

RIVERSIDE SCHOOL



Safeguarding Pupils. Mobile Phones, Cameras and Smart Technology Devices Policy

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS

RESPONSIBLE PERSON – HEADTEACHER

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Statement of Intent

Riverside School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of pupils, both on and off school premises. We implement a whole-school preventative approach to managing safeguarding concerns in a timely fashion, ensuring that the wellbeing of pupils is at the forefront of all action taken.

This policy has been updated in line with the revised DfE guidance, [Mobile phones in Schools](#), published January 2026, advised to be implemented in schools from April 2026. Although the guidance uses the text 'mobile phones' this should be taken to refer to other smart technology.

It is our intention to provide an environment in which:

- pupils are not distracted from their learning or other activities;
- staff are not distracted from their work or supervision of pupils;
- there is no inappropriate use of mobile phones and cameras or recordings around pupils; and
- pupils are safeguarded and GDPR guidance is followed.

1. Policy Statement

We will provide a safe environment through:

- preventing the possible identification of pupils when a photograph or recording is accompanied by personal information;
- preventing the inappropriate use, adaptation or copying of images for use on child pornography or other inappropriate websites;
- preventing the taking of inappropriate photographs or recordings of pupils;
- ensuring there is not a breach of court issued Conduct Orders restricting photography/recording of specific pupils (it is the lead member of staff's responsibility to ensure they are aware of the most up to date list of pupils who do not have consent for photographs/recordings); and
- ensuring they keep an updated list of pupils who do not have consent for photographs and videos for publications, school use, home school contact books or any other way these images/recordings could be shared.

This policy should be read in conjunction with relevant policies including the following:

- Data Protection Policy
- Cyber Security Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Failure to adhere to the contents of this policy can lead to an investigation under the school's disciplinary procedures and possible legal or other action.

2. Procedures Regarding Pupil use of Mobile Phones and Other Smart Technology.

In line with the updated DfE guidance Riverside School will ensure that the use of mobile phone and other home smart technology throughout the school day is limited to high tech communication devices or necessary medical data access, e.g., the use of diabetic apps to monitor glucose levels on a mobile phone unless an exception needs to be made and this is agreed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Pupils will not use devices to send/receive phone calls, messages, notifications etc as part of social networking, including during breaktimes and lunch times. When arriving at school pupils will hand their phones to a designated member of staff. The device will be returned at the end of the day. The school does not accept liability for any technology/smart devices brought to school by pupils or families.

Families will ensure that pupils that wear a smart watch will ensure the camera, record and notification/communication settings are turned off while in school.

The school will provide sessions on safe use of mobile phones and other smart devices as part of its education curriculum. It will promote internet safety and wellbeing in line with use of smart technology and support families in enabling safe use and decision making around smart devices and technology. The school will promote the benefits of technology free times appropriate to the pupil and their personalised needs.

3. Reasonable Adjustments to the Prohibiting of Devices.

Riverside School is aware that exceptional circumstances to this policy apply to some pupils, therefore there is some flexibility when considering arrangements for individual pupils. This should be agreed with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Pupils who require reasonable adjustments may change over time due to a one-off incident, or as part of an ongoing series of incidents, condition or diagnosis.

Under the [Equality Act 2010](#) schools have a duty to avoid disadvantaging a pupil. Under the [Children and Families Act 2014](#) schools have a duty to support pupils with medical conditions. This is linked to the Government's statutory guidance on [Supporting Pupils with a Medical Condition in School](#).

As noted in the updated guidance, Headteachers, or staff they authorise, have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item as set out in legislation or any item identified in the school rules as an item that may be searched for... Staff should refer to the [searching, screening and confiscation in schools guidance](#) regarding searching a pupil.

N.B: A 'prohibited item' is defined in subsection (3) of [section 550ZA of the Education Act 1996](#) and includes articles specified in [The Schools \(Specification and Disposal of Articles\) Regulations 2012](#).

The school will remind pupils at appropriate times, personalised to pupils/pathways/phases, the policy on smart technology.

Medical Needs

The school accepts the use of mobile devices to monitor medical data, for example, glucose levels. The school is aware these need to be kept within agreed distance to consistently and accurately monitor sensors worn by the pupil. However, in medical circumstances, such as the forementioned, the device is not kept on the pupil's person. On arrival it is handed to a member of staff who will be responsible for monitoring the device. There may be some flexibility with this for 6th Form pupils to aid their understanding and independent use, however, this will be agreed with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Riverside School is aware there are other medical diagnosis, conditions and needs which require monitoring and/or tracking via a smart device and these will be discussed on a case-by-case basis with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Decisions and rational will then be communicated to appropriate members of staff to support this.

High Tech Communication Devices

The school accepts that in order to ensure communication is promoted, a number of pupils will bring in a high-tech communication device from home. These are pre-programmed with communication aids that maybe personalised to the pupil. The use of these devices is supported through the SaLT team and a member of the Leadership Team. It is an essential part of supporting pupils to fully access communication both expressive and receptive.

