Mobile Phone, Smart Device and Wearable Technology Policy

1. Purpose

At Queensway School, the safety, wellbeing and education of our pupils are our highest priorities. Queensway School is a mobile phone-free school. This policy safeguards pupils, protects privacy, promotes positive behaviour and ensures that teaching and learning are not disrupted by personal devices.
This policy has been developed in response to the Department for Education statutory guidance "Mobile phones in schools", updated in June 2026 and applicable from September 2026. The national guidance states that schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default, with exceptions made only where necessary. DfE guidance: Mobile phones in schools (GOV.UK)

The policy also reflects Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), the school's safeguarding responsibilities, data protection requirements and Oxfordshire County Council expectations for maintained schools. It supports the school values of Respect, Kindness and Resilience by encouraging safe, responsible and considerate use of technology.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all:

- Pupils
- Staff
- Governors
- Volunteers
- Student teachers and placement students
- Contractors
- Visitors
- Parents and carers whilst on school premises or attending school events

For the purposes of this policy, "mobile phones and smart technology" includes devices capable of communication, tracking, internet access, messaging, photography, video or audio recording. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Mobile phones and smartphones, including restricted or "locked-down" smartphones
- Tablets where used as a personal communications device
- Smart watches and other communication-enabled wearables
- Smart glasses and other camera- or microphone-enabled wearable technology
- Bluetooth/GPS tracking devices, including AirTags or similar trackers, where brought to school or attached to a pupil's belongings
- Any other device with similar communication, notification, tracking or recording functionality

The Headteacher will determine whether a device falls within the scope of this policy, taking account of its functionality and the individual circumstances.

3. Mobile Phone-Free School

Queensway School operates a mobile phone-free environment. Personal mobile phones and smart devices must not be visible or used whilst on school premises when children are present, unless specifically authorised by the Headteacher or permitted as an agreed reasonable adjustment or individual exception.
This approach supports:

- Safeguarding
- Teaching and learning
- Positive behaviour
- Social interaction
- Privacy and dignity
- Effective supervision of pupils

4. Pupils

General Expectations:

Pupils must not bring personal mobile phones, smartphones or smart devices to school unless they meet an exception set out in this policy or an individual arrangement has been agreed by the Headteacher.

Pupils must not:

- Use mobile phones during the school day
- Bring smartphones onto the school site unless specifically authorised
- Wear communication-enabled smart watches or wearable devices
- Photograph, film or audio record others
- Access digital content using personal devices whilst on school premises

Any breach of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and, where appropriate, safeguarding procedures.

Medical, SEND, Young Carer and Other Individual Exceptions:

The school recognises that a pupil may need access to a device because of a medical condition, disability or SEND need, Young Carer responsibilities, or other exceptional individual circumstances. Examples may include a phone or connected device required for continuous glucose monitoring or another agreed health need. Any exception must be agreed in advance with the Headteacher and, where appropriate, recorded in the pupil's individual healthcare plan, SEND provision, safeguarding plan or other relevant school record. The school will make reasonable adjustments where required and will agree how, when and where the device may be used or stored. Permission applies only to the agreed purpose and does not provide unrestricted use of the device during the school day.

Year 6 Exception:

The school recognises that some Year 6 pupils begin travelling independently to and from school during Term 6. A mobile phone may be brought to school only when all the following conditions apply:

- The pupil is in Year 6
- The pupil is in Term 6
- The pupil travels independently to and from school
- A parent or carer believes a phone is required for safety purposes
- The phone is an approved device, as defined below
- A parental agreement has been signed

This arrangement exists solely to support safe travel to and from school.

Approved Devices:

Only a basic mobile phone ("first phone") is permitted under the Year 6 travel arrangement. The device must:

- Allow phone calls and text messages only
- Have limited functionality
- Not provide unrestricted internet access
- Not support social media applications
- Not allow app downloads
- Not function as a smartphone

A smartphone that has merely been restricted or "locked down" by parental controls will not normally meet this definition, because its underlying functionality remains that of a smartphone. The Headteacher reserves the right to determine whether a device meets these requirements.

Storage of Approved Phones:

Any approved mobile phone must:

- Be switched off before entering the school site
- Be handed to a member of staff on arrival
- Be stored securely by the school for the duration of the school day
- Be collected by the pupil at the end of the school day

The school accepts no responsibility for loss, theft or damage to personal devices brought onto school premises, except where liability arises by law.

5. Smart Watches, Wearables and Tracking Devices

Simple analogue or digital watches used solely for telling the time are permitted. Pupils must not wear or use any watch or wearable device capable of:

- Making or receiving calls
- Sending or receiving messages or notifications
- Accessing the internet or social media
- Taking photographs
- Recording video or audio
- Using communication applications

Smart glasses and similar wearable devices with recording, communication or internet capability are prohibited unless specifically authorised for an agreed individual need.

AirTags and similar Bluetooth/GPS tracking devices must not be used to track pupils, staff or other individuals during the school day. Where a parent believes a tracking device is necessary for a specific safeguarding, medical, SEND or other exceptional reason, this must be discussed with and authorised by the Headteacher in advance. The school will determine any conditions for its use.

Communication-enabled smart watches and wearable technology will be treated in the same way as smartphones under this policy.

6. Confiscation and Return of Devices

Where a prohibited device is seen, heard or used in breach of this policy, or where a pupil fails to hand in an approved device as required, a member of staff may confiscate it in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and applicable DfE guidance. The device will be switched off where practicable and stored securely.

