King's Cross Academy

Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy: Smartphone-Free School

Ratification and Monitoring

Ratified date:	September 2026
Review date:	September 2029
Website?	YES
Policy drive?	YES
Master Policy S/S	YES

Approval

Headteacher	Stephen Mitchell	September 2026
Chair of Quality of Education Committee	Allan Atlee	September 2026

Internal Monitoring

Stephen Mitchell	Headteacher	September 2026

Introduction

At King's Cross Academy, we are committed to creating a learning environment that is focused, respectful and inclusive for all. In an age where digital connectivity is ever-present, we recognise the impact that smartphones and other personal smart devices can have on children's wellbeing, concentration, social development and relationships, both in and beyond the classroom.

This policy sets out our approach to ensuring that mobile phones and other personal smart devices do not distract from learning, disrupt the school environment or compromise the safety and wellbeing of our pupils. As a smartphone-free school, we aim to foster strong face-to-face relationships, reduce unnecessary distractions and promote healthy digital habits that align with our school values.

Our commitment is not to reject technology, but to ensure that children learn to use it purposefully, safely and at the right time. Our approach reflects the Department for Education's statutory guidance on mobile phones in schools and sits alongside our wider work on safeguarding, online safety and digital education.

This policy has been developed in consultation with pupils, staff and families and reflects our shared responsibility to help children thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- To minimise distractions and maximise learning time by ensuring that the school environment remains focused, calm and free from unnecessary digital interruptions.
- To promote face-to-face social interaction and strengthen pupils' communication, interpersonal skills, empathy and collaboration.
- To safeguard pupils' wellbeing by reducing exposure to online pressures, social media, inappropriate content and other forms of online harm during the school day.
- To support children to develop healthy digital boundaries and habits that they can carry with them beyond the school environment.
- To maintain a safe and respectful school culture in which pupils are protected from the potential risks associated with the misuse of mobile phones and personal smart devices.
- To ensure clear and consistent expectations for pupils, staff and families regarding mobile phones and personal smart devices during the school day.
- To promote responsible and purposeful use of technology through age-appropriate digital education and adult guidance.

Safeguarding and Online Safety

This policy is underpinned by the Academy's commitment to safeguarding all pupils. By maintaining a smartphone-free environment, we reduce opportunities for pupils to be exposed to inappropriate or harmful content, online bullying, inappropriate image-sharing, exploitation or grooming during the school day.

The policy reflects the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and the Department for Education's statutory guidance on *Mobile Phones in Schools*. It is consistent with our wider safeguarding and curriculum provision, including:

- **Online safety education** delivered through computing and PSHE;
- **Anti-bullying and peer relationship work**, including learning about social media and online behaviour;
- **Digital literacy**, including safe searching, responsible use of technology and age-appropriate content; and
- **Support for vulnerable pupils**, including those who may be at greater risk of exploitation or other forms of online harm.

We recognise that the digital world presents both opportunities and risks. Alongside maintaining clear boundaries around personal devices in school, we have a responsibility to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to navigate the online world safely and responsibly. Our smartphone-free approach therefore forms part of our wider commitment to ensuring that KCA remains a safe, focused and inclusive environment.

Mobile Phone Agreement

We recognise that some families may wish their child to carry a mobile phone for safety when travelling to and from school. In line with our smartphone-free approach, this is permitted only under the following conditions:

- The device must be a basic mobile phone and must not provide access to mobile data, internet browsing, social media or apps. Families wishing to identify an appropriate device may find the guidance provided by Smartphone Free Childhood helpful.
- The phone must be clearly labelled with the pupil's full name.
- The phone must be switched off before the pupil enters the school grounds and handed in to the Deputy Headteacher's office upon arrival.
- Phones are stored securely during the school day and pupils do not have access to them.
- Phones may only be used after the school day, once the pupil has left the school site and moved away from the school entrances.

For the purposes of this policy, smartphones include personal smart or communication devices with similar functionality, including smartwatches and other devices capable of accessing the internet, sending or receiving messages or notifications, or recording audio or video.

Mobile phones and personal smart devices are not permitted on school trips or residential visits. Where communication with families is necessary, this will be managed by school staff using agreed school communication arrangements.

Exceptions and reasonable adjustments

The Academy recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances in which access to a mobile phone or personal smart device is necessary for an individual pupil, including because of a disability, special educational need, medical condition or other individual safeguarding need. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments or individual arrangements will be agreed with the pupil and their family and recorded by the school.

Breaches of this policy

Where a pupil brings a smartphone or other prohibited personal smart device onto the school site, or accesses or uses a mobile phone or personal smart device during the school day without permission, the device will be confiscated and held securely by the Senior Leadership Team.

Confiscated devices will normally be returned only to a parent or carer at the end of the respective half term. The Headteacher may vary the period of confiscation where individual circumstances mean that this would be appropriate and proportionate.

Parental Agreement

At the start of each academic year, as part of our Home School Agreement, we ask families to reaffirm their support for our commitment to a smartphone-free environment. We believe that a consistent partnership between home and school is essential in promoting safe, focused and connected learning. By signing the Home School Agreement, families acknowledge and agree to uphold the expectations set out in this policy.

The section of the Home School Agreement relating specifically to our smartphone-free approach is included below:

Smartphone-Free Commitment

I understand that King's Cross Academy is a smartphone-free school. If my child needs to bring a phone to school for safety when travelling to and from school, I will ensure that it is a basic, non-smart device with no access to the internet, social media or apps. I agree that it will be clearly labelled with my child's name, switched off before entering the school grounds and handed in to the Deputy Headteacher's office upon arrival.

I understand that smartphones and other personal smart devices, including smartwatches with communication or internet functionality, are not permitted in school or on school trips or residential visits, unless an individual arrangement has been agreed with the Academy. I understand that any prohibited device brought into school, or any mobile phone used during the school day without permission, will be confiscated in accordance with the Academy's policy.

Supporting pupils at KCA

We recognise that pupils are more likely to understand and uphold our smartphone-free approach when they understand the reasons behind it. We therefore take a proactive, age-appropriate and inclusive approach to helping children understand the expectations of this policy and develop positive relationships with technology.

Communication and pupil voice

The expectations of the policy and the reasons behind them will be communicated through assemblies, class discussions and other appropriate opportunities. Pupils will be encouraged to ask questions, share their experiences and contribute their views about technology, online safety and the smartphone-free approach at KCA.

Personal Development and the curriculum

Through our Personal Development curriculum, including PSHE and computing, pupils will learn about online safety, digital responsibility, social media, screen use and healthy relationships with technology. This ensures that children understand not only the expectations of the policy, but the reasons behind them, and supports them to develop safe and responsible digital habits beyond school.

Clear and consistent expectations

Staff will reinforce the Academy's expectations consistently and in an age-appropriate manner. Where appropriate, reminders will be used across the school to support pupils in understanding the routines and boundaries associated with mobile phones and personal smart devices.

Inclusive support

We recognise that pupils' experiences of and relationships with technology will differ. Expectations will be explained and reinforced in ways that are accessible to all pupils, with additional support or reasonable adjustments provided where appropriate for pupils with SEND, disabilities or other individual needs.

Through this approach, we aim to ensure that pupils understand both the expectations of our smartphone-free policy and the reasons behind them, while developing the knowledge and skills they need to engage with technology safely, responsibly and purposefully.