Reviewed:
October 2026
Next Review
October 2028

LEE CHAPEL MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

SMART Devices Policy

1. Purpose

Lee Chapel Multi-Academy Trust is committed to providing a calm, safe and purposeful environment in which pupils can learn, develop positive relationships and achieve highly.

The Trust recognises that mobile phones and other smart devices are an established part of modern life. However, the use of personal smart devices during the school day can distract pupils from learning, reduce face-to-face interaction, contribute to disruption and create safeguarding and wellbeing concerns.

The Trust therefore adopts a **smart-device-free approach during the school day**, subject only to clearly defined exceptions.

This policy is intended to ensure that expectations are clear, consistent and easily understood by pupils, staff and parents/carers across all Trust schools.

The policy has been developed with regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance, *Mobile phones in schools*, which states that schools should be mobile-phone-free environments by default and that policies should also address other smart technology with similar functionality.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all pupils attending LCMAT schools;
- all personal mobile phones;
- smart watches and other wearable technology;
- fitness trackers where they have communication, notification, recording or internet-enabled functionality;
- wireless earbuds and headphones, including AirPods;
- tablets or other personal smart devices where these are not specifically authorised for educational use;
- devices capable of taking photographs, recording audio or video, sending or receiving messages, accessing the internet or receiving notifications;
- any future technology which has functionality substantially similar to the devices listed above.
- For the purposes of this policy, these devices are collectively referred to as **'SMART devices'**.
- The Trust reserves the right to determine whether a particular device falls within the scope of this policy.

3. Trust-wide expectation

Pupils must not use or have access to personal SMART devices during the school day.

This includes:

- lessons;
- registration;
- assemblies;
- movement between lessons or activities;

- breaktimes;
- lunchtimes;
- extracurricular activities taking place during the school day;
- before- and after-school provision where the school has specifically stated that the policy applies;
- educational visits and trips, unless the school has specifically authorised an exception.

A device being **switched off, on silent or in 'Do Not Disturb' mode does not constitute use** but does not, in itself, make the device permitted to be accessed during the school day.

Individual schools will determine the practical arrangements for the storage of devices.

4. Primary School Expectations

LCMAT primary schools will operate a clear **no-access approach** to personal SMART devices.

Where a pupil brings a mobile phone or other SMART device onto the school site, it must be stored in accordance with the individual school's arrangements.

Pupils must not:

- use a mobile phone during the school day;
- send or receive messages;
- make or receive calls;
- access social media;
- take photographs or videos;
- make audio recordings;
- use a smart watch to communicate;
- use wireless earbuds or headphones without permission;
- use a device to access the internet;
- use a device to circumvent the school's expectations in any way.

5. Smart Watches and Wearable Technology

Smart watches are included within this policy.

A pupil wearing a smart watch must have its communication and notification functions disabled or the device must be stored in accordance with the school's arrangements.

Schools may require pupils to remove smart watches where there is a reasonable concern that the device could be used to communicate, record, photograph, access the internet or otherwise circumvent this policy.

Simple watches which do not have smart functionality are permitted.

6. Earbuds and Headphones

Personal wireless earbuds, AirPods and similar devices must not be worn or used during the school day unless specifically authorised by a member of staff.

This includes wearing an earbud even when the pupil is not actively listening to audio.

School-provided headphones may be used where they form part of an authorised learning activity.

7. Devices Required for Medical Purposes

The Trust recognises that, in some circumstances, a pupil may require access to a mobile phone or smart device because of a medical condition.

Where this is necessary, the school will agree an individual arrangement with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant professionals.

For example, a pupil may require a device to support the management of a medical condition or to receive information from an approved medical monitoring device.

Any agreed exception will be:

- based on the pupil's individual needs;
- clearly documented;
- limited to the purpose for which access is required;
- reviewed as appropriate; and
- communicated to relevant staff.

The DfE guidance recognises that mobile phone access may be necessary for some pupils with medical conditions and that reasonable adjustments may be required for disabled pupils.

8. SEND and Reasonable Adjustments

The Trust is committed to ensuring that its SMART device arrangements do not place disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage.

Where a pupil requires an adjustment because of their individual circumstances, the school will consider what reasonable adjustment is necessary.

