Leigh Primary School

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'Caring, Sharing and Learning Together'

Mobile, Smart Technology and Social Media Policy

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff. It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents.

- Date written: August 2026
- Date of last update: September 2025
- Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body/management committee: September 2026
- Date of next full review: August 2027

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedure

Key Contacts

	Name	Contact Information
Joint Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Jenna Halfhide (Co-Headteacher) *Maternity Leave September 2026-April 2027 Joanne Shobbrook (Co-Headteacher and DeputyHeadteacher) Victoria |Short (Inclusion Manager and acting Designated Safeguarding Lead during maternity leave for Jenna Halfhide)	headteacher@leigh.kent.sch.uk (both)
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Mobile Phones and Smart Devices

1. Policy aims and scope

- This policy has been written by Leigh Primary School, involving staff, pupils and parents/carers, building on the Kent County Council LADO Education Safeguarding Advisory Service mobile phone and smart device policy template, with specialist advice and input as required.
- This policy is based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), Mobile Phones in Schools, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Behaviour in Schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff, Searching, Screening and Confiscation, Working Together to Safeguard Children, and the local Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership (KSCMP) procedures.
- The DfE Mobile Phones in Schools guidance became statutory on 29 June 2026 and schools are expected to follow it from 1 September 2026. Leigh Primary School therefore operates as a mobile phone-free environment by default, with any departure from this position being exceptional, clearly justified and appropriately safeguarded.
- The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all members of the school community when using mobile phones and smart devices, while supporting a calm, safe and purposeful learning environment.
- Leigh Primary School recognises that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding. As set out in the Child Protection Policy, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has overall responsibility for online safety.
- This policy supports the EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirement to have clear procedures for the use of mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities.
- For the purposes of this policy, a mobile phone or smart device includes any personal device with similar functionality, including the ability to send or receive messages or notifications, connect to mobile networks or the internet, or record images, audio or video. This includes smartphones, smart watches, smart glasses, fitness trackers and other wearable technology.
- This policy applies to pupils, parents/carers, governors, the leadership team, teachers, support staff, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for, or provide services on behalf of, Leigh Primary School.

2. Links with other policies

This policy forms part of the school's wider safeguarding and behaviour framework and should be read alongside the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour Policy, including anti-bullying and searching, screening and confiscation arrangements
- Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs)
- Child Protection Policy
- Image/Camera Use Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection and Data Security arrangements
- Online Safety arrangements
- Computing, Personal Development, PSHE and Relationships/Sex Education curriculum policies
- Educational Visits procedures
- Social Media section of this policy

3. Mobile phone and smart device expectations

- Leigh Primary School is a mobile phone-free environment by default. Pupils must not use, access, display or check personal mobile phones or smart devices at any point during the school day, including lessons, transitions, breaktimes and lunchtime, unless an agreed individual exception, adaptation or reasonable adjustment applies. Only Year 6 pupils can bring a mobile phone to school if they walk home without an adult and have parent permission to do so. In this circumstance they must hand their phone into the school office on arrival and collect at home time.
- Personal devices brought onto site remain the responsibility of the owner. The school accepts no responsibility for loss, theft or damage. Devices should be protected with passwords/PINs and configured to prevent unauthorised access.
- Mobile phones and smart devices capable of taking images or recordings must never be used in toilets, changing areas or other spaces where privacy is expected.

- The sending, displaying, creating or sharing of abusive, harmful, discriminatory, sexual, threatening or otherwise inappropriate content is prohibited. Breaches will be addressed under the school's behaviour, anti-bullying and child protection procedures.
- All school-provided devices, networks and online platforms will be subject to appropriate filtering and monitoring arrangements in line with KCSIE and the Prevent Duty. Further detail is set out in the Child Protection Policy.

3.1 Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

- The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and, where applicable, the Children and Families Act 2014. Reasonable adjustments or adaptations may be required for disability, SEND, medical needs, safeguarding considerations, caring responsibilities or other exceptional individual circumstances.
- Where a pupil requires a connected device to monitor or manage a medical condition, arrangements will be considered as part of the pupil's individual healthcare or support plan.
- Any agreed exception will be considered individually, be necessary and proportionate, be approved in advance by the headteacher, be risk assessed and documented, include clear expectations for use, supervision and storage, be communicated to relevant staff, and be regularly reviewed.
- An agreed adjustment will not normally mean unrestricted use. Access will be limited to the specific purpose, time and location required.

