PENK VALLEY ACADEMY TRUST

Mobile Phone Policy

Adopted by Trustees:	
Signed:	
Date:	Summer 2026
This policy is reviewed annually by the Audit Finance & Risk Committee.	
Next Review date:	Summer 2029

COLLABORATION CHALLENGE CURIOSITY CARE

POLICY INFORMATION

Date of last review:	Summer 2024	**Review period:**	3 yearly
Date ratified by Trustees:	Summer 2026	**Trustee committee responsible:**	Audit Finance & Risk
Policy owner:	C00	**Executive team member responsible:**	C00

Reviews/revisions

Review date	Changes made	By whom
2017	JA/NF/DS/HJ/BW Federation SLT	JA/NF/DS/HJ/BW
2017	2017 – TP – SJFS added.	TP
2018	2018 – TP – updated for PVAT.	TP
2020	2020 – Full review	JF (WHS)
2024		DP(WHS)AG (PMS) HB (PFS).
2024	2024 – Addition of MFA and Work Mobile information. Review Changes made to Penkridge Middle School section.	AG (PMS), HB (PFS), RN (MB), SL (SMSC), EC (SJ), AC (TREA).
2026	Multiple changes to bring in line with DFE and ofsted. General format change	COO + Headteachers

Equality and GDPR

All Penk Valley Academy Trust policies should be read in conjunction with our Equal Opportunities and GDPR policies.

Statement of principle – Equality

We will take all possible steps to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, either directly or indirectly against any individual or group of individuals. When compiling, monitoring and reviewing the policy we will consider the likely impact on the promotion of all aspects of equality as described in the Equality Act 2010.

Statement of principle – GDPR

Penk Valley Academy Trust recognises the serious issues that can occur as a consequence in failing to protect an individual adult's or child's personal and sensitive data. These include emotional distress, physical safety, child protection, loss of assets, fraud and other criminal acts.

Penk Valley Academy Trust is therefore committed to the protection of all personal and sensitive data for which it holds responsibility as the Data Controller and the handling of such data in line with the data protection principles and the Data Protection Act (DPA)/GDPR.

Penk Valley Academy Trust will be referred to as **PVAT** for the remainder of the document which includes all schools who are members of PVAT, business operations and centralised services.

Introduction and Aims

The policy refers to electronic devices such as mobile phones, smart watches, tablet or handheld devices and their accessories. This list is not exhaustive and may be reviewed earlier than proposed

The aim of this policy is to protect children from harm by ensuring the appropriate management and use of mobile phones, smart watches, tablet or handheld devices, by everyone who comes into contact with the setting. This policy is part of a suite of policies in order to support Keeping Children Safe in Education.

This policy is for staff, volunteers, committee members, children, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

In line with Department for Education guidance, all PVAT schools operate as mobile phone-free environments by default. The use of mobile phones and other smart devices is prohibited for pupils throughout the entire school day, including lessons, transitions between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtimes. Any exceptions to this position are limited, clearly defined and agreed in advance, and are made only where necessary to meet individual pupil needs.

Definition of Mobile Phones and Smart Devices

For the purposes of this policy, "mobile phones" includes smartphones and any device capable of sending or receiving messages or notifications via mobile networks, or of recording audio, images or video. This includes, but is not limited to, smart watches and similar wearable technology.

Mobile Phone Use for Work Related Purposes – Staff

- Phones should be on silent or switched off and kept out of sight during class time and kept safely in classroom cupboards, lockers or the school office drawers.
- Personal mobiles if used, should only be used to carry out professional duties such as MFA (Multifactor authentication) or in emergency situations.
- The personal use of mobile phones should be limited to non contact time when no children are present.
- It is recommended that personal mobile phones are security marked, password protected and insured.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example; to take recordings of children or sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and tablets.
- We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on off-site activities. However, staff should ensure that mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).
- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office or school mobile phone. Where parents are accompanying trips they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via text, call, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children. In the interest of safety, we recognise there is a need for teachers and coaches running after school clubs to have access to a mobile phone in case of medical or other emergencies. Or when access to the main school phone is restricted. Mobile use on these occasions should be appropriate and professional (and should never include taking photographs of children).
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes concern to the Headteacher. No schools setting will be held responsible for any loss or damage of personal mobile phones.

