Mobile Phone & Device Policy

Policy Approval

Approval Required	Indicate with a tick (✓)		**Annual Review Required**	Indicate with a tick (✓)	
	Yes ✓	No		Yes ✓	No
Approval Panel	Loren Janes				
Approved by	Name: Loren Janes		Signature: 	Date: April 2026	
Policy Review Date	April 2027				

Introduction

Futures Changing Ltd is committed to providing a safe, respectful and focused learning environment. Mobile phones and personal digital devices can present risks to safeguarding, behaviour, learning, privacy and wellbeing if not managed appropriately.

In line with DfE guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), and Ofsted expectations, the use of mobile phones and personal devices is restricted during the learning day.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All learners
- All staff
- Visitors and contractors (where relevant)

Devices covered include:

- Mobile phones
- Smart watches
- Tablets
- Personal laptops
- Headphones / earbuds
- Any internet-enabled personal device

Learner Use of Mobile Phones & Devices

Permitted Use

Learners may use mobile phones and personal devices:

- During designated break and lunch times only
- In designated break areas
- In a manner that is respectful, safe, and lawful
- If required as part of a lesson when instructed by tutor

Prohibited Use

Mobile phones and personal devices must not be used:

- During lessons or learning activities unless specifically instructed by tutor
- In workshops or practical areas
- In classrooms, corridors or learning spaces
- In toilets or changing areas
- During trips, visits or off-site activities (unless authorised)

Devices must be:

- Switched off or on silent
- Out of sight during learning time

Safeguarding & Online Safety Expectations

Learners must not use devices to:

- Create, view, store or share inappropriate, sexual or offensive content
- Bully, harass, threaten or intimidate others
- Record, photograph or film staff or learners without permission
- Access or share content relating to:
  - Drugs or alcohol
  - Violence or criminal behaviour
  - Extremism or radicalisation
  - Self-harm or harmful challenges
- Use fake or anonymous accounts to cause harm
- Share personal information about themselves or others

Any online behaviour that places a learner or others at risk will be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Monitoring, Confiscation & Searches

- Staff may ask learners to hand over devices if this policy is breached.
- Devices may be confiscated temporarily and returned at the end of the day or via a parent/carer.
- In serious cases, devices may be retained while a safeguarding investigation takes place.
- Searches will only take place:
  - In line with DfE guidance
  - By authorised staff
  - Respecting dignity and privacy

Reasonable Adjustments for Learners with Special Requirements

Futures Changing Ltd is committed to ensuring that all learners are able to access learning safely and equitably. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, reasonable adjustments will be made where a learner's disability, medical condition, mental health need, neurodiversity, or safeguarding requirement means that restricted access to a mobile phone or personal digital device would place them at a disadvantage.

The organisation's default position is that mobile phones and personal devices remain switched off and out of sight during learning activities. However, it is recognised that for some learners, controlled access to a device may be necessary to remove barriers to learning, support wellbeing, enable communication, or manage identified risk. Where this is the case, an individual adjustment may be agreed that is proportionate, time-bound where appropriate, and clearly defined.

Any adjustment granted will be specific to the learner's identified need and limited to the agreed purpose. Safeguarding, behaviour and online safety expectations apply equally to all learners. Devices approved under a reasonable adjustment must not be used to access social media, messaging services, gaming or non-approved applications during learning time. Where there are concerns about misuse, staff are authorised to intervene, and the adjustment will be reviewed.

Approval and Oversight of Reasonable Adjustments

Requests for reasonable adjustments may be identified by the learner, a parent or carer, a member of staff, the Centre Manager, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or an external professional. Consideration will be given following discussion with the learner to understand the nature of the need, how the device supports learning or wellbeing, and any associated risks.

Where appropriate, supporting information may be used to inform decision-making, including medical advice, professional recommendations, existing support arrangements, or safeguarding records. While formal

documentation may support the decision-making process, adjustments will be considered on an individual basis and will not be unreasonably withheld due to the absence of paperwork.

A proportionate risk assessment will be undertaken prior to approval to ensure that safeguarding, online safety and the wider learning environment are not compromised. Approval must be given by the Centre Manager and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All agreed adjustments will be recorded and shared with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis to ensure consistent implementation.

Review and Impact

Reasonable adjustments will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain appropriate, effective and proportionate. Reviews may also be triggered by changes in the learner's needs, concerns about device use, or safeguarding considerations. Adjustments may be amended or withdrawn where they are no longer required or where risks increase.

This approach ensures that reasonable adjustments are purposeful, consistently applied, and have a clear positive impact on learner engagement, safety and progress, while maintaining high expectations for behaviour and safeguarding.

Confidentiality and Professional Practice

All reasonable adjustments will be managed sensitively and confidentially. Learners will not be singled out or challenged publicly in relation to approved device use. Staff are expected to act professionally at all times and ensure that learners are treated with dignity and respect.

Reporting Concerns

Learners are encouraged to:

- Report any online behaviour that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable
- Provide evidence where appropriate (e.g. screenshots)

Reporting concerns will never result in punishment for victims.

All concerns will be:

- Logged securely
- Reviewed by the Safeguarding Team
- Managed in line with safeguarding procedures

Staff Use of Mobile Phones & Devices

Staff must:

- Model appropriate and professional behaviour
- Use personal devices only during breaks
- Never use personal phones to:
    - Contact learners
    - Take photographs of learners
    - Access learner information
- Use only approved Centre systems for communication and recording

Staff are expected to follow:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy

Consequences for Breach

Breaches of this policy may result in:

- Verbal warning
- Confiscation of device
- Loss of phone privileges
- Behaviour agreement
- Parent / carer or referral partner contact
- Safeguarding review
- In serious cases: suspension, removal from site, or referral to external agencies including the police

Safeguarding concerns will always be addressed before disciplinary action.

Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Critical Incident Policy