September 2026

Stanwix School – Acceptable Use Mobile Phone Policy for Pupils, Parents and Carers

Introduction

At Stanwix School, we are committed to creating a safe, nurturing and purposeful learning environment where every child can thrive. Whilst some pupils may need a mobile phone for travel safety, mobile phones and smart devices can present safeguarding risks and distract from learning, which is why the school operates as a mobile phone-free environment.

Unless an agreed exception applies, pupils are not permitted to access or use mobile phones or similar smart technology during the school day.

This policy supports our commitment to maintaining high standards of behaviour, safeguarding all members of our school community and promoting positive social interaction.

Scope

This policy applies to all pupils attending Stanwix School and covers mobile phones, smartphones, smart watches and any device capable of making or receiving calls, sending messages, receiving notifications, taking photographs or recording audio or video.

For the purposes of this policy, references to mobile phones also include other smart technology with similar communication or recording capabilities.

Staff, visitors and contractors are subject to a separate Mobile Phone Policy, which sets out expectations for the use of personal devices and reinforces safeguarding responsibilities whilst on the school site. The policy is designed to minimise the risk of inappropriate access, communication, photography or recording, and to ensure that children remain safeguarded throughout the school day.

Mobile Phones in School

Stanwix School does not encourage pupils to bring mobile phones onto the school site. Pupils should only bring a mobile phone where there is a genuine need, such as for personal safety when travelling independently to and from school or where a medical condition requires access to a device.

At Stanwix School, children are able to walk home independently from Year 5 where parental permission has been granted. In these circumstances, a mobile phone may be brought to school for safety purposes. Pupils below Year 5 should only bring a mobile phone in exceptional circumstances and with prior agreement from the school. Such circumstances would normally relate to a medical need or other exceptional welfare considerations.

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If a child is to bring a mobile phone device into school, parents and pupils should complete the agreement/ promise at the bottom of this document.

Stanwix School operates a mobile phone-free environment throughout the entire school day. Mobile phones must not be accessed or used during lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes, assemblies, educational visits, sports days, residentials or at any other time whilst pupils remain under the supervision of the school. Any exception to this expectation will only be made in exceptional circumstances and with prior approval from the Headteacher.

Storage of Mobile Phones

Where a pupil brings a mobile phone to school, it must be switched off before entering the school site.

On arrival in the classroom, the pupil must hand the device to their class teacher for storage. The phone will remain stored throughout the school day and will be returned to the pupil at the end of the day. The school cannot guarantee the safety of any devices that are lost, stolen or broken and children bring them in at their own risk.

Once returned, the phone should be placed immediately into the pupil's bag and must not be switched on or used until they have left the school site.

This arrangement enables pupils who require a phone for their journey to and from school to have access to it when needed, whilst ensuring that the school remains a mobile phone-free environment throughout the day.

The only exception to this arrangement is where a pupil requires a mobile device to support a medical need, such as monitoring blood glucose levels. In these circumstances, the device may be used only for its agreed medical purpose and in accordance with the pupil's healthcare plan.

Smart Watches

Smart watches capable of sending or receiving messages, making or receiving calls, accessing the internet, receiving notifications or recording images, audio or video are not permitted in school.

Parents should be aware that many modern smart watches operate as extensions of mobile phones and therefore fall within this policy.

Where a watch functions solely as a timepiece and has no communication or recording capabilities, the school reserves the right to determine whether it is suitable for use in school.

Medical and Exceptional Circumstances

Stanwix School recognises that some pupils may require access to a mobile device in order to manage a medical condition. This may include, for example, continuous glucose monitoring systems that are linked to a mobile phone.

The school will consider each request individually and will make reasonable adjustments where required. Any agreed arrangements will be documented and communicated to relevant staff.

Communication During the School Day

Parents and carers should not contact pupils directly via mobile phone during the school day.

If a parent or carer needs to pass on an urgent message, they should contact the school office. Office staff will ensure that urgent or important messages are passed on appropriately and promptly.

This enables the school to maintain effective communication with families whilst preserving a mobile phone-free learning environment.

Photography, Recording and Image Sharing

Stanwix School takes its safeguarding responsibilities extremely seriously and expects all pupils and their families to respect the privacy, safety and dignity of every child.

Pupils must not use mobile phones or other smart devices to take photographs, videos or audio recordings of pupils, staff or visitors whilst on or around the school site. Photographs should never be taken and shared of other children whilst wearing school uniform without the permission of their parent / guardian.

The school recognises that some families have safeguarding arrangements in place that require photographs of their children not to be taken or shared. These arrangements must be respected at all times.

Unauthorised photography, recording or sharing of images may constitute a safeguarding concern and will be treated seriously.

