The Blue Kite Academy Trust

Title of Policy/Procedure	Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy
Reviewer(s):	BKAT Central Team
To be read in conjunction with the following policies:	• Trust and School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy • School Behaviour Policy • Online Safety Policy • Staff Code of Conduct • Acceptable Use Policy • Educational Visits Policy • Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy • Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy • DfE statutory guidance: Mobile phones in schools • DfE statutory guidance: Searching, screening and confiscation at school.
Consultation Process	Headteachers
Policy Date:	1 November 2026
Review Date:	1 July 2027
This policy has been ratified by:	• Board of Trustees • Local Governing Body

BLUE KITE ACADEMY TRUST
Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy
The Vine Schools (Christian Malford, Seagry and Somerfords' Walter Powell)

This policy has been developed having regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Mobile phones in schools, updated on 29 June 2026, which schools should follow from 1 September 2026.

Trust-wide expectation
All Blue Kite Academy Trust schools will operate as mobile phone-free environments by default. Pupils must not use or have access to mobile phones or personal smart communication devices throughout the school day. Any exception must be individual, necessary, proportionate, authorised in advance and limited to a specified purpose, time and location. School-level procedures may determine how devices are handed in, securely stored, recorded and returned, but must not weaken this Trust-wide expectation.

Related policies and guidance:
- Trust and School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- School Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- DfE statutory guidance: Mobile phones in schools
- DfE statutory guidance: Searching, screening and confiscation at school.

1. Policy Purpose, Scope and Application
Blue Kite Academy Trust is committed to providing safe, inclusive and focused learning environments in which all pupils can learn, play and develop without unnecessary distraction. Limiting access to mobile phones and other personal smart communication devices during the school day supports pupils' concentration, safeguarding and wellbeing, reduces opportunities for bullying and encourages positive social interaction.

This policy establishes consistent Trust-wide expectations for the possession, storage and use of mobile phones, smart watches and other personal smart communication devices. It applies to:
- all pupils attending Blue Kite Academy Trust schools;
- parents and carers;
- staff and volunteers; and
- visitors and contractors when on school premises or participating in school-led activities.

For the purposes of this policy, a personal smart communication device includes:
- mobile phones and smartphones;
- smart watches capable of sending or receiving calls, messages or notifications;
- devices capable of accessing the internet;
- devices capable of taking photographs or recording audio or video (e.g. smart glasses); and
- other personal electronic devices with functionality similar to a mobile phone.

This policy does not apply to devices supplied by or on behalf of the school for authorised educational use. Any approved use of a pupil-owned laptop or tablet will be governed by the school's acceptable-use procedures. Mobile phones must not form part of a bring-your-own-device arrangement.

The prohibition applies from the point at which a pupil enters the school site at the beginning of the day until the pupil leaves the site at the end of the day. This includes breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and other school-led provision taking place on the school site. Separate arrangements for educational visits, residential visits and activities taking place away from the school site are set out in Section 7.

2. Policy Principles

The Trust's approach is underpinned by the following principles:

- Safeguarding children is paramount.
- Learning time should be free from unnecessary distraction.
- Pupils should be encouraged to interact positively during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The school environment should support pupils' wellbeing.
- Schools should minimise risks associated with bullying, online harm, inappropriate communication and unauthorised photography or recording.
- Any exceptions, reasonable adjustments, sanctions and confiscation arrangements will be necessary, reasonable and proportionate.

3. Trust-wide Expectations for Pupils

3.1 Mobile phone-free environment

Blue Kite Academy Trust schools are mobile phone-free environments by default. Pupils must not use or have access to a mobile phone or other personal smart communication device at any point during the school day, including lessons, movement around the school, breaktimes and lunchtimes.

3.2 Devices covered

This expectation applies to all personal smart communication devices defined in Section 1, including smartphones and smart watches with communication, internet or recording functionality. A simple fitness tracker without communication, internet-access or recording functionality may be permitted at the Headteacher's discretion.

3.3 Prohibited use

Pupils must not:

- access or use a personal device during lessons, transitions, breaktimes or lunchtimes;
- make or receive calls, messages or notifications;
- access social media;
- photograph, film or record pupils, staff or visitors;
- share messages, images, audio or recordings relating to school;
- use a personal device to contact parents or carers during the school day; or
- use a personal device on an educational visit unless an individual exception has been authorised in advance under this policy.

4. Bringing a Device to School, Storage and Return

4.1 Devices required for travel

Where a parent or carer determines that a pupil needs a mobile phone for safety reasons before or after school, bringing the device to school does not permit the pupil to access or use it during the school day.

Trust schools reserve the right to prohibit a pupil from bringing a device onto the school site where this is considered necessary and proportionate.