An agreed adjustment does not automatically provide unrestricted access to a device.

Where possible, schools will establish clear arrangements specifying:

- the purpose for which the device may be accessed;
- when it may be accessed;
- where it may be accessed;
- which adults need to be aware of the arrangement; and
- how the arrangement will be monitored.

9. Exceptional Circumstances

The Trust recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances in which a pupil needs limited access to a SMART device.

Any exception must be agreed by the Headteacher or an appropriately delegated member of the school's leadership team.

Examples may include:

- specific medical needs;
- reasonable adjustments;
- safeguarding circumstances;
- exceptional family circumstances;
- other circumstances agreed by the Headteacher.

Exceptions will be considered on an individual basis and do not create a general entitlement for other pupils.

10. Bringing a Device to School

Parents/carers are responsible for deciding whether their child needs to bring a mobile phone or SMART device to school.

Where a pupil travels independently to or from school, parents/carers may consider a phone necessary for their child's journey.

However, bringing a device onto the school site does not give a pupil permission to use it during the school day.

Schools will communicate their specific arrangements for storing devices.

The Trust does not encourage pupils to bring valuable personal SMART devices to school where they are not required.

11. Storage of Devices

Each school will establish an appropriate system for the secure storage of personal SMART devices.

Schools may, for example:

- require pupils to hand devices to staff at the beginning of the school day;
- require devices to be stored securely in a designated location;
- use another system appropriate to the age and context of the pupils.

The school's arrangements will be communicated clearly to pupils and parents/carers.

Pupils remain responsible for following the school's arrangements and must not attempt to circumvent them.

12. Breaches of the Policy

A breach of this policy will be treated as a breach of the school's Behaviour Policy.

Examples include:

- having a phone accessible during the school day;
- using a phone or smart watch;
- responding to a notification;
- sending or receiving a message;
- taking a photograph or video;
- making an audio recording;
- using social media;
- using earbuds without permission;
- refusing to hand over a device when reasonably requested;
- deliberately concealing a device;
- attempting to circumvent the school's storage arrangements.

Schools will respond to breaches consistently and proportionately.

The school's Behaviour Policy will set out the sanctions that may apply.

13. Confiscation

Where a pupil breaches this policy, staff may confiscate the device in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

The Headteacher or an appropriately authorised member of staff may determine the length of time for which a device is retained.

The DfE confirms that schools can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices as a disciplinary penalty where this is proportionate and in accordance with the school's policy.

The school will take account of the individual circumstances of the pupil, including age, SEND and any other relevant factors, when determining an appropriate response.

14. Safeguarding

The use of SMART devices can create safeguarding concerns, particularly where devices are used to:

- photograph or record pupils or staff without permission;
- share inappropriate images;
- access inappropriate or harmful material;
- engage in cyberbullying;
- communicate with unknown individuals;

- record or distribute incidents occurring within school;
- facilitate harmful or inappropriate online activity.
- Where a device or its use raises a safeguarding concern, staff must follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL.
- A breach involving a SMART device may therefore require a safeguarding response in addition to a behavioural sanction.

15. Searching Devices

The Trust recognises that personal SMART devices may contain highly personal information.

Where a search of a device is considered necessary, schools will act in accordance with the relevant legislation, DfE guidance and the school's Behaviour and Searching Policy.

Staff must not routinely access the contents of a pupil's personal device.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the school's safeguarding procedures must be followed.

16. Educational Use of Technology

This policy does not prevent the appropriate use of technology for learning.

School-owned and school-managed devices may be used where authorised by staff and in accordance with:

- the school's Acceptable Use Policy;
- filtering and monitoring arrangements;
- safeguarding procedures;
- data protection requirements;
- the school's ICT and Digital Learning policies.

Where a school operates a Bring Your Own Device arrangement for educational purposes, this must be governed by the school's specific BYOD and acceptable-use arrangements. The DfE guidance makes clear that BYOD arrangements should not be used to permit pupils to use mobile phones as learning devices.

17. Educational Visits and Residential Trips

The expectation that pupils should not use personal SMART devices will normally continue during educational visits.

The school will determine arrangements appropriate to the nature of the visit.

Where pupils are permitted to bring a mobile phone for a journey or residential experience, the school will provide clear instructions regarding:

- when the device may be used;
- where it may be used;
- where it must be stored;
- whether photography is permitted;
- contact with parents/carers;
- consequences of misuse.

Any arrangements must continue to protect pupil safety, privacy and safeguarding.

18. Staff expectations

Staff are expected to model the behaviour expected of pupils.

Staff should not use personal mobile phones or SMART devices for personal purposes in front of pupils during the school day.

There will be legitimate occasions when staff need to use a mobile phone or similar device for professional purposes, for example:

- safeguarding;
- emergency communication;
- contacting parents/carers through approved systems;
- taking attendance or accessing approved school systems;
- educational activities;
- multi-factor authentication;
- authorised school communication.

Staff must use devices responsibly and in accordance with Trust policies.

The DfE specifically expects staff to model appropriate behaviour and not use personal mobile phones for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day.

19. Parents and Carers

Parents/carers are asked to support the Trust's approach by:

- discussing the policy with their child;
- ensuring their child understands the expectations;
- avoiding contacting their child directly on their mobile phone during the school day;
- contacting the school office if they need to communicate an urgent message;
- supporting the school's response to breaches of the policy.

Schools will ensure that parents/carers have clear information about the arrangements in place.

The DfE expects schools to communicate their policy clearly to parents and direct parents to the school office when they need to contact their child during the school day.

20. Communication with pupils

Schools will ensure that pupils understand:

- why SMART devices are restricted;
- when devices may and may not be used;
- where devices should be stored;
- the consequences of breaching the policy;
- how to seek help if they have a genuine need to access a device.

Pupils should understand that the purpose of the policy is not simply to remove access to technology but to protect learning, relationships, wellbeing and safeguarding.

21. Equality and inclusion

The Trust will implement this policy fairly and consistently while recognising the individual circumstances of pupils.

Schools will consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014 when implementing restrictions.

Where a pupil has a disability, medical condition or other identified need that requires access to a SMART device, the school will consider appropriate reasonable adjustments.

22. Roles and responsibilities

Trust Board

The Trust Board will:

- approve the Trust-wide policy;
- ensure appropriate oversight;
- monitor implementation through Trust governance arrangements.

CEO / Executive Leadership Team

The Trust leadership team will:

- establish clear Trust-wide expectations;
- support consistent implementation;
- review the effectiveness of the policy;
- ensure the policy remains aligned with statutory guidance.

Headteachers

Headteachers will:

- implement the policy within their school;
- establish practical arrangements for storage and enforcement;
- ensure pupils, staff and parents understand expectations;
- ensure reasonable adjustments and exceptional circumstances are appropriately considered;
- monitor compliance and respond to concerns.

Staff

All staff will:

- model appropriate use of technology;
- apply the school's expectations consistently;
- respond appropriately to breaches;
- report safeguarding concerns;
- follow the school's arrangements for confiscation and storage.

Pupils

Pupils will:

- follow the school's SMART device expectations;
- store devices as directed;
- not use personal SMART devices during the school day;
- hand over devices when reasonably requested;
- report concerns or difficulties to an appropriate adult.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will:

- support the school's expectations;
- ensure their child understands the policy;
- use the school office when urgent contact is required;
- work constructively with the school where a breach occurs.

23. Monitoring and review

Each school will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy through its normal behaviour, safeguarding and leadership processes.

The Trust will review the policy regularly and in response to:

- changes to legislation or statutory guidance;
- emerging safeguarding concerns;
- developments in technology;
- evidence from schools;
- feedback from pupils, staff and parents/carers.

The policy will be formally reviewed at least every two years, or sooner where required.

24. Related policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy;
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Acceptable Use Policy;
- Data Protection Policy;
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation arrangements;
- Equality Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Medical Conditions Policy;
- Educational Visits Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct.

LCMAT position:
Personal SMART devices should not be part of pupils' school-day experience. Our schools should be places where pupils are able to concentrate, communicate face-to-face, participate fully in learning and feel safe. Where an individual pupil has a genuine medical, safeguarding, SEND or other exceptional need, appropriate arrangements will be made.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if considered necessary.

Lee Chapel Multi-Academy Trust Board agreed this policy on 7th October 2026

Next review October 2028