The school will require a parent or carer to collect the device and may withdraw permission for the pupil to bring a device to school.

If the device is connected to a safeguarding concern, suspected prohibited content or another serious incident, the school may retain it for longer while the matter is managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures and the law. Staff will not routinely access or search the contents of a device. Any search will only take place where there is a lawful basis and in line with current statutory guidance. Parents/carers will be informed as appropriate.

7. Staff Use of Personal Devices

Staff have a professional responsibility to model safe and appropriate technology use. Personal mobile phones must be stored securely and out of sight whilst pupils are present and must not be used during teaching, supervision or other pupil-facing duties except in exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Headteacher. Staff must not:

- Use personal devices to photograph or record pupils
- Use personal devices to communicate with pupils
- Store pupil images or recordings on personal devices

Staff are permitted to use their personal mobile phones within the staffroom, away from children.

Where photographs, video or audio recordings are required for educational or school purposes, only authorised school equipment and systems must be used. Staff must comply with the Staff Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use Agreements, data protection requirements, and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

8. Off-Site Activities, Educational Visits and Residentials

The principles of this policy apply during school-organised activities away from the school site, including educational visits, sporting events and residential trips. Unless the Headteacher or visit leader has agreed

otherwise, pupils must not use personal mobile phones or smart devices during an off-site activity. Any individual medical, SEND, Young Carer or safeguarding exception must be agreed in advance.

Staff leading or accompanying visits are permitted to carry a mobile phone or school communication device where this is required for safeguarding, emergency contact, navigation or visit management. Staff must continue to follow the Staff Code of Conduct, safeguarding procedures and educational visit risk assessment. Parents and carers must use the school's agreed emergency contact arrangements rather than contacting pupils directly during the visit, unless otherwise instructed by the school.

9. Visitors, Governors, Volunteers and Contractors

All adults visiting Queensway School must support the school's mobile phone-free environment. Visitors, governors, volunteers and contractors must:

- Keep personal devices out of sight when children are present
- Refrain from using mobile phones around pupils unless authorised
- Not photograph, film or record children using personal devices
- Follow all safeguarding instructions provided by the school

Visitors requiring an urgent call must do so away from pupils and in a location agreed by staff. Failure to follow these expectations may result in an individual being asked to leave the site.

10. Parents and Carers on Site, including Drop-Off and Collection

Parents and carers must support the mobile phone-free environment whenever they are on the school site or attending a school activity. During drop-off and collection, adults must not use or have mobile phones visibly in use in areas where pupils are present, except in a genuine emergency or where specifically authorised by the school. Phones must be put away before entering the school grounds and remain away until leaving the site.

If an adult uses a phone around pupils, a member of staff will remind them of the expectation and ask them to put the device away or move to an agreed location away from children. Persistent or deliberate refusal to follow this expectation may result in the individual being asked to leave the site and, where necessary, further action being taken under the school's procedures for managing unacceptable behaviour on school premises.

11. Photography, Video and Audio Recording at School Events

The privacy, dignity and safeguarding of children and adults must be protected at all times. No pupil, parent, visitor, volunteer, contractor or member of staff may photograph, film or audio record children using a personal device whilst on school premises unless explicit permission has been given by the Headteacher for a specific event or purpose.

At events such as nativities, assemblies, performances and sports day, the school will tell families in advance whether personal photography or filming is permitted. Where permission is given, images or recordings must be for personal family use only, must not deliberately focus on children other than the parent/carer's own child, and must not be uploaded to social media or shared publicly where other identifiable pupils are visible without the appropriate consent. If the school states that photography or filming is not permitted, all adults must comply.

The school may use authorised school devices and systems for educational purposes, school communications, safeguarding purposes and celebrating achievement. All images and recordings will be managed in accordance with data protection legislation, school safeguarding procedures and parental consent arrangements.

12. Safeguarding and Online Safety

The misuse of technology can present safeguarding risks including cyberbullying, harassment, recording without consent, sharing inappropriate images or content, breaches of privacy, exposure to inappropriate online material, and online exploitation or abuse.

Any misuse of a mobile phone, smart device or wearable technology that raises a safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where electronic devices are used by pupils for educational purposes, these will normally be school-owned devices operating within the school's filtering and monitoring systems and under staff supervision. Where concerns arise regarding content on a device, school leaders will act in accordance with statutory guidance, safeguarding procedures and relevant legislation.

13. Monitoring, Breaches and Review

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- A reminder of expectations
- Confiscation and secure storage of a device
- Contact with parents or carers
- A requirement for a parent/carer to collect a device
- Withdrawal of permission to bring a device to school
- Behaviour sanctions
- Safeguarding action where appropriate
- An adult being asked to put a device away, move away from pupils or leave the school site

The school reserves the right to take reasonable and proportionate action to maintain the safety, wellbeing and orderly running of the school.

14. Conclusion

Through this policy, Queensway School seeks to provide a safe, respectful and inclusive environment where pupils can learn, develop and thrive free from the distractions and risks associated with personal mobile technology. The policy supports the school's commitment to safeguarding, promotes positive behaviour and helps prepare pupils to use technology responsibly both now and in the future.

15. Review

The Governing Body will review this policy every three years, or sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding guidance or local authority requirements change.