4.2 Switching off and secure storage
The device must be switched off before the pupil enters the school site.
The device must not be used anywhere on the school site.
The device must be handed in or placed in the school's approved secure-storage arrangement immediately on arrival.

4.3 School-specific arrangements
Each school must complete Appendix 1, setting out its arrangements for receiving, recording, securely storing and returning devices. These arrangements must be communicated clearly to pupils and parents and must not weaken the Trust-wide expectation.

4.4 Responsibility for personal devices
Personal devices are brought onto school premises at the pupil's and parent's own risk. The Trust and its schools will take reasonable care of devices handed in or confiscated in accordance with this policy but cannot guarantee against loss, theft or damage. Any concern will be considered in light of the particular circumstances.

5. Exceptions, Individual Circumstances and Reasonable Adjustments
The default expectation is that pupils will not have access to mobile phones or personal smart communication devices during the school day. The Headteacher may authorise an exception where this is necessary:

- as a reasonable adjustment for a disabled pupil;
- to support the management of a medical condition;
- to meet an identified safeguarding or welfare need;
- because of exceptional individual or home circumstances, including, where relevant, the pupil's responsibilities as a young carer; or
- to support another clearly evidenced need where limited access is necessary and proportionate.

Any exception must be agreed in advance and recorded. It must identify the reason, permitted device, specific purpose, authorised times and locations, supervision arrangements and review date. An exception does not provide unrestricted access to or use of the device.

6. Communication During the School Day
Parents and carers who need to contact their child during the school day must contact the school office. The school will relay messages or facilitate contact where necessary. Pupils must not use a personal mobile phone or smart communication device to contact parents or carers unless this forms part of an authorised individual arrangement. Where a pupil needs to contact home, this must take place through the school's agreed procedures.

7. Educational Visits, Residential Visits and Out-of-hours Activities
7.1 Visits during the school day
The normal prohibition applies on educational visits taking place during the school day. Pupils must not use personal mobile phones or smart communication devices unless an individual exception has been authorised in advance for medical, disability, safeguarding or other exceptional reasons. School-owned devices should normally be used where technology is required for an educational purpose.

7.2 Residential visits and out-of-hours activities

For residential visits or activities taking place outside the normal school day, the Headteacher or visit leader will determine appropriate arrangements through the visit risk assessment. Any permitted use will be limited to specified purposes, times and locations and communicated to pupils and parents before the visit.

8. Breaches, Sanctions and Confiscation

8.1 Responding to a breach

Breaches of this policy will be addressed in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. Possible responses may include a reminder and correction, confiscation, parental notification, parent or carer collection, withdrawal of permission to bring a device onto the school site, or another proportionate sanction.

8.2 Confiscation

Authorised staff may confiscate a device where this policy has been breached, where there is a safeguarding concern, or where there is reason to believe that the device is relevant to a behaviour or safeguarding incident. Confiscated devices must be recorded, stored securely and returned in accordance with the school-specific arrangements in Appendix 1.

The nature and duration of any sanction or confiscation will be reasonable and proportionate. Staff will consider the seriousness and circumstances of the breach, the intended disciplinary outcome and relevant individual circumstances, including the pupil's age, SEND, disability, medical needs and safeguarding context.

Repeated or serious breaches may result in further sanctions under the school's Behaviour Policy, a requirement for the device to be collected by a parent or carer, or withdrawal of permission to bring a device onto the school site. Where a breach raises a safeguarding concern, staff must follow Section 10 of this policy.

9. Searching and Concerns About Device Content

9.1 Searching for a device

This policy forms part of each school's approach to behaviour and must be read and implemented alongside the school's Behaviour Policy. Each school's Behaviour Policy and school rules will identify mobile phones and personal smart communication devices as items which authorised staff may search for where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil possesses one in breach of the school rules. Any search will be undertaken in accordance with current statutory guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

9.2 Concerns about content

Staff must not routinely access or search content held on a pupil's device. Where there is a concern about content, staff must secure the device, report the matter to the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead, and follow current statutory guidance, the Trust's safeguarding procedures and applicable legal requirements.

9.3 Suspected crime or significant harm

Where there is a suspected crime or risk of significant harm, the school will consider whether the device should be passed to the police without its content being accessed by school staff.

10. Safeguarding and Online Safety
Mobile phones and smart communication devices can present safeguarding risks, including cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content, sharing harmful or illegal images, contact from unknown individuals, online exploitation and unauthorised photography or recording.

Where a breach or suspected device content indicates that a pupil may be suffering, or may be at risk of, harm, staff must report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy and follow the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The DSL will determine whether pastoral support, early help, referral to children's social care or contact with another agency is required.

Where an incident raises a safeguarding concern, the safeguarding response will take priority. Any behavioural response will be considered alongside, and must not impede, action required to protect a child.