4. School-provided mobile phones and smart devices

- School-provided devices are issued for professional, safeguarding or educational purposes only and must be used in accordance with this policy, the Acceptable Use Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, confidentiality and data protection requirements.
- Staff will use school-provided email addresses and approved school communication systems when contacting pupils or parents/carers in a professional capacity. Personal mobile numbers and personal social media accounts must not be used for this purpose.
- School-provided devices will be protected by appropriate security controls, such as passcodes, passwords or PINs, and may only be used by authorised users.
- Users will be informed that activity on school-provided devices and systems may be monitored for safeguarding, security and policy compliance purposes. Monitoring will be proportionate and lawful.
- Where remote or online learning takes place, staff will use school-provided equipment wherever possible. Any exceptional use of a personal device must be agreed in advance by the headteacher and supported by appropriate safeguards.

5. Staff use of personal mobile phones and smart devices

- Staff are expected to model safe, responsible and appropriate use of technology and to uphold the school's mobile phone-free expectations consistently.
- Staff must not use personal mobile phones or smart devices for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day. Personal use may take place at lunchtime in staff-only areas, provided it does not compromise supervision, safeguarding or professional responsibilities.
- Personal devices should be stored securely, kept on silent and out of sight during teaching and pupil-contact time. Notifications, messaging, image display, recording and sharing functions should be disabled where these could compromise safeguarding, professional boundaries or the learning environment.
- Staff must not use their phone to share personal information with students e.g. searches, messages, emails, videos, photos, online purchases or social media profiles.
- Limited staff use of a device may be permitted for an agreed professional, operational or safeguarding purpose, for example multi-factor authentication, access to an approved school system or an emergency. Such use must be necessary, proportionate and must not undermine pupil expectations.
- Staff must not use personal devices to take photographs, video or audio recordings of pupils, to work directly with pupils, or to communicate with parents/carers in a professional capacity. School-provided equipment must be used.
- Any pre-existing relationship or exceptional circumstance that makes compliance difficult must be discussed with the DSL and headteacher and formally recorded.
- Any breach by a member of staff will be managed under the Staff Code of Conduct, Child Protection Policy and allegations management procedures. Suspected illegal content or criminal use will be referred to the police and, where relevant, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

6. Pupil use of mobile phones and smart devices

- Pupils will be taught about the risks and benefits associated with mobile phones and smart devices, including distraction, bullying or harassment, privacy, harmful content, online behaviour and the benefits of a mobile phone-free school environment.
- Pupils will be reminded of this policy, the reasons for it and the consequences of breaches at the start of each academic year and at appropriate intervals. Safe and responsible use will be reinforced through safeguarding education, Computing, Personal Development/PSHE, RSE, online safety, assemblies and Acceptable Use expectations.
- Leigh Primary School recognises that pupils' online experiences outside school can affect their safety and wellbeing in school. Pupils will be encouraged to speak to a safe/trusted adult about online concerns without fear of blame or automatic sanction.
- If a pupil needs to contact a parent/carer during the school day, this will be arranged through the school office. Parents/carers will only contact pupils through the school office rather than personal devices during the school day.
- Where necessary to report an online concern, preserve evidence or seek help, a pupil may be given supported or supervised access to a device.

6.1 Year 6 local arrangement for independent travel

- Pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones or smart watches on the school premises. Where a Year 6 pupil has written parental permission to walk home independently, the headteacher may give permission for the pupil to bring a mobile phone to school as an additional safeguard for the journey between school and home.
- Any permitted Year 6 phone must be handed to the school office on arrival and will be stored securely in a locked drawer. The pupil will not have access to the phone during the school day. The phone will be returned at the end of the school day for the journey home.
- Any individual exception for medical, disability, safeguarding or other exceptional need will be agreed and recorded under section 3.1.

6.2 Educational visits, residentials and activities outside the normal school day

- When planning visits or residential activities, leaders will consider whether access to mobile phones or smart devices could disrupt the educational experience, compromise supervision, privacy, safeguarding or wellbeing.
- The school may prohibit or restrict devices where this is necessary and proportionate. Expectations will be communicated in advance and reflected in visit risk assessments and planning documentation.

7. Visitors' use of mobile phones and smart devices

- Parents/carers, volunteers, contractors and visitors must not use personal mobile phones or smart devices while working with or supervising pupils, unless this has been explicitly agreed in advance for a legitimate professional purpose.
- Visitor use must not include accessing, displaying, recording or sharing images or information relating to pupils unless this has been expressly authorised and is consistent with safeguarding and data protection requirements.
- Visitors must not use personal devices in a way that distracts from or compromises the supervision, care, privacy or safeguarding of pupils.
- Any agreed visitor access will be documented and, where appropriate, risk assessed. Staff are expected to challenge unsafe or inappropriate use and report concerns to the DSL or headteacher.

8. Working with parents/carers and communicating the policy

- Leigh Primary School recognises that effective partnership with parents/carers is essential to the successful implementation of a mobile phone-free environment.
- Parents/carers will be informed of the rationale for the policy, how it supports learning, wellbeing and safeguarding, how it will be implemented and the consequences of breaches.
- Parents/carers are asked to support the school's approach, discuss the reasons for it at home and avoid contacting pupils directly on personal mobile phones or smart devices during the school day unless an individual exception has been agreed.
- Where the policy affects pupils travelling to and from school, the school will work with parents/carers to understand and address reasonable concerns while maintaining the expectation that pupils do not have access to phones during the school day.
- The policy will be published in an accessible form, included in staff induction and communicated to pupils and parents/carers with reminders during the year.

9. Responding to policy breaches

- All members of the community are expected to report concerns or breaches in line with the school's safeguarding, behaviour and staff conduct procedures.
- Where a pupil breaches this policy, the response will be proportionate and will take account of the context, the pupil's age and needs, SEND, medical needs and any safeguarding considerations. Support, education and prevention will be considered alongside sanctions.
- Parents/carers will be informed of concerns or breaches as appropriate. Where there is concern that a pupil is at risk of harm, the school will respond under the Child Protection Policy and the DSL will be informed without delay.
- Any sanction, including confiscation, will be lawful, proportionate and consistent with the Behaviour Policy.
- Leadership will review significant incidents to identify lessons learned and any required changes to policy, procedures, curriculum or practice.

9.1 Searching, screening and confiscation of mobile phones and smart devices

- Mobile phones and similar smart devices may contain files or data relating to an offence or that may cause harm. This may include child sexual abuse material (CSAM), including nude or semi-nude images generated or altered using artificial intelligence, pornography, abusive messages, images or videos, or evidence of suspected criminal behaviour.
- Staff may confiscate a pupil's device where they reasonably believe it is being used in breach of school policy or where confiscation is necessary to safeguard others or maintain a safe environment. Confiscated devices will be stored securely. The school's normal local arrangement is secure storage in the school office, with return to the parent/carer or pupil as determined under the Behaviour Policy and the circumstances of the incident.
- Where a concern involves child sexual abuse material, including nudes or semi-nudes or AI-generated/altered sexual imagery, staff will confiscate the device, will not view the content, and will refer the matter to the DSL without delay.
- Where there is reasonable suspicion that data or files may be illegal or constitute evidence of a criminal offence, the device will be preserved and handed to the police as soon as reasonably practicable.
- Any search of a pupil or their possessions, or examination of data on a confiscated device, will only be carried out by the headteacher or an authorised member of staff in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, statutory powers and the DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance. The DSL will be informed whenever a search identifies or may identify a safeguarding risk.
- Data or files will not be erased where they may constitute evidence of an offence. Any decision to examine or erase data for a good reason will follow statutory guidance and will be appropriately recorded.

10. Monitoring and review of mobile phone and smart device arrangements

- This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following changes to national or local guidance, identified safeguarding concerns or significant changes to technology or school systems.
- Governing bodies and leaders will ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and regularly reviewed in line with KCSIE. Issues identified through monitoring will be addressed through safeguarding procedures and school action planning.
- Staff, pupils and parents/carers will be kept informed of expectations and how compliance is supported and monitored through induction, training, Acceptable Use Policies, classroom practice and school communications.

Social Media

11. Policy aims and scope

- This section has been rewritten using the Kent County Council LADO Education Safeguarding Advisory Service Social Media Policy template for 2026-27 and should be read as part of this combined policy.
- It takes account of DfE guidance including KCSIE, EYFS, Working Together to Safeguard Children, Behaviour in Schools, Mobile Phones in Schools, Preventing and Tackling the Bullying and Harassment of School Staff, Searching, Screening and Confiscation, and KSCMP procedures.
- The purpose of this section is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all members of the Leigh Primary School community when using social media.
- For this policy, social media includes any online platform where users can create, share or interact with content, including social networking sites, messaging apps, blogs, forums, bulletin boards, video and image-sharing services, online gaming spaces, chatrooms and other online communication services.
- This policy applies to pupils, parents/carers, governors, leaders, staff, contractors, visitors and volunteers.

