# JMS MOBILE PHONE & SMART TECHNOLOGY POLICY

**This is a new policy, as required by recent statutory guidance from DFE. There is no previous version and therefore no changes.**

## 1. Purpose and principles

John Mason School is committed to creating a calm, safe and highly focused learning environment where pupils and students can thrive. This policy supports the School values: **Opportunity, Respect and Determination** by promoting respectful relationships, protecting wellbeing, and reducing distraction and online harms during the school day.

This policy sits alongside and supports the school's **Behaviour Policy**, safeguarding arrangements under **KCSIE**, and the Trust's approach to **searching and confiscation**. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation

## 2. Status and scope

2.1 This policy applies to: pupils/students, staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors and any other persons on school premises or supervising pupils off-site (e.g. trips).

2.3 **Default position**: John Mason school is a **mobile phone-free environments by default** across the school day, with any departure only by defined exception.

## 3. Definitions (what is covered)

For the purpose of this policy, "mobile phones / smart technology" includes:

- mobile phones and smartphones;
- smart watches and wearables capable of messaging/notifications/recording;
- earbuds/headphones with connectivity enabling calls, messaging or recording (including "pods");

- any device capable of connecting to a mobile network or sending/receiving messages/notifications;
- any device capable of audio/video capture where this creates safeguarding or behavioural risk.

## 4. Core rules

**4.1** Pupils/students must not bring mobile phones/smart technology to school, if they do bring it to school ), it must be **switched off** (or in flight mode as specified locally),they must **enter the school via reception and hand in their phone for safekeeping** until the end of the school day. On arrival to school students are issued a number that corresponds with a bag where they place their phone. These are organised into Year Group boxes (30 per box). They are locked securely until the end of the school day. At the end of the day, student go to the hall to swap their number for their phone

**4.2** Pupils/students must not photograph, record audio/video, livestream, or share images/recordings of any member of the school community or school activity without explicit permission and a clear educational purpose authorised by staff. Safeguarding concerns will be managed under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy following KCSIE procedures.

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

### 5.1 Trust Board & LAC

Ensures the Trust has a clear policy framework aligned across schools and to DfE guidance and safeguarding requirements and receives assurance on implementation and impact. The LAC ensures the Policy is appropriate for the school setting.

### 5.2 Headteacher (and Sixth Form Lead where applicable)

- Adopts the Trust baseline policy and determines the school's phase module choices (within Trust parameters).
- Ensures the policy is communicated to pupils/students, staff and parents/carers and applied consistently.

### 5.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Advises on safeguarding implications (e.g., online abuse, sexual harassment, harmful content).
- Supports evidence handling and reporting routes in line with the Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE.
- Enforce the policy consistently and model expected behaviour.
- Follow searching/confiscation procedures where relevant.

**5.5 Parents/carers**

- Support the school approach and use school channels for urgent contact during the day.
- Reinforce safe and respectful use of technology outside school hours.

**5.6 Visitors/contractors**

- Must not photograph or record pupils/staff on site.
- Must follow site instructions for phone use.

**5.7 Staff/ Volunteers use of mobile phones whilst in school**

- Must follow site staff instructions for phone use. At John Mason School, staff and visitors must not use phones during the school day, even for school use and particularly not in sight of students.

## 6. Sanctions, confiscation and return

**6.1** Sanctions are applied under John Mason's Behaviour Policy, with a clear staged approach and consideration of SEND/individual circumstances.

**6.2 Confiscation**

- Any member of staff may require a pupil/student to hand over a device if seen/heard/used contrary to policy. A parent/carer will be contacted and required to collect the phone. The phone will not be returned to the student, unless there are individual circumstances.
- Refusal to comply is treated as a behavioural incident and may escalate in line with the Behaviour Policy.

**6.3 Storage and chain-of-custody** (Trust minimum standard)

- Confiscated devices are labelled/logged and stored securely.
- Where a phone has been heard or seen during the school day, the parent is called and asked to collect the phone from school from a member of the Senior Leadership Team. From that day forward, the student must enter through reception to hand in their phone. They will be offered the use of a phone locker, at the front of school.

**6.4 Repeated breaches**

John Mason School has an escalation plan: first confiscation parent collection, requirement to enter the school via reception every day and hand the phone in and offered a phone locker and key to use every day.

## 7. Searching, screening and confiscation (summary)

**7.1** Staff follow DfE "Searching, screening and confiscation" guidance and the school's local procedure, including authorised searchers, recording and safeguarding considerations.

**7.2** A search may be considered where there are reasonable grounds to suspect a device is being used in breach of policy, where safeguarding concerns exist, or where the pupil/student is believed to be concealing a device contrary to an agreed plan.

**7.3 Electronic devices and content**
If concerns relate to harmful/illegal content or safeguarding risk, staff do not circulate material. The DSL must be involved and evidence handled according to safeguarding procedures and DfE guidance.