This policy should be read alongside the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy and each school's Behaviour Policy.

11. Expectations for Staff, Volunteers, Visitors and Contractors
11.1 Staff and volunteers
Staff and volunteers must consistently model and enforce the Trust's mobile phone expectations. They must not use personal mobile phones for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day. Limited professional use may be authorised where necessary for an approved school purpose, such as multi-factor authentication or another agreed operational requirement. Such use must be professional, proportionate and consistent with safeguarding, staff conduct, acceptable-use and data-protection requirements.

Staff and volunteers must not use a personal device to photograph, video or record pupils unless expressly authorised under an approved Trust or school procedure.

11.2 Visitors and contractors
Visitors and contractors must not use personal mobile phones in the presence of pupils unless authorised for an appropriate operational reason. They must not photograph, video or record pupils using a personal device. These expectations will be communicated through the school's safeguarding and visitor procedures.

12. Supporting Pupil Understanding
Pupils will be reminded of the policy, including the consequences of breaching it, at the start of each academic year and at appropriate intervals. Through the curriculum and wider safeguarding education, pupils will be taught about:

- distraction and loss of focus;
- disruption to learning;
- bullying and online harm;
- personal information, images and data;
- responsible online behaviour; and
- the social, emotional and educational benefits of a mobile phone-free school environment.

13. Publication, Communication and Induction

Each school must:

- publish this policy and its completed school-specific arrangements on its website;
- explain the policy, its rationale and the consequences of breaches to parents and carers;
- include the expectations in pupil, staff and volunteer induction;
- communicate relevant expectations to visitors and contractors;
- make storage, collection and emergency-contact arrangements clear;
- communicate any material change before it takes effect; and
- respond to parental questions or concerns in a timely manner.

14. Roles and Responsibilities

14.1 Trust Board

- Approve and review this policy.
- Oversee compliance with statutory and safeguarding expectations.
- Seek assurance that the policy is implemented consistently across the Trust.

14.2 Local governing bodies

- Seek assurance that the policy is implemented consistently within the school.
- Monitor relevant patterns, risks and exceptions through appropriate reporting.
- Support clear communication of the Trust-wide expectation within the school community.

14.3 Headteachers

- Implement this policy and establish school-specific procedures.
- Ensure staff understand and apply the expectations consistently.
- Monitor implementation and ensure breaches are recorded and patterns reviewed.
- Review whether individual exceptions remain necessary and proportionate.
- Report implementation assurance to the local governing body and Trust as required.
- Ensure new staff, pupils, parents and carers understand the policy.

14.4 Staff and volunteers

- Implement the policy consistently.
- Model appropriate personal device use.
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately.
- Apply sanctions fairly and proportionately.

14.5 Parents and carers

- Support the school's expectations.
- Discuss safe and responsible technology use with their child.
- Ensure any device brought to school complies with this policy and the school-specific arrangements.
- Use the school office as the route for contacting their child during the school day.

14.6 Pupils

- Follow the Trust-wide expectation and school-specific procedures.
- Hand in or store devices as required.
- Use any authorised exception only for its agreed purpose, time and location.
- Report concerns about inappropriate device use to a trusted adult.

15. Monitoring, Assurance and Review

Monitoring will consider the consistency of implementation, patterns of breaches, the use and review of individual exceptions, safeguarding concerns and feedback from schools. The policy will be reviewed by 31 July 2027 following its first full year of implementation and at least every two years thereafter. It may be reviewed earlier following changes to legislation or statutory guidance, safeguarding learning, implementation evidence or Trust practice.

Appendix 1: School-specific Arrangements

Each school must complete this appendix before the policy is approved locally or published. The arrangements must reflect the Trust-wide expectation and be communicated clearly to pupils, parents, staff and relevant adults.

Required detail	School-specific arrangement
School name	The Vine Schools (Christian Malford, Seagry and Somerfords' Walter Powell)
Named responsible leader	Shaun Carter
Device hand-in point	School Office
Staff responsible for receiving devices	Class Teachers, Headteachers and Admin Staff
How receipt is recorded	Recorded on sign in, sign out sheet
Secure-storage location	Lockable draw in the office
Daily collection and return arrangements	Collection at 8:45am Return at 3:15am
Arrangements for uncollected devices	Items kept in lockable draw.
Parent collection following repeated or serious breaches	Headteachers to contact parents regarding collection.
Breakfast club and after-school provision	Breakfast club collection by member of staff on breakfast club duty. After-school club return by member of staff on after-school club duty.
Emergency contact route	Parents and carers: Should contact the school office using the main school telephone number if they need to get an urgent message to their child.
Date local arrangements approved	11.11.26