12. Links with other policies

The social media expectations in this policy should be read alongside:

- Anti-bullying and Behaviour Policies
- Acceptable Use Policies
- Child Protection Policy
- Image Use Policy
- Home-school agreement/parental code of conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality and Data Protection arrangements
- Complaints Policy
- Computing, Personal Development/PSHE and RSE curriculum policies
- Mobile phone and smart device section of this policy

13. General social media expectations

- Leigh Primary School believes everyone should be treated with kindness, respect and dignity. The same standards of behaviour are expected online as offline.
- Members of the school community must not post or share content that is threatening, hurtful, abusive, harassing, defamatory, discriminatory or otherwise inappropriate.
- Access to social media through school-provided devices and systems will be controlled, restricted and monitored through the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements.
- Any planned use of social media or online platforms as an educational or remote-learning tool will be risk assessed by the DSL and/or headteacher before use with pupils and will comply with the school's safeguarding, behaviour and Acceptable Use arrangements.
- Concerns about the school, staff or pupils should be raised through published school procedures wherever possible. Online complaints, harassment, intimidation or abuse will be taken seriously and may be addressed under the Behaviour Policy, Complaints Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Child Protection Policy and, where appropriate, reported to external agencies.

14. Staff use of social media

- Personal use of social media is not permitted by staff during working time with pupils. Personal use may take place at lunchtime in staff-only areas, provided professional responsibilities and safeguarding are not compromised.
- Safe and professional online behaviour forms part of staff induction and ongoing safeguarding training. Staff have a key role in creating an environment in which pupils feel safe to discuss online experiences and report concerns.
- Staff must be mindful of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence tools and automated features, and must not use them in ways that could compromise confidentiality, professional standards or the safety and wellbeing of pupils.
- Any complaint or concern about staff misuse of social media will be managed in line with the Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and allegations management procedures.

14.1 Reputation, privacy and professional standards

- Online conduct may affect a member of staff's professional role and the reputation of the school. Civil, legal or disciplinary action may be taken where online conduct brings the profession or school into disrepute or undermines confidence in professional standards.
- Content shared on social media may be copied, redistributed or viewed beyond the intended audience. Staff should use appropriate privacy settings, disable unnecessary location sharing, use strong passwords, log out of accounts and ensure personal views are not represented as those of the school.
- Staff are encouraged to consider carefully whether identifying themselves as employees of Leigh Primary School on personal social media accounts creates unnecessary professional or privacy risks.
- Information obtained through employment, including photographs or personal information about pupils, families or colleagues, must not be shared or discussed on personal social media.
- Staff must inform the leadership team and/or DSL immediately if they become aware of online content that may affect their role, the school, or the safety and wellbeing of pupils.

14.2 Communicating with pupils and families

- Staff must not use personal social media accounts to contact pupils or their family members. This includes unofficial parent WhatsApp groups. A staff member who is also a parent may participate in a parent group in their capacity as a parent, but must maintain professional boundaries and must not use the group for school business.
- Staff should not add or accept current or former pupils, or their family members, as "friends" or contacts on personal social media accounts where this would blur professional boundaries.
- Any communication from a pupil or parent/carer received through a personal social media account must be reported to the DSL (or deputy) and headteacher.
- Any pre-existing relationship or circumstance that prevents compliance must be discussed with the DSL and headteacher and the agreed arrangements formally recorded.
- Where contact with former pupils is required for a legitimate school purpose, only approved school communication tools or formal alumni arrangements will be used.

15. Official use of social media

- Official school social media will only be used where there is a clear educational or community-engagement purpose, specific intended outcomes and headteacher approval following appropriate risk assessment.
- Official accounts will be distinct from personal accounts, registered and managed using school-provided contact details wherever possible, and leadership will retain access to account information and login arrangements to support continuity and emergency access.
- The school will maintain arrangements to monitor and moderate comments, messages and interactions on official channels where these functions are enabled.
- Official communications will be clear, professional, transparent and open to scrutiny. Staff managing official accounts must act as ambassadors for the school and comply with confidentiality, copyright, data protection, equality, safeguarding and image-use requirements.
- Private or direct messaging with current or former pupils or their family members through official social media accounts will not be used unless a specific approved platform and safeguarding process has been formally established.
- Official social media use must not exclude families who are unable or unwilling to use social media. Essential information will also be made available through other school communication routes.
- The PTA Facebook page and parent-created WhatsApp groups are not official communication channels of Leigh Primary School and are not controlled by the school.

