

Summerhill School



Behaviour and relationships policy

Member of staff responsible for Policy	Mr Randle Deputy Headteacher – Pastoral Care		
Applies to:	All students and staff (Teaching and non-teaching) at Summerhill School		
Review committee:	Summerhill Senior Leadership Team		
Approval by:	Summerhill School Governors		
Review frequency:	As necessary (In-line with any amendments to school policy, procedures, change in legislation or every 2 years.		
Review ratification and summary:	Action	Ratified by:	
	March 2026 Policy written and ratified	Governors	March 2026

Summerhill School Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy (Updated)

1. Introduction and Rationale

In line with the latest Department for Education (DfE) expectations, Summerhill School is a mobile phone-free environment by default. This policy supports our ethos of "Success through Caring" and our CARE values (Courage, Ambition, Respect, and Effort) by ensuring the school is a calm, safe environment, free from the distractions and classroom disruption associated with mobile devices.

2. The "Phone-Free" Expectation

At Summerhill, the rule is: **"See it, Hear it, Lose it"**.

- **Zero-Use Zone:** Students are prohibited from using mobile phones and associated devices (e.g. electronic devices, earbuds, or headphones) anywhere inside the school building or on the school site, during the school day (including break and lunch times), including changing rooms and toilets.
- **Arrival and Departure:** All devices must be switched off and put away either in a bag or in a zipped pocket before entering the school building. Students must not use their phones or personal headphones until they have completely left the school building at the end of the school day.
- **Extra-Curricular Activities:** These expectations apply to all extra-curricular activities and clubs held on the school site; the school remains a phone-free environment during these times.
- **School trips:** Mobile phones must not be used during school trips unless explicit permission is granted by a member of staff. This ensures that students remain engaged, safe, and respectful of the learning environment. All rules outlined in the school's mobile phone policy continue to apply throughout the duration of the trip, and any misuse will be addressed in line with the school's mobile phone policy and behaviour and relationships policy.

3. Headphones, Earbuds, and Smartwatches

- **Personal Headphones and Earbuds:** The ban on usage includes speakers, AirPods, and all forms of personal headphones or earbuds. These must remain switched off and stored in a bag or a zipped pocket throughout the school day.
- **Smartwatches:** These may only be used for reading the time. All messaging, notifications, and internet-enabled features must be turned off; misuse will result in confiscation.

4. Curriculum Exceptions

The school site remains a phone-free environment. Any use of mobile devices for curriculum-related activities is strictly prohibited unless explicit permission has been granted by the Headteacher only.

- **Authorisation:** Permission is granted on a case-by-case basis for specific, essential curriculum needs.
- **Personal Headphones/Earbuds:** The ban on earbuds and headphones remains in effect at all times, even during authorised curriculum tasks, unless the Headteacher has provided specific, explicit permission for their use as part of that task.

Summary and exemptions

Acceptable *(only with explicit permission from a staff member on each occasion before the phone is used and tight supervision by the staff member during the usage):*

- *Device used briefly by a student to capture a record of their work or an image/video to form part of their work, then transfer/email the file to a school device*
- *Device used briefly by student to send an emergency message / make an urgent call to a family member - eg "I think I left the iron on!"*

Not acceptable:

- *Device used to view or edit images previously collected. Files should be printed or transferred to a school device for viewing/editing.*
- *Device used to listen to music*
- *Device used to revise*
- *Device used to access resources (including web pages, quizzes, surveys and videos)*

5. Medical and SEND Adaptations

Summerhill complies with its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

- **Medical Needs:** Students with a current medical plan (e.g., for diabetes monitoring) are permitted to use their phones solely for medical management.
- **SEND Adjustments:** Any reasonable adjustments regarding mobile device or headphone use for students with Special Educational Needs must be formalised in the individual student's SEN Passport.

6. Sanctions and Restorative Practice

As a fully restorative practice school, we use the theory of "Accept, Correct, Learn".

- **Confiscation:** If a device is seen or heard without permission, it is handed to reception.
- **First Incident:** A 60-minute detention is set; the phone is collected from reception at 3:20 pm.
- **Repeat Occurrences:** A 60-minute detention is set and the phone is held until a parent/carer collects it.

- Restorative Conversations: Staff will lead a dialogue (e.g., *"Who has been affected?"*, *"What needs to happen to put things right?"*) to help students reflect on their actions.
- Persistent offenders will be required to hand their phone in at the start of each day or use a secure lock-bag until the end of the school day.

7. Role of Staff

Staff will model high expectations by only using mobile devices in front of pupils for acceptable professional purposes or an emergency, such as when required for Multi-factor Authentication (MFA) or to access Arbor in situations (eg a fire drill) where the school's wifi is not accessible.