These devices are checked by a designated member of the class team before they leave school to ensure that no photos or videos have been recorded on the devices. Any recordings that identify other pupils will be deleted. These devices may need internet connection but will be monitored by adults in the class and the school team to ensure they are used for personal communication within school.

4. Procedures Regarding High-Tech Communication Devices

The following procedures must be observed:

- If the camera/ photo apps are kept activated to enable pupils to personalise their grids in order to support communication, it is the responsibility of the class teacher or nominated lead adult to check all saved photos and recordings on the device, ensuring pupils are represented positively, respecting dignity and to ensure any photos/recordings of other pupils
- Devices may have photos of a pupil's family etc. when they arrive at school, these images should not be downloaded and used in school or on school documentation such as Happiness Passports without the written consent of the adult family member or person with parental consent (e.g., for siblings under 18 years of age)

this would be a parent).

- Some communication devices (e.g., Microsoft/ Grid iPads) have access to cameras/ photos and the internet. This is monitored by the school/ family/ carers to ensure that usage is in line with our Safeguarding Policy, Cyber Security Policy and Data Protection Policy.
- The school reserves the right to activate restrictions on any devices brought into school or remove the device for safeguarding or data protection reasons.

5. Procedures Regarding Mobile Phones and Smart Watches with a Built-In Camera

Riverside School allows staff, visitors, families and other adults on site to bring in personal mobile telephones/ devices for their personal use. (For the purpose of this policy 'staff' will be inclusive of all adults in school, volunteering or employed directly or indirectly by Riverside School undertaking pupil contact roles.)

The following procedures must be observed:

- The school does not allow a member of staff to contact a current or former pupil or parent/ carer using their personal mobile telephone or other such device, unless this is an exception and they have permission from a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Or unless that person is a carer or nurse employed by a third party who attends Riverside School with the pupil to ensure safety and wellbeing. In this circumstance contact should be completed in agreed spaces such as the staff room, not in pupil areas.
- Staff bringing personal mobile telephones or other such devices into the school building must ensure there is no inappropriate or illegal content on the mobile telephone/ device.
- Staff must ensure that their mobile telephones/ devices are in a designated safe area, on silent and are not used or carried by staff in the presence of pupils. Smart watches with a built-in camera are not to be used by staff while working with pupils.
- Mobile phone calls may be made during staff break times or in staff members own time and only in the designated staff only areas or off-site.
- If staff have a personal emergency, they should share the school's phone number or, with the agreement of their line manager, make a personal call from their mobile telephone/ device in the designated staff only areas.
- In exceptional circumstances where a staff member has a family or similar emergency and needs to keep their mobile phone/ device in close proximity, prior permission must be sought from their line leader and agreement on how this can be kept safely to ensure the safeguarding of pupils and staff.
- Staff need to ensure that they make their emergency contacts e.g., families, children's schools etc. aware of the school number for emergencies. This is the responsibility of the individual staff member.
- All family helpers/ work experience/ students/ volunteers, contractors and other visitors and adults in the school will be requested to keep their phone/ device in a designated place, stored securely.
- During trips and visits nominated staff will have access to a school camera or a school mobile device with camera e.g., an iPad to document the trip. No photos,

video or recording should be made on personal phones.

- It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns about inappropriate use of mobile phones/ devices to the DSL and/ or a Safeguarding Lead or Line Leader.
- Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately.
- The Senior Leadership Team reserve the right to check the image contents of a member of staff's mobile phone/ technology device should there be any cause for concern over the appropriate use. If they are not prepared to volunteer their device then other such actions can be taken.

6. Procedures Regarding Photography/ Video and Cameras

Photographs or other recordings are taken for the purpose of recording a pupil or group of pupils participating in activities or celebrating their achievements. This is an effective form of evidencing pupils' progression. It is essential that photographs and recordings are taken and stored appropriately to safeguard pupils. The following procedures must be observed:

- All pupils featured in recordings or photos must be appropriately clothed and the images/recording showing appropriate actions etc.
- Images taken and stored on the school camera/device during school trips and visits must be downloaded as soon as possible, within one working week, and then deleted from the device the next day (following an overnight back-up of the network).
- All staff are responsible for safeguarding of the camera/ device and ensuring this device is kept safely, and returned following the trip/ visit. This device should not be taken home by staff.
- If photographs or other images need to be taken in an area that is not open and accessible to all i.e., photographs of the pupils in a quiet work area or less frequented space, e.g., the sensory garden during session times, then the class teacher must be aware, and staff should be chaperoned by another member of staff whilst carrying out this kind of activity. At all times, the device must be placed prominently in a place where it is clearly visible. Consideration should be taken of other pupils and staff in this area. Where possible these images/recording should be taken in other high traffic areas of the school or surroundings.
- In all photographs, recordings and videos, staff must be aware of the background to ensure no images of pupils without consent are captured, or any information that can be used to identify or name pupils is visible e.g., display boards.
- Photographs of pupils without photo consent should not be shared in school documents, without the written permission of the parent, and after conversation with your Line Leader and the Administration and Data Manager. These images are for evidence recording purposes documenting the pupils progress and achievements.
- Photographs of pupils are not permitted to be taken by third parties. Only photographs, recordings and videos taken on a school device and by school staff can be taken during trips and visits unless otherwise previously agreed by the Headteacher and there is explicit written permission in place. The Administration

and Data Manager should be informed before this takes place.

- Photos of pupils other than that of the named pupil on the contact book should not be recognisable, e.g., back of head, only showing other pupils' hands, if engaged in an activity together to show moments of shared play etc.

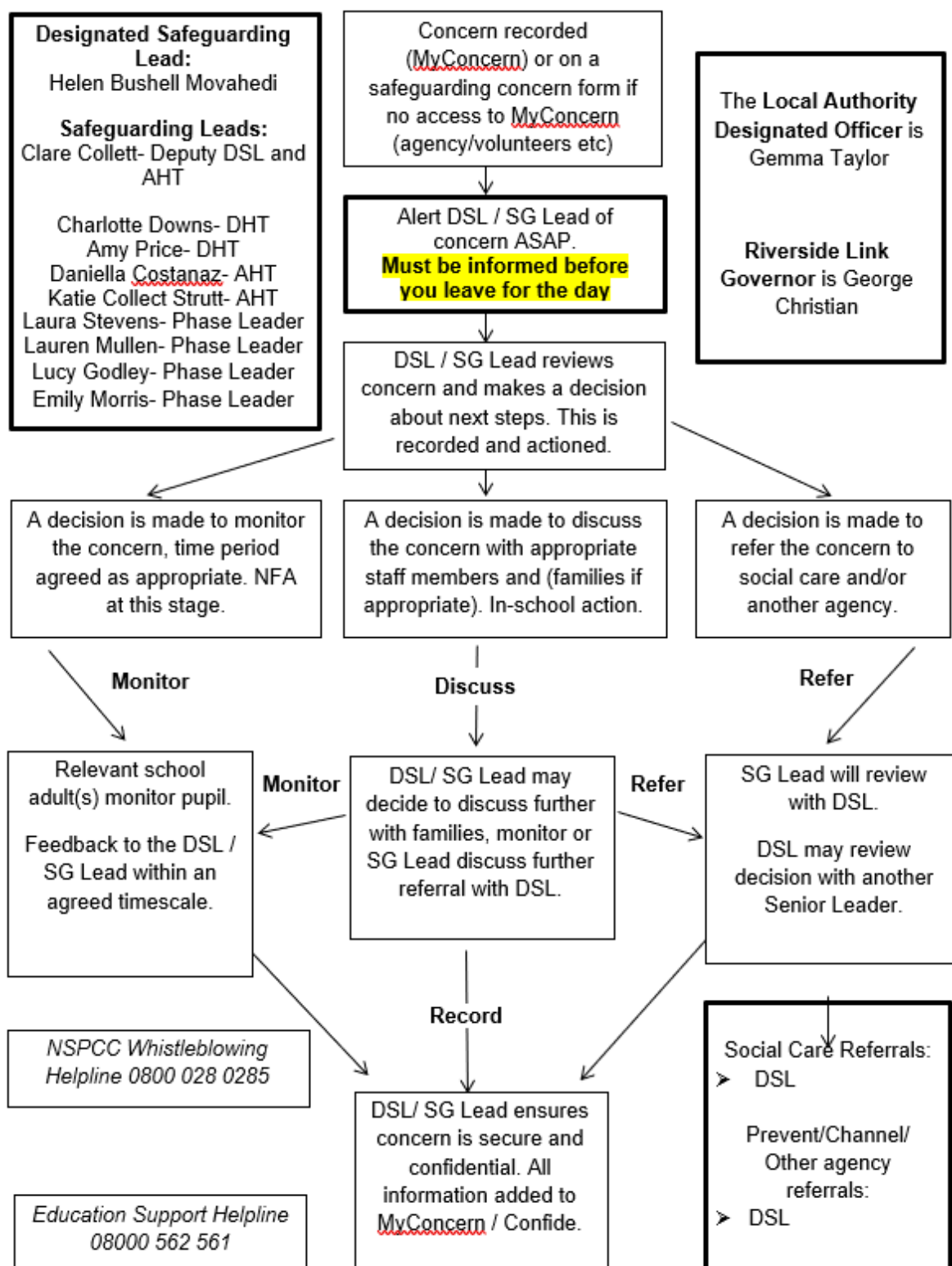
7. Guidelines for Publishing Images

If a photograph is used in any publication relating to the school it must be first agreed with the Headteacher and Administration and Data Manager to establish the reason for the use of the image. This must be in line with school policies and positive promotion of the school. Personal details including a pupil's name should never be revealed on any documentation or on a website or accompany a published photo.

The Administration and Data Manager, in conjunction with other members of the school Leadership and Expressive Arts team, will give adequate thought to the selection of images for use in publicity materials or flyers. They will consider the images of children and young people used on websites. Simple techniques such as digital "water marking" may deter others from misusing images.

All school staff will take photographs that represent our broad range of pupils, participating safely in their activities in line with our Belonging and Wellbeing Agenda.

Appendix 1 – Designated Safeguarding Lead Structure Riverside School



Appendix 2 – Designated Safeguarding Lead Structure Light House Club

