



**Onside Education
Mobile Phone
and Smart Device
Policy 2025/6**

1. Policy Statement

Onside Education recognises that mobile phones and smart devices (including smartwatches, tablets, and wearables) are part of modern life. However, within an educational and therapeutic environment, such devices can present safeguarding, privacy, and behavioural risks, as well as distract students from learning.

This policy sets out clear expectations to promote a safe, respectful, and focused learning environment, consistent with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2024) and DfE Behaviour in Schools Guidance (2024).

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students, staff, visitors, and contractors using or carrying mobile phones or smart devices on any Onside Education site or during offsite activities.
- All personal devices capable of making calls, recording audio or video, or connecting to the internet.

3. Aims

- To prevent distraction and disruption during learning.
- To safeguard students and staff from risks associated with technology misuse.
- To protect the privacy and dignity of all individuals on site.
- To ensure consistent and fair expectations across all Onside Education provisions.

4. Student Mobile Phone and Smart Device Use

4.1 General Rule

- Students are not permitted to use mobile phones or smart devices during the school day.
- All phones and smartwatches must be handed in at reception or to a designated staff member upon arrival.
- Devices will be switched off and stored securely until the end of the day.
- Devices may only be used for a specific educational purpose with staff supervision and prior approval.

4.2 Smartwatches and Wearable Technology

- Smartwatches (including Apple Watch, Fitbit with notifications, etc.) are treated the same as mobile phones.
- They must be removed and handed in at the start of the day.
- Simple, non-connected watches (with no camera, recording, or messaging functions) are permitted.
- The use of smartwatches to record audio, take photos, or send/receive messages is strictly prohibited.

4.3 During the Day

- Devices must not be visible or used during lessons, breaks, or social times.
- Unauthorised use will result in immediate confiscation.

4.4 Offsite and Trips

- The decision to allow mobile phones or smart devices on trips will be made by the trip leader and DSL, following a safeguarding risk assessment.
- Where allowed, use must remain appropriate and supervised.

4.5 Consequences

- **First incident:** device Taken and secured until the end of the day; parent/ carer informed
- **Second incident:** Device held until parent collects the device in person.
- **Persistent misuse:** Behaviour meeting arranged; potential review of placement or privileges

5. Staff Mobile Phone and Smart Device Use

5.1 General Expectations

- Staff must keep personal phones and smart devices **on silent** and **out of sight** during contact time with students.
- Personal use should take place only during breaks and in staff-only areas.
- Staff must not use personal devices to photograph, film, or communicate with students.

5.2 Safeguarding and Data Protection

- Any work-related images or videos must be taken on Onside Education-approved equipment (e.g., company camera or tablet).

- No student images, contact details, or safeguarding information should ever be stored on personal devices.
- Staff must report any breach or concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

5.3 Disciplinary Implications

- Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action and will be treated seriously if they compromise safeguarding.

6. Visitors and Contractors

- All visitors and contractors must keep phones and smart devices on silent and must not use them in areas where students are present.
- Photography or video recording is strictly prohibited unless explicitly authorised by the DSL or Leadership Team.

7. Safeguarding Considerations

Mobile phones and smart devices can expose young people to risks including:

- Online bullying or harassment
- Inappropriate image sharing or sexting
- Grooming, exploitation, or radicalisation
- Filming of peers or staff without consent
- Distraction and emotional dysregulation

Preventive measures:

- All incidents are logged as a safeguarding concern
- DSL reviews all incidents and initiates appropriate support or intervention.
- Persistent misuse may trigger a review of the student's behaviour or safeguarding plan.

8. Data Protection

- Recording, storing, or transferring student data on personal devices is strictly prohibited.

- All staff must follow Onside Education’s Data Protection and ICT Policies at all times.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

| Role | Responsibility |
|--------------------|---|
| SLT | Oversees implementation and annual review of policy. |
| DSL | Investigates incidents, assesses safeguarding risk, liaises with parents and external agencies. |
| HT | Ensures secure storage of devices. |
| Staff | Enforce the policy consistently and model appropriate use. |
| Students | Comply with expectations and use devices responsibly. |
| Parents/ Carers | Support the policy and ensure students hand devices in daily. |

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed **annually**, or sooner if new technology or safeguarding concerns arise.

11. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Conduct Policy
- ICT / Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection (UK GDPR) Policy