Parents are encouraged to discuss consent, privacy and responsible image sharing with children that have a mobile phone. Children should understand that once an image has been shared online, it may be copied, saved or shared further without their knowledge or permission.

Social Media and Online Safety

Stanwix School is committed to teaching pupils how to use technology safely and responsibly. Through our curriculum, pupils learn about online privacy, cyberbullying, digital footprints, online relationships and how to seek support when something online causes concern.

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Parents should be aware that most social media and messaging platforms, including WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok and X, have minimum age requirements. Stanwix School encourages parents and carers to consider these age restrictions carefully and to monitor their child's online activity regularly.

Parents should be aware that applications such as WhatsApp are forms of social media. Once photographs, videos or messages are shared through social media or messaging platforms, there is little control over where that content may be forwarded or stored.

The school strongly encourages parents to monitor their child's online activity, set appropriate parental controls and maintain regular conversations about safe and responsible technology use.

Advice for Parents and Carers When Buying a Child Their First Mobile Phone

Stanwix School recognises that many families choose to provide a child with a mobile phone as they become more independent. If you decide that your child is ready for a phone, we encourage you to consider the following:

- Consider whether a basic phone, rather than a smartphone, would meet your child's needs.
- Delay access to social media platforms until your child is old enough to use them safely and legally.
- Know your child's passwords and explain that this is part of keeping them safe.
- Make use of parental controls and age restrictions.
- Regularly check:
    - Internet search history.
    - Social media accounts and WhatsApp / messaging services (if applicable)
    - Downloaded apps and games.
    - Photographs and videos stored on the device.
    - Contacts and online friendships.
    - Privacy and location settings.
- Discuss consent before taking or sharing photographs.
- Talk about cyberbullying and encourage children to report concerns immediately.
- Make it clear that they should never share personal information, passwords or photographs with people they do not know.
- Keep phones and other devices out of bedrooms overnight.
- Encourage a healthy balance between online and offline activities.
- Create clear family rules and expectations for device use.
- Have regular conversations about their online experiences and remind them that they can always speak to a trusted adult if something worries them.

Regular parental involvement remains one of the most effective ways of keeping children safe online.

Breaches of this Policy

Stanwix School expects all pupils, parents and carers to support this policy. Where a pupil fails to comply with the expectations set out in this document, appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

This may include confiscation of the device, communication with parents or carers, behaviour sanctions or withdrawal of permission to bring a mobile phone onto the school site.

Repeated breaches will be regarded as persistent non-compliance and may result in further sanctions.

Searching and Confiscation

Stanwix School identifies mobile phones and smart devices as items that may be searched for where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of, or using, a device in breach of this policy.

Any search will be undertaken by authorised staff in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and Department for Education guidance. Any search will be carried out sensitively and proportionately, taking full account of the pupil's age, individual needs, wellbeing and personal circumstances.

Safeguarding

Any concerns relating to the misuse of a mobile phone or smart device will be considered within the context of safeguarding and child protection.

Where the use of a device gives rise to concerns regarding bullying, cyberbullying, inappropriate image sharing, online abuse, harassment or a pupil's welfare, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

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Stanwix School Mobile Phone Promise -Pupil Agreement

At Stanwix School, we want everyone to be safe, happy and ready to learn. If I bring a mobile phone to school, I agree to follow the school's Mobile Phone Policy.

I Promise To:

☐ Keep my mobile phone switched off before entering the school site.
☐ Hand my mobile phone to my class teacher as soon as I arrive in class.
☐ Not use my mobile phone during the school day unless I have a medical exemption agreed by the school.
☐ Place my mobile phone straight into my bag when it is returned to me at the end of the school day.
☐ Wait until I have left the school site before switching on or using my mobile phone.
☐ Never use a mobile phone, smart watch or other device to take photographs, videos or recordings of other children, staff or visitors.
☐ Respect the privacy and safety of others both in school and online.
☐ Use technology responsibly and report anything online that worries or upsets me to a trusted adult.
☐ Follow the Stanwix School Mobile Phone Policy at all times.

My Promise

I understand that Stanwix School is a mobile phone-free environment. I understand that these rules are in place to help keep me and others safe, support learning and protect everyone's wellbeing.

Pupil Name		Class	
Pupil Signature		Date:	

Parent/Carer Agreement

I have read and discussed the Stanwix School Mobile Phone Policy with my child. I understand the school's expectations and agree to support them in following the policy. I understand that:

☐ My child should only bring a mobile phone to school where there is a genuine need.
☐ Mobile phones must be switched off and handed to the class teacher on arrival.
☐ The school office should be used if I need to pass a message to my child during the school day.

Parent/ Carer Name		Date	
Signature			

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