

# Mobile Phones and Wearable Technology Policy 2026

## Summary

The International British Theatre School (IBTS) recognises that mobile and wearable technologies are an integral part of modern life.

This policy ensures their use within IBTS settings supports the safety, privacy, and wellbeing of all children and staff, preventing misuse while maintaining an open, transparent environment.

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## Policy Statement

IBTS promotes a culture of safety and professionalism where children and staff are protected from harm, distress, and inappropriate exposure to digital risks.

This policy sets clear boundaries around the use of mobile phones, smartwatches, and other connected devices, to support compliance with the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2024)** and the **Online Safety Guidance for Early Years Providers (Ofsted 2025)**.

By following this policy, IBTS ensures:

- Children are safeguarded from harm and abuse.
- Privacy and online safety are protected.
- Staff maintain focus and professionalism.
- Allegations of misconduct are prevented.
- The environment remains open, safe, and transparent.

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## Staff Use of Mobile Phones and Wearable Technology

- Personal mobile phones must be **switched off or silenced** and stored securely in staff bags during working hours.
- Staff may wear smartwatches or fitness devices (e.g. Apple Watch, Fitbit) **for timekeeping only** — not for messaging, calls, or photography.

- Personal devices must **not** be used to take photographs, videos, or recordings of children under any circumstances.
- In emergencies, staff may use the **IBTS work phone** or request permission from the Manager or Deputy to use their personal phone away from children (e.g. in the office or staff area).
- If a staff member needs access to their phone (e.g. for family emergencies), this must be authorised in advance by management.
- Staff must never post or share any information, images, or opinions about the school, staff, or children on social media.

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## Children's Use of Mobile Phones

- Children are discouraged from bringing mobile phones to IBTS sessions.
- If phones are brought in, they must be **kept switched off** and stored safely during activities.
- Children aged **10 and above** may access their phones only during designated free breaks with staff permission.
- Taking photographs, videos, or recordings on a child's personal device is **strictly prohibited**.
- If a child wishes to have a photo of an activity, a staff member may take one using the **IBTS camera** in accordance with the **Photography and Social Media Policy 2026**.
- IBTS accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft, or damage of personal devices brought by children.

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## Visitors' and Parents' Use of Mobile Phones

- Visitors, including parents and contractors, must **not use mobile phones or wearable devices** on the premises where children are present.
- Photography and recording by visitors are **strictly prohibited**.
- Parents may request photographs of their child's activities, which staff will take using IBTS equipment in line with safeguarding procedures.

- Clear signage at entrances reminds all visitors of this rule.

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## **Safeguarding and Online Safety**

To maintain a safe digital environment, IBTS follows:

- **“Safeguarding Children and Protecting Professionals in Early Years Settings: Online Safety Considerations”** (DfE, 2025).
- **The UK Safer Internet Centre Early Years Online Safety Framework.**

Staff receive ongoing training on online safety, confidentiality, and digital professionalism. Any breaches of this policy will result in disciplinary action and may be reported to Ofsted or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

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## **Monitoring and Review**

- The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.
- The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if technology, guidance, or legislation changes.
- Regular audits will assess staff understanding and adherence to digital safeguarding procedures.

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**Reviewed:** 15 November 2025

**Next Review Due:** 15 November 2026

**Policy Owner:** Ben Whiteside, Director  
**International British Theatre School**