiscation](#)' guidance.

Staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers. Staff conducting a search must not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing - outer clothing means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear and includes hats, shoes, boots or scarves. Possessions means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control - this includes desks, lockers and bags.

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A staff member may ask a pupil to show them what they are doing on their mobile phone or tablet if they reasonably believe that the pupil is using the device to cause harm. If it is judged reasonable, the staff member may inspect the files or data on a pupil's electronic device and delete them if necessary. They will ensure they have a good reason to examine and delete data on a pupil's electronic device. When determining a good reason to examine data, staff members will ensure they reasonably suspect that the data has been, or could be, used to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.

When determining a good reason to delete data, staff members will consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence and if so, choose not to delete the data. The data may be deleted if it is found likely to cause harm to any person, and the pupil and/or parent refuses to delete the data themselves.

If a search uncovers a device that is being used to cause harm, or which contains prohibited material such as pornography, a staff member can confiscate the device. If a staff member finds child pornography, it must be given to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. Where staff find stolen items like mobile devices, they must be given to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. The staff member conducting the search must be the same sex as the pupil being searched. A witness to the search must be present; this should also be a staff member of the same sex as the pupil being searched.

Pupils are required to comply with any request to check their electronic device. and they are also required to comply with any request to disable the screen lock function of their electronic device and show any staff member what they are doing. Any pupil who refuses to comply with these requests will be disciplined in line with the Behaviour Policy.

Sanctions: The school will apply sanctions for breaches of this policy in a consistent and proportionate manner, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. Where this policy is clearly breached, for example where a device is used, seen, or heard ringing, staff will feel confident to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty. Confiscated devices may be retained for a proportionate length of time, as determined by the Headteacher and in consideration of the circumstances, including the pupil's age, SEND, and any agreed exceptions or reasonable adjustments.

Where a breach gives cause to suspect a pupil may be suffering, or may be at risk of, harm, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the DSL. Confiscated personal electronic devices will be locked away securely in the Pastoral office. Bullying via personal electronic devices will be dealt with in line with the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

Appendix 1: Conditions for pupils' use of mobile devices (under permitted exceptional circumstances)

Pupils who wish to use a personal mobile device (with staff permission, in line with allowed exceptions) to access the school's wireless network must agree to and accept the terms of this policy. These include:

- Use of personal mobile devices is also subject to the school's Online Safety Policy and Behaviour Policy.
- Pupil access to the school's wireless network is treated as a privilege, not an entitlement.
- While using the device, pupils must not connect to any external wireless or networking service (e.g. 3G, 4G etc.).
- Use of the school network will be monitored by the school's ICT support team.
- Pupils must keep their device passwords private and not allow others to use the device for any reason while connected to the school network.
- Pupils must not attempt to bypass the school's network security or filtering policies.
- Devices must not be used to record, transmit, or post any photos, audio, or video or any person(s) within the school. They must not upload or distribute pictures, videos, or any other material relating to students or staff.
- School power sockets must not be used to charge personal mobile devices, as per Health and Safety requirements in relation to guidelines on Portable Appliance Testing (PAT).
- The pupil must read and sign the ICT Acceptable Use Agreement before using a device in school.

Appendix 2: Mobile Device: Bring Your Own Device, (BYOD) Policy Acceptance (for exceptional permitted circumstances)

PUPIL DECLARATION: I would like to use my own personal mobile device in school. I have read and understand the Appleford School Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy, the ICT Acceptable Use Agreement, and the School Behaviour Policy.

I understand that the use of mobile devices in school is a privilege and not a right and agree to use the device for learning only.

I agree not to connect to any wireless or networking service (apart from the school network as permitted) whilst using my mobile device in school.

I understand that I am solely responsible for the correct care, safety and security of my personal mobile device when in school.

Pupil Name: Tutor Group:

Parent's Signature on behalf of pupil: Date:

PARENT/GUARDIAN: I/We have read and understand the Appleford School policy and give my son/daughter approval to use a personal mobile device in school. I understand my son/daughter is personally and solely responsible for the correct care, safety and security of the device. I understand that Appleford School accepts no liability in respect of any personal mobile device used during or in transit to and from school.

Print Name:

Signature: Date:



Appleford School

A unique path to success

September 2026

Online Safety, Phone Information & Parental Controls Agreement

Dear Parent,

I hope you are well. As part of our safeguarding responsibility within the Appleford community, I would like to remind all families of the importance of ensuring that students remain safe when using digital devices.

The recent Mobile phones in schools (DfE February 2026) Statutory guidance,

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools>

has now prohibited the use of mobile phones throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime unless an agreed exception applies. Appleford has had such an arrangement in place for some years now.

However, Appleford also understands that parents may wish for their child to carry a mobile phone for their personal safety on their way to and from school.

To update our records could you and your child please complete the form below notifying us that your child will arrive at school with a mobile. Your child will be unable to bring a mobile phone into school unless this form is returned to us.

Your child is probably already aware of the morning procedure:

- on arrival at school, mobile phones are collected and registered by a member of staff.
- They are stored in cabinets which are placed in a staff only room opposite reception
- They remain there until the end of the school day

We would also like to remind parents that pupils should use only age-appropriate apps and websites, and that robust parental controls are in place before devices are brought into school.

To support us in safeguarding, we ask all parents to:

Check age ratings for all social media platforms your child uses.

Ensure parental controls are set on phones, apps, and home Wi-Fi settings.

Monitor your child's online activity and discuss responsible use regularly.

Encourage open conversations about online behaviour, privacy, and staying safe.

Remind your child to speak up if they encounter anything that causes concern.

Student Mobile Phone Information – Parent Checklist

Please complete and return the following details:

Student Name:

House and Year Group:

1. Phone Make/Model:

(e.g., iPhone 16, Samsung A14, Google Pixel 6)

2. Network Provider:

(e.g., EE, Vodafone, O2, Three)

3. Is mobile data enabled on the phone? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. List social media or messaging apps installed on your child's device:

(e.g., WhatsApp, Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram)

5. Mobile Phone Number:

6. Have parental controls been set on the device?

☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Appleford will be inviting you via email to use Qustodio - [Qustodio](#) is a parental control solution that makes it easier to keep your children safe online. It enables you to supervise your children's device use so you can ensure they only view age-appropriate content and that they enjoy a positive online-offline balance. We advise that you use this on your child's mobile.

Parental Controls Agreement

Please read and sign below:

I confirm that age-appropriate parental controls have been set on my child's mobile phone.
I have reviewed the apps and settings on my child's device and agree to ensure ongoing monitoring
I will, I will Not be using Qustodio – please circle

Parent Name:

Signature:

Date:

We understand that phones / contracts and numbers are updated from time to time. Please do inform us of any changes. We will resend these forms out from time to time in order to make sure that any changes are captured.

If you would like assistance with setting parental controls or guidance on age-appropriate apps, please feel free to contact us—we are always happy to support you.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Kind regards,



Julia Hendrickse
Designated Safeguarding Lead
Appleford School