## 8. Safeguarding and wellbeing (KCSIE linkage)

**8.1** Mobile phone misuse can be associated with online bullying, sexual harassment, harmful content, coercion, and peer-on-peer abuse; concerns are managed under safeguarding procedures and KCSIE.

**8.2** Pupils/students are supported through curriculum/PSHE and pastoral systems to understand risk, consent, respectful communication, and reporting routes.

## 9. Equality, reasonable adjustments and exceptions

**9.1** The Trust recognises that some pupils/students may require exceptions (e.g., medical monitoring, travel safety arrangements, SEND-related needs). DfE guidance anticipates reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

**9.2** Exceptions must be:

- agreed in writing, time-limited where possible, and reviewed;
- specific about where/when the device can be accessed;
- communicated to relevant staff on a need-to-know basis.

*(Template: Individual Mobile Device Agreement – see Appendix D below.)*

## 10. Communication and training

- Trust-wide Policy is shared with Headteachers.
- Policy is published and explained to pupils/students and parents/carers through the school.
- Staff receive annual briefing, including searching/confiscation and safeguarding escalation.

### 11. Monitoring, review and assurance

- Schools monitor incidents, repeat breaches, and safeguarding referrals linked to devices.
- The policy is reviewed annually by the Education Standards Committee or as guidance changes and reports to Trust Board as required.

## Appendix A — Primary module (adaptable)

**A1 Default**: No pupil mobile phones on site unless explicitly authorised (e.g., specific safeguarding/travel need).
**A2 Smart watches**: Either prohibited or required to be placed in "school mode" (no messaging/camera) — local choice stated clearly.
**A3 Storage**: Any authorised phone is handed to the office at arrival and collected by the adult at end of day.
**A4 Parent contact reassurance**: Parents contact school office for messages; pupils do not need phones for contact during the day.
**A5 Sanctions**: age-appropriate restorative approach; parent meeting for repeated breaches.

*(This aligns with DfE's "phone-free by default" expectation, with tightly controlled exceptions.)*

## Appendix B — Secondary module (adaptable)

**B1 Baseline**: "Never used, seen or heard"
**B2 Storage expectation**: switched off and kept in bag; not in pockets; no earbuds worn on site.
**B3 Confiscation**: same-day return / parent collection escalation options.
**B4 Repeated breaches**: device sign-in/sign-out plan, fixed term restriction, or parent-only collection.
**B5 Exams**: explicit statement re JCQ expectations (phones not in possession; follow exam rules).

## Appendix C — Sixth Form module options (adaptable)

Because Sixth Form culture differs and study periods can create pressure for "managed access", there are compliant models:

### Model C1: Phone-free by default (strongest alignment)

- No phones used in teaching time, independent study sessions, corridors, social spaces — except explicit exception.
- Phones can be accessed only **off-site** or at end of day.

### Model C2: Managed exception (common in sixth forms; must be explicit)

- Phones not used in lessons, corridors, and shared study spaces.
- Phones permitted **only** in designated Sixth Form social area(s) and/or at specific times (e.g., before/after taught sessions), subject to conduct expectations.
- Clear sanction escalation for breaches.

Whichever model is chosen, the policy should state the rationale, boundaries, and supervision expectations to maintain consistency and inspection confidence.

## Appendix D — Individual Mobile Device Agreement (template text)

Use for exceptional circumstances/medical/SEND/young carer arrangements.

- Name / Year / reason for exception
- Device type + identifying details
- Approved access times/locations
- Storage method when not in use
- Who holds the device (pupil vs office)
- Review date and withdrawal conditions
- Staff awareness list (need-to-know)
- Signatures: parent/carer, pupil/student, school, DSL/SLT where relevant

## Appendix E - External Guidance and Statutory Sources Referenced

The ALT Mobile Phone & Smart Technology Policy is informed by and aligned to the following national guidance and statutory frameworks:

1. **Department for Education (DfE)** – *Mobile phones in schools*
   Non-statutory guidance setting the national expectation that schools should be mobile phone-free by default and should implement clear policies to prevent access during the school day. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools
2. **Department for Education (DfE)** – *Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff*
   Non-statutory guidance outlining expectations for behaviour policies, consistent implementation, and sanctions, including the management of mobile phone use.
   https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2
3. **Department for Education (DfE)** – *Searching, screening and confiscation*
   Statutory guidance on the legal powers, procedures and safeguards for searching pupils and

confiscating items, including electronic devices and the handling of digital content. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation

4. **Department for Education (DfE)** – *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*
   Statutory safeguarding guidance informing expectations around online safety, peer-on-peer abuse, recording and sharing images, evidence handling, and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
5. **Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)** – *Instructions for conducting examinations*
   National requirements governing possession and use of mobile phones and smart devices during examinations (referenced within secondary and sixth form expectations). https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/
6. **Equality Act 2010**
   Statutory framework underpinning reasonable adjustments and non-discrimination duties, informing the policy's approach to SEND, medical needs and individual exceptions. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents