

Mobile Technology Policy 2026–2027

Thurlstone Primary School

Approval date	**Oct 2026**
Review date	Autumn 2027, or earlier if required
Policy lead	Executive Headteacher – Charlotte Gibbins / Designated Safeguarding Lead

1. Purpose and scope

Thurlstone Primary School is committed to keeping children safe while supporting responsible and respectful use of technology. This policy applies to pupils, staff, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors on school premises and during school activities, including visits and events. It covers personal mobile phones, smartwatches, tablets, wearable cameras and other personal connected devices. School-owned devices are also subject to the Online Safety and Acceptable Use policies.

2. Principles

- The school day should be free from unnecessary distraction, unwanted recording and inappropriate online contact.
- Some pupils need a device to travel safely to or from school; this does not normally mean they may use it during the school day.
- Individual reasonable adjustments or medical arrangements take precedence over a blanket restriction where required.
- Safeguarding concerns are addressed through the child protection procedures, not simply as disciplinary matters.

3. Pupil devices

Pupils are discouraged from bringing phones or other personal connected devices to school. Where a parent/carer considers a device necessary for travel or another agreed reason, they must provide written permission in advance. The device must be switched off, handed to the headteacher on arrival and collect from the headteachers office at the end of the school day. The school will confirm a secure, supervised storage and collection process; pupils should not keep devices in bags or on their person unless an individual arrangement has been agreed.

Smartwatches with calling, messaging, camera, audio-recording or internet functions are subject to the same restrictions. Where a watch cannot reliably disable these functions, it must be handed in. Pupils must not use personal devices during lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes or school activities without explicit permission under an agreed arrangement.

4. Medical needs, disability and individual exceptions

Where a device is needed for medical monitoring, communication, accessibility or another identified disability-related need, the school will consider reasonable adjustments and agree an individual plan with the pupil, parent/carer and relevant staff. The plan will identify permitted functions, supervision, safeguarding measures, emergency access and review arrangements. The school will not automatically remove a device needed for an agreed medical or accessibility purpose.

5. Photography, recording and sharing

Pupils must not use personal devices to photograph, film or audio-record others at school without explicit school authorisation. They must not post images or recordings of pupils or staff online in breach of school rules. Staff should use school-approved devices for pupil images, recordings and communications. Personal devices must not be used to photograph, film, record or store pupil information unless expressly authorised through a documented school procedure; any authorised material must be transferred and deleted securely in accordance with that procedure.

Parents and visitors must follow instructions given for individual school events. The school may restrict photography or recording on its premises to protect children. Families should not publish images identifying other children without appropriate permission. The school will explain any event-specific arrangements in advance wherever possible.

6. Staff, volunteers and visitors

Staff may carry personal phones but must use them discreetly and only where compatible with their duties, supervision responsibilities and safeguarding requirements. Staff must not communicate with pupils using personal messaging accounts or social media. Communication with families should use approved school channels, including agreed ClassDojo arrangements. Staff should not use personal devices to record confidential school information except under expressly authorised secure arrangements.

Visitors and volunteers must not photograph, record or contact pupils using personal devices without school authorisation. Any suspected misuse should be reported promptly to the DSL or another senior leader.

7. Responding to misuse and safeguarding concerns

Staff will respond proportionately, considering the pupil's age, understanding, SEND, disability, medical needs and circumstances. Where appropriate, a device may be temporarily confiscated in accordance with the Behaviour and Relationships Policy and applicable guidance; staff will explain how and when it will be returned. Repeated misuse may lead to an agreed review of permission to bring a device, while maintaining necessary travel, medical and accessibility arrangements.

Where misuse suggests bullying, grooming, exploitation, harmful content, indecent imagery, coercion or another safeguarding concern, staff must report promptly to the DSL and record the concern on the school's safeguarding system. Staff must not investigate independently or routinely view, copy, forward or delete potentially illegal or intimate images. The DSL will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and relevant guidance, including decisions about preserving evidence and contacting external agencies.

8. Responsibilities and review

The governing body oversees this policy. The Executive Headteacher ensures implementation; the DSL leads on safeguarding incidents; all staff apply the rules consistently and report concerns. The policy will be reviewed annually and sooner following significant changes to guidance, technology or school practice. It should be read alongside the Online Safety Policy 2026–2027, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour and Relationships Policy, Acceptable Use arrangements, Data Protection Policy and Accessibility Plan 2026–2029.