



## **PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (INCLUDING MOBILE PHONES) POLICY**

The Governors and staff of Lowton Church of England High School are committed to the provision of a high quality education in a Christian context. We aim to provide a school where we can live out our ethos of Caring, Learning and Succeeding on a daily basis. At the heart of the commitment is the notion of the uniqueness and infinite worth of the individual, that every person is valuable in the eyes of God

This policy has been produced in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Education Needs Disability Act 2001, the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and the Children and Families Act 2014. It has been reviewed in accordance with all other school policies and related Acts.

<b>Date effective from</b>	February 2026
<b>Date of next review</b>	July 2028
<b>Review period</b>	2 Years
<b>Status</b>	
<b>Person responsible</b>	Heather Clare
<b>Version</b>	1

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## *Purpose and Rationale*

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Lowton Church of England High School is committed to providing a safe, orderly, and focused learning environment in which all pupils can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

The school recognises that parents and carers may choose to provide pupils with personal electronic devices, including mobile phones, for reasons of safety and communication. However, the presence and use of such devices during the school day presents significant risks to:

- Safeguarding and child protection
- Data protection and privacy
- Pupil wellbeing and mental health
- Behaviour, focus, and learning
- The safety and dignity of pupils and staff

Evidence and national guidance highlight the role of personal electronic devices in facilitating:

- Cyberbullying and online harassment
- Sexting and the creation, possession, or distribution of indecent images
- Filming or photographing individuals without consent
- Disruption to learning and the calm operation of the school

This policy sets out the school's approach to the management, restriction, and enforcement of personal electronic devices in order to safeguard pupils and staff and promote high standards of behaviour.

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## *Definition of Personal Electronic Devices*

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For the purposes of this policy, **personal electronic devices** include any privately owned device brought onto the school site that is capable of communication, data storage, recording, or internet access.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Mobile phones and smartphones
- Smart watches or wearable technology capable of calling, messaging, image capture, audio recording, or internet access
- Headphones, earbuds, or wireless listening devices
- Non-school-issued tablets or iPads
- Music players
- Handheld entertainment or gaming devices (e.g. Nintendo Switch)
- Any device capable of:
  - Photographing or filming
  - Audio recording

- Accessing the internet or social media
- Sending, receiving, or storing data

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### *Legal Framework and Statutory Guidance*

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This policy has due regard to, and is informed by, the following legislation and statutory guidance (as amended):

#### **Primary Legislation**

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002 (Sections 175 and 157 – safeguarding and promoting welfare)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (behaviour regulation and confiscation powers)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Equality Act 2010

#### **Safeguarding and Behaviour Guidance**

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE)
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (DfE)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (DfE)

#### **Data Protection and Online Safety**

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Communications Act 2003
- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019

Under this framework, the school is legally entitled to regulate pupil behaviour, prohibit the use of personal electronic devices, and confiscate prohibited items where necessary to maintain safety, discipline, and good order.

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### *School Expectations*

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All personal electronic devices must be switched off and kept out of sight from the moment pupils enter the school site until they have left the school site at the end of the school day.

For clarity:

- Devices must be fully powered off (not on silent, vibrate, or airplane mode)
- Devices must be stored securely in a school bag
- Devices must not be carried in pockets, worn on the body, or accessed at any time during the school day

This expectation applies:

- Before school
- During lessons
- During social times and transitions
- At the end of the school day until pupils have exited the site

Any use, visibility, or access to a personal electronic device during the school day constitutes a breach of this policy.

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### ***Monitoring and Enforcement***

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The school applies this policy consistently and proportionately, in line with statutory guidance.

- Pupils will be asked to demonstrate that a device is switched off and appropriately stored at the start of the school day
- Staff are authorised to confiscate devices that are seen, used, or accessed

#### **Confiscation and Sanctions**

- Devices will be confiscated where a breach occurs
- A detention will be issued in line with the Behaviour Policy
- Confiscated devices will normally be returned at the end of the detention period

#### **Refusal to Comply**

- Where a pupil refuses to hand over a device, patrol will be called to support
- The pupil will be placed in isolation and given time to reflect and comply
- Continued refusal will result in escalated sanctions, which may include a fixed-term suspension for defiance

#### **Repeat Offences**

Repeated breaches may result in:

- Extended periods of confiscation
- Parental meetings
- Withdrawal of permission to bring personal electronic devices onto the school site

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### ***Communication During the School Day***

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**Pupils are not permitted to use personal devices to contact home during the school day.** If your child uses a mobile phone during the school day, to contact home, they will receive a sanction.

- If communication home is required, pupils may ask the pastoral office to contact home on their behalf.
- Parents and carers should not contact pupils directly on their mobile phone during the school day and must instead contact the School Office.

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## *Expectations of Parents and Carers*

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Parents and carers are expected to:

- Support and reinforce this policy
- Ensure pupils understand the expectations and consequences
- Work in partnership with the school where breaches occur

If your child breaches this policy and uses their mobile phone to ring you during the school day, please instruct your child to seek appropriate support and end the call. If you feel it appropriate you can contact the school office to tell us your child needs assistance.

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## *Exceptions to the Policy*

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### **Medical and Health-Related Exceptions**

Pupils who require access to a personal electronic device for medical or health reasons will be permitted to use their device where:

- This requirement is documented in a medical care plan
- Use is strictly limited to medical purposes

Any misuse outside of the agreed provision will be treated as a breach of this policy.

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## *Monitoring and Review*

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This policy will be reviewed regularly by senior leaders and governors to ensure it remains:

- Compliant with statutory guidance
- Effective in safeguarding pupils
- Consistent with the school's Behaviour and Safeguarding policies.