



Why Do We Have This Policy?

At Running Deer, we're a special woodland school that helps you benefit from nature and the outdoors. We believe that being phone-free during the school day helps you:

- **Learn better** – without distractions
- **Stay safe** – both physically and online
- **Enjoy nature** – and all the amazing things our woodland site offers
- **Connect with others** – face-to-face, not through screens
- **Feel happier** – spending time outdoors is great for your wellbeing



The Rules About Mobile Phones

During the School Day

- **Mobile phones are not allowed to be used at school**
- This means you can't use them during lessons, breaks, or lunchtime
- The same rules apply to smartwatches

If You Need to Bring a Phone to School

We understand some of you might need a phone for your taxi journey or to contact home. If this applies to you, you have two options:

1. **Hand it to staff when you arrive** – we'll lock it safely in the office and give it back at the end of the day
2. **Keep it in your secure locker** – you have your own locker where you can store personal belongings safely

Important: Your phone must be switched off and put away as soon as you arrive at school.



What About Smartwatches?

Smartwatches are also not allowed during the school day because:

- They can distract you from learning
- They have many of the same features as phones
- For Key Stage 4 students, they're not allowed in exams, so we want to help you get used to not having them



Are There Any Exceptions?

Yes! We understand that some students might need their phone for special reasons, such as:

- **Young carers** who need to be contactable
- **Health reasons** – for example, if you have diabetes and use your phone to monitor your blood sugar

If you think you need an exception, you or your parents/carers should speak to our Head of School, Geraldine Carter.



What Happens If I Break the Rules?

We want to support you to follow the rules. If you're finding it difficult, here's what might happen:

1. **First, we'll talk to you** – staff will remind you of the rules and ask you to put your phone away
2. **We might ask you to hand over your phone** – for safe storage (we won't take it by force)
3. **We might call your parents/carers** – to help collect your phone so learning can continue

We'll always try to be fair and understand your individual situation.



Serious Situations

Some things are never okay and could lead to serious consequences, including permanent exclusion:

- Taking or sharing photos/videos of other students without permission
- Bullying or harassing others online or through messages
- Sharing inappropriate images
- Using your phone in ways that could harm yourself or others

If you see something online that worries you or makes you uncomfortable, **please tell a trusted adult** – you won't automatically be in trouble for having your phone.



What If There's an Emergency?

- If you need to contact your parents/carers during the day, speak to staff in the office
- Your parents/carers should contact the school office if they need to reach you – **not** your personal phone



Looking After Your Phone

- If you bring a phone to school, **you're responsible for keeping it safe**
- Make sure it has your name on it
- Use a password or PIN code to protect it
- The school cannot be responsible if your phone is lost, damaged, or stolen (unless we've agreed in writing to look after it)



Your Rights

We follow UNICEF's rights for children, which include your right to:

- **Relax and play** (Article 31)
- **Express yourself** (Article 13)
- **Be safe from violence** (Article 19)
- **An education** (Article 28)
- **Privacy** (Article 8)
- **A good standard of living** (Article 27)
- **Know your rights** (Article 42)
- **Health and health services** (Article 24)

This policy helps protect these rights for everyone.



Questions?

If you have any questions about this policy or need to discuss your individual circumstances, please speak to:

- Geraldine Carter (Head of School)
- Any trusted adult at school

Remember: This policy is here to help you get the most out of your time at Running Deer School. We want you to enjoy nature, learn new things, and build great relationships with the people around you!