

## MOBILE PHONE POLICY

|                                    |                                           |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>AREA:</b>                       | CONNEX                                    |
| <b>AUDIENCE:</b>                   | ALL STAKEHOLDERS                          |
| <b>REVIEW FREQUENCY:</b>           | ANNUALLY                                  |
| <b>DATE 1<sup>st</sup> ISSUED:</b> | NEW JULY 2026                             |
| <b>LAST REVIEW DATE:</b>           | JULY 2026                                 |
| <b>NEXT REVIEW DATE:</b>           | JULY 2027                                 |
| <b>OWNED &amp; REVIEWED BY:</b>    | HEAD OF PROVISION / BRUNEL EDUCATION TEAM |
| <b>APPROVED BY:</b>                | CHAIR OF BE BOARD OF TRUSTEES             |
| <b>LAST APPROVAL DATE:</b>         | 20 JULY 2026                              |

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*We are committed to a sustainable future and to improving the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the community. We are dedicated to environmental improvements that foster a sustainable future and lead to social and economical improvements in the communities we operate within.*

| Amendments to policy |             |                                                               |
|----------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Date                 | Section     | Amendment                                                     |
| 21/07/26             | 4.1, 5, 5.1 | Addition of 'Wearable Technology' following Trustee feedback. |
|                      |             |                                                               |

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## 1. Introduction and aims

At Connex we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our learners, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for learners, learners, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers

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

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

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

## 2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy.

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 Principal is responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and learners accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly, and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

## 4. Use of mobile phones and wearable technology by staff

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance advises that staff (all adults working in the setting) should avoid using their personal mobile phones for non-work-related purposes where learners can see them during the day. This is to promote professionalism, maintain safeguarding standards and model appropriate behaviour for young people.

#### **4.1 Personal mobile phones**

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the setting) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone, while learners are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the setting where learners are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The principal will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, setting staff can use the setting office number 01793 493 905 as a point of emergency contact.

#### **4.2 Data protection**

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential setting information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

#### **4.3 Safeguarding**

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or learners, 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 learners.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of learners, their work, or anything else that could identify a learner. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/trip/activity, this must be done using setting equipment.

#### **4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes**

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct.
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of learners, their work, or anything else that could identify a learner
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the settings office

#### **4.5 Work phones**

Connex provides mobile phones to members of staff as equipment please refer to the trust mobile device policy (2026)

#### **4.6 Sanctions**

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

### **5. Use of mobile phones and wearable technology by learners**

Learners should not use their mobile phones during the day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

Connex have decided to make the environment phone free with the aim to:

- Eliminate distraction from learning caused by mobile phones
- Promote positive behaviour, engagement, and wellbeing
- Prevent misuse of mobile devices, including bullying, filming, upskirting, and academic dishonesty
- Create a safer learning environment and reduce safeguarding risks
- Reinforce a calm and focused culture through consistent rules

This is in line with DfE guidance:

*The Department for Education (DfE) expects schools to implement a policy whereby learners do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the setting day including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.*

#### **5.1 Secure Lockable Phone Pouches – How the System Works**

- At the start of their timetabled session learners will be given a signal-blocking pouch when they enter the building, mobile phones and other personal technology devices are to be placed inside and locked in the pouch under staff supervision
- The pouch remains on the learner's person but cannot be opened until the end of their timetabled session
- At the end of their session/day, staff will support learners to unlock their pouches using unlocking stations
- If a learner leaves early, the pouch will be unlocked by reception staff

#### **5.2 Expectations of Learners**

- Follow all staff instructions regarding pouch use, placing devices into the pouches upon entering the building and ensuring the pouch is locked before transitioning to learning spaces
- Put all devices into the pouch and not bypassing the system (e.g. second phone, magnets, smartwatches)
- Keep as many devices at home as possible, only bringing in devices that are necessary for transport times
- Look after the pouch, including not damaging or defacing it whilst it is in use

#### **5.3 Expectations of Staff**

- Enforce pouch use when learners enter the building, including visual checks and supervised locking of pouches

- Conduct spot checks during the day if misuse is suspected, using rewards where appropriate
- Unlock pouches at the end of the learner's session/day
- Report damage, missing pouches or misuse to a member of the SLT
- Keep the unlock station secure and inaccessible to learners outside of designated times

#### 5.4 Staff Training and Implementation Details

- All staff will be trained in how to lock and unlock the pouches, along with the unlocking station security. Keys for the unlocking station will be kept in the Admin lock box, with Admin staff locking and unlocking the station at the start and end of the day.
- If learners are reluctant to secure their phone in a pouch, then SLT will be on hand to support. Support can also be accessed throughout the day from SLT with learners who damage their pouches. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of all staff to support learners to secure their pouches and look after them during the day.

#### 5.5 Expectations of Parents and Carers

- Reinforce the message that phones must not be used during the academic day
- Accept that any damage to a pouch will be chargeable (current cost is £15 per pouch, which will be invoiced by Connex)
- Use the Connex reception as the point of contact in emergencies – learners are not contactable during the day on their mobile phones (as their phones will be in their pouches with the signal being blocked)

#### 5.6 Use of smartwatches and wearable technology by learners

The DfE's [non-statutory mobile phone guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the setting chooses to include in their policy.

Any smart watch or wearable technology capable of accessing the internet, sending messages, making calls or recording audio or video will be subject to the setting's mobile phone procedures. Learners will be required to place such devices in a designated phone pouch for the duration of the settings day.

#### 5.7 Exceptions

Any required exceptions (e.g. for medical or SEN reasons) must be agreed in writing with the SENCO and Principal. These will be rare and handled discreetly on an individual learner basis, and recorded clearly on each learner's Personalised Support Plan.

Any learners who are given permission must then adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

#### 5.8 Emergencies

In an emergency, parents must contact the Connex reception. If a learner requires urgent contact with home, staff will facilitate this through appropriate channels.

#### 5.9 Sanctions

| Breach                    | Restriction/Action      |                            |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Phone not placed in pouch | Learners first refusal  | Verbal reminder from staff |
|                           | Learners second refusal | Verbal reminder from SLT   |

|                                                                |                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                | Learners third refusal                                                                                                                                     | Verbal reminder from SLT, with reminder parents will be called      |
|                                                                | Learners forth refusal                                                                                                                                     | Parents/Guardians called to support learner over the phone          |
|                                                                | Learners fifth refusal                                                                                                                                     | Parents/Guardians to come and collect mobile device or their child. |
|                                                                | Actions fully explained below table                                                                                                                        |                                                                     |
| Attempting to bypass the system (e.g. 2nd phone, unlock tools) | The learner will be reminded of the expectations.<br>A face to face meeting with parents, the learner and SLT after a second attempt to bypass the system. |                                                                     |
| Vandalism or damage to pouch                                   | Parents will be invoiced for £15 to cover the cost of a new pouch.                                                                                         |                                                                     |
| Persistent refusal (such as daily for a period of a week)      | A meeting will be held between parents and SLT to review the reasons for refusal and identifying next steps                                                |                                                                     |

### 5.10 Staff guidance steps for breaches

- Staff will hand learners a pouch when they sign into the building, secure the pouch and ask the learner to keep it safe for the remainder of the day.
- If learners do not place their mobile phones and other technology into the pouches and/or secure their pouch, they will receive one reminder from the staff member with them.
- If learners still do not place their mobile phones and other technology into the pouches and/or secure their pouch, a member of SLT will be called to support. The learner will receive two requests from the SLT member to place their mobile phones and other technology into the pouch and/or secure their pouch. If the learner complies, they will continue to their learning space and their timetabled sessions. With the second request, SLT will remind the learner that parents/carers will be called.
- If the learner still chooses to not comply, then their parents/carers will be contacted. Parents/carers will be asked to speak to their child and encourage them to place their mobile phones and other technology into the pouches and/or secure their pouch. If the learner chooses to continue to not comply, then the parent/carer will be asked to come and collect the phone and/or their child.
- Learners will wait with a member of staff in the reception area and will not be allowed access to the rest of the building whilst still in possession of their mobile phones and other technology.

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The setting will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, disability)
- The learner's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The setting takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- 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

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

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on site during the setting day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of learners, unless it's at a public event (such as a setting fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with learners

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising setting trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to contact other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of learners, their work, or anything else that could identify a learner

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for learners using their phones, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

Parents/carers must use the office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the day. They must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the day.

## **7. Loss, theft or damage**

Learners must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The setting accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on setting premises or transport, during setting visits or trips, or while learners are travelling to and from Connex.

Lost phones should be returned to the office. The setting will then attempt to contact the owner.

## **8. Monitoring and review**

The setting is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on learners' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the setting will consider:

- Feedback from parents/carers and learners
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents

- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and reviewed annually or in response to updated DfE guidance.

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of Angus Brereton, Principal in a timely manner.

## 9. Links with other Policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- SEND policy
- SEN information report
- Safeguarding policy
- Anti bullying policy
- Child-on-child abuse policy
- Acceptable use/online safety Policy
- Data Protection

**This policy is adopted by the BE Board of Trustees and will be reviewed every year or earlier if change to legislation.**

Signed:  CEO

Signed:  Chairman of BE Board of Trustees

Date: 08.09.2026

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**This policy is adopted by Connex (part of the Brunel Education) and will be reviewed every year or earlier if change to legislation.**

Signed:  Principal

Signed:  Chief Education Officer

Date: 08.09.2026

## Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement for learners allowed to bring their phones to setting due to exceptional circumstances

### Acceptable use agreement

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons, unless the teacher specifically allows you to.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other learners.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of setting staff or other learners without their consent.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating learners or staff via:
  - a. Email
  - b. Text/messaging app
  - c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

| LEARNER DETAILS                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Learner name:</b>            |  |
| <b>Class:</b>                   |  |
| <b>Parent/carer(s) name(s):</b> |  |

  

| FOR SETTING USE ONLY  |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Authorised by:</b> |  |
| <b>Date:</b>          |  |