- Work provided mobile phones should only be used in context of the school / PVAT needs, work mobile phones should not be used for personal use. The Phone remains the property of PVAT and content on the phone can be monitored or remotely wiped.
- Work provided phones used for work related imagery or multimedia such as, but not limited to promotional photos, videos or used in a capacity such as exam identity authentication, should at the earliest convenience have any such data removed off the device and moved to OneDrive or any such approved local storage.
- Work phones must be set up with a password or pin to lock the device when not in use.
- Where a work phone is lost, IT or your line manager must be informed ASAP.

Use of Mobile Phones by Visitors and Volunteers

- Volunteers and visitors are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example, to take recordings of children, sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and tablets.
- Visitors, including other professionals, contractors and parents / carers must be made aware by signs and verbal reinforcement that they are not to use their mobile phone where children are present.
- Volunteers are advised to provide the school contact number to their family members, own children's schools /settings for use in the event of an emergency.
- Visitors and volunteers should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher. No school setting will be held responsible for any loss or damage of personal mobile phones.

Information for Parents and Carers

- If parents have an emergency and need to contact their child, then they should do this by the normal school channels. This is by phoning the school reception and the school is then responsible for giving the message to the pupil. Similarly, if a student needs to contact home, then they can do so by going to reception before school, during morning break, lunchtime or after school.
- Students found using mobile phones, Smart watches, iPods and other such electronic devices (including text messaging and silent phoning) or whose phone or Smart watch rings on the school site will have their phone or Smart watch confiscated. The phone, Smart Watch, iPod or electronic device is then locked away in the school safe and will only be returned at the end of the school day. If, however, a phone, Smart watch, iPod and other such electronic device is confiscated repeatedly parents may be requested to collect the device from the school office.
- While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate. We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment. We also allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones – but request that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.

Information for Pupils

First School Pupils

- Pupils in First Schools are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips. Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day. Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the head teacher does have the power to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site' – please refer to Anti-Bullying Policy of the school for more specific information. This prohibition applies for the full duration of the school day and on all school-organised activities unless an agreed exception is in place.

Penkridge Middle School Pupils

- At Penkridge Middle School, pupils are expected to attend school without access to a mobile phone during the school day. Where a parent has requested permission for a pupil to bring a phone for safety reasons outside school hours, devices must be switched off before entering the school site and handed in during morning registration. Phones are securely stored and returned at the end of the school day.
- Mobile phones must not be accessed, used, seen or heard at any point during the school day.
- Penkridge Middle School has an online form for parents to complete if they wish their child to bring their phone to school, which has specific terms and conditions; this must be completed before a mobile phone is brought to school. Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the head teacher does have the power to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site' - please refer to the anti-bullying policy of the school for more specific information.

High School and Secondary School Pupils

- At our High Schools and Secondary schools no mobiles should be seen or heard during the school day. Pupils must not access or use mobile phones at any point during the school day. Where pupils bring a mobile phone onto the school site, it must remain switched off and stored securely in accordance with school arrangements.
- Mobile phones must not be used, seen or heard during lessons, transitions, breaktimes or lunchtimes.
- Where a pupil is seen with a phone, it will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day. In the event of this happening repeatedly, a parent will need to come into school to collect the phone. Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the head teacher does have the power to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site' - please refer to Antibullying Policy of the school for more specific information.

6th Form

- Sixth Form students are expected to model PVAT's expectations regarding mobile phone use. While limited access to mobile phones may be permitted in **clearly designated Sixth Form areas only**, this is an exception to PVAT's mobile phone-free environment and may be withdrawn where misuse occurs or where it impacts learning, behaviour or wellbeing.

- Mobile phones must not be used in teaching areas unless expressly directed by a member of staff for learning purposes.

All pupils

Where the policy is breached, sanctions will be applied in line with the school Behaviour Policy. Confiscation is a proportionate response to unauthorised mobile phone use, and repeated breaches may require parental collection and further consequences.

Exceptions and Reasonable Adjustments

PVAT recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments may be made for pupils who require access to a mobile device for:

- Medical or Health monitoring purposes
- a disability or special educational need
- safeguarding-related needs agreed with the school

Any exception must be agreed in advance with the Headteacher and documented. Adjustments will be reviewed regularly and will be proportionate to the identified need.

Dissemination

PVAT will ensure that this policy is clearly communicated to pupils, parents and staff, and is published on each school website through the trust wide section of that website. Parents are expected to support and reinforce the policy.
This policy will be reviewed considering any future statutory changes to DfE guidance.

This policy has been updated to reflect the Department for Education guidance *Mobile phones in schools* and associated case studies on creating mobile phone-free environments.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or when national guidance, inspection expectations or school practice changes. by the board of trustees.