15.1 Use of images and recordings on social media

- Photographs, videos and livestreamed content featuring pupils, staff or other members of the school community will only be used in accordance with the school's Image Use Policy, consent processes, data protection requirements and safeguarding procedures.
- Before publishing an image, the school will consider whether publication is necessary, proportionate and appropriate, taking account of safeguarding, privacy and potential online risks.
- The school will not routinely publish unnecessary identifying information alongside images, such as full names, personal details, precise locations, routines or information that could increase the risk of an individual being identified or targeted.

- The school recognises that online images may be copied, redistributed, manipulated or misused, including through artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies. Reasonable steps will be taken to reduce risk when selecting, storing and sharing imagery.

16. Pupil use of social media

- Personal use of social media is not permitted for pupils during the school day.
- The school recognises that social media can support learning, entertainment and participation, but can also expose pupils to harmful content, unknown contacts, abuse, coercion, bullying, harassment and pressures linked to online interactions.
- Online behaviour outside school can have a significant impact on safety and wellbeing in school. Where online behaviour poses a risk of harm, affects the safety or wellbeing of members of the school community, disrupts the orderly running of the school or significantly affects the school community, the school may respond under the Behaviour and Child Protection Policies.
- Age restrictions for social media and online services vary and may change. The school will not create accounts for pupils who do not meet the required age thresholds set by the relevant service and current legal or regulatory requirements.
- Regardless of age restrictions, pupils may encounter social media outside school. The school will ensure pupils feel safe and able to speak to a safe/trusted adult about online experiences, worries or incidents without fear of blame or automatic sanction.
- Safe and appropriate use of social media, including emerging features and technologies, will be taught progressively through safeguarding education, computing, PSHE, RSE and other age-appropriate curriculum opportunities.

Pupils will be taught and reminded to:

- consider the risks of sharing personal information, images, location or routines online
- use privacy settings and only connect with people they know
- never arrange to meet an online contact without parent/carer permission and the presence of a safe/trusted adult
- use strong passwords and protect account access
- use services appropriate to their age and abilities
- block and report unwanted communications
- report concerns within school to a safe/trusted adult or DSL and use appropriate external reporting routes

Concerns about pupil social media use will be handled under the school's anti-bullying, behaviour and child protection procedures. Parents/carers will be informed as appropriate, particularly where there are safeguarding or age-related concerns.

17. Responding to harmful online behaviour, harassment and image misuse

- Online abuse, bullying, harassment or intimidation of staff is unacceptable. Harmful, abusive or threatening online behaviour towards staff by pupils, parents/carers or members of the wider community will be taken seriously, recorded where appropriate and addressed through relevant behaviour, complaints, staff conduct, safeguarding and police-reporting processes.
- Concerns involving photographs, videos or other images shared through social media - including unauthorised publication, inappropriate sharing, manipulation, or the use of artificial intelligence to create, alter or generate imagery - will be treated as safeguarding matters where appropriate and managed under child protection, data protection and behaviour procedures.
- Responses may include preserving evidence, seeking removal of content where possible, supporting affected individuals, applying proportionate sanctions, and seeking advice from or reporting concerns to external agencies.
- All members of the community are expected to report concerns through official school procedures, respect confidentiality and work in partnership to resolve issues. Pupils and parents/carers will be informed of the Complaints Policy and staff will be aware of whistleblowing arrangements.

18. Policy monitoring and review

- Technology and social media develop rapidly. Social media provisions in this policy will be reviewed annually or sooner in response to national/local guidance, safeguarding concerns, changes in legislation or emerging risks.
- The school will regularly evaluate its filtering, monitoring and online-safety arrangements and will incorporate identified issues into safeguarding and school improvement action planning.
- Staff, pupils and parents/carers will be made aware of expectations through policies, induction, training, curriculum education, school communications and other appropriate reminders.

	Signed	Date
Approved by Governing Body	Governing Body	September 2026
Chairmen of Governors	Dave Dorrell and Stephen Hall	September 2026
Co-Headteachers	Jenna Halfhide and Joanne Shobbrook	September 2026