Leverhulme
Church of England and Community Trust

Mobile Phones and Smart Device Policy

September 2026

Leverhulme Academy Trust

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0.1	September 2026	New Trust wide policy

Purpose

Leverhulme Academy Trust is committed to providing a calm, safe and disruption-free learning environment. The purpose of this policy is to support learning, behaviour, safeguarding, positive social interaction and student wellbeing by removing the distraction and potential risks associated with mobile phones and smart technology during the school day.

In line with Department for Education (DfE) guidance, Leverhulme Academy Trust operates a mobile phone-free environment throughout the school day. The DfE states that schools should be "mobile phone-free environments by default" and that any alternative approach should be by exception only.[1] As such we have adopted the DfE's "not seen, heard or used" model.

Expectations

Students may bring a mobile phone to school for use on their journey to and from school. However:

- Mobile phones must be switched off before entering the school site.
- Mobile phones must remain switched off and stored securely inside a school bag throughout the school day.[2]
- Mobile phones must not be carried in blazer pockets, trouser pockets, skirts, coats or any other accessible location.
- Smart watches and other wearable technology capable of receiving messages, notifications, internet access, photographs, recordings or phone calls are not permitted.[3]
- Earbuds, headphones and similar devices are not permitted unless authorised by a member of staff for a specific educational purpose.

Mobile-Free School Environment

To maintain a fully mobile-free environment:

- Mobile phones and smart devices must not be seen, heard or used anywhere on the school site.[2]
- Students must not access phones during lessons, social times, movement around school, enrichment activities, educational visits or detention.[2]
- Bags and coats must not be taken into student toilet facilities.
- Students may be required to leave bags and coats in designated areas before entering toilets.
- Any attempt to use bags or coats to conceal the use of a mobile phone or smart device will be treated as a serious breach of this policy.
- Students should use social times to interact positively with their peers and engage fully in school life without the distraction of mobile technology.[1]

Confiscation Procedures

Any mobile phone, smart watch or prohibited smart device that is:

- visible;
- carried in a blazer /trouser pocket;
- seen by a member of staff;
- heard;

- handled;
- accessed; or
- used

will be confiscated immediately.[4]

Students are expected to hand over devices when instructed by a member of staff. Refusal to comply will be treated as a serious breach of the school's Behaviour Policy and may result in removal from lessons, internal suspension or further sanctions.

Students are not permitted to retrieve confiscated devices before the end of the school day (3:10pm), unless authorised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Sanctions

Sanctions will escalate for repeated breaches of this policy.[4] All breaches will result in the device being confiscated and an escalated tariff of detention issued.

Persistent Breaches

- Internal suspension or other significant sanctions in line with the Behaviour Policy.
- Placement on behaviour monitoring or report.
- Meeting with parents/carers.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play an important role in supporting the school's mobile phone-free environment.[5]

Leverhulme Academy Trust will:

- Publish and communicate this policy to students, parents/carers and staff.[5]
- Clearly explain the rationale for the policy and the consequences for breaches.[5]
- Ensure students understand the expectations regarding mobile phones and smart devices.[5]
- Contact parents/carers where repeated breaches occur.

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Support the school's mobile phone-free approach.[5]
- Reinforce the expectations outlined in this policy at home.
- Ensure students understand the consequences of breaching the policy.
- Contact students through the school office in the event of an emergency.

Loss, Theft and Damage

Students bring mobile phones, smart watches and other electronic devices onto the school site at their own risk.

Leverhulme Academy Trust accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of any mobile phone, smart watch or electronic device brought onto the school premises. Students are strongly encouraged not to bring valuable devices into school unless necessary for their journey to and from school.

Educational Visits Exception

The Headteacher may authorise the use of mobile phones on specific educational visits where their use directly supports the curriculum and/or enhances learning outcomes. Such use will be supervised by staff, limited to the educational activity being undertaken, and may be withdrawn at any time. Where this is the case:

- Phones remain switched off or stored during travel.
- Phones are only taken out when instructed by staff.
- Use is restricted to educational use for identified tasks only.
- No social media access.
- No messaging or phone calls, unless an emergency and contacting the school emergency number.
- No photographing members of the public without permission.
- Images must be uploaded to school systems and deleted from personal devices from home; access to mobile phones on return in school will not be permitted.
- Any misuse results in immediate withdrawal of permission and confiscation of the mobile phone.

Exceptional Circumstances

Any exception to this policy must be approved by the Headteacher and will normally only apply where there is a documented medical, safeguarding or SEND requirement.

Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy should be read alongside:

- DfE Mobile Phones in Schools Guidance (2024, updated 2026).
- DfE Behaviour in Schools
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Leverhulme Academy Trust Behaviour Policy.

School staff have statutory powers to confiscate prohibited items and apply sanctions where students breach school rules in accordance with relevant legislation and DfE guidance.