

MOBILE PHONE & SMART DEVICE POLICY INC ONLINE SAFETY & MEDIA

Company Operations

ADO Services C.I.C.

Incorporating ADO River Valley

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Last Ratification By Management Committee	New Policy
Next Review By Management Committee	September 2026
Latest Update by ADO River Valley	Jan 2026
Mobile Phone & Smart Device merged with Online Safety Policy	

1. Policy Overview

It is the policy of ADO River Valley, to address the use of technology, mobile telephones, smart devices or any other mobile computer technology capable of capturing, receiving and sending images, video or sound by staff, children and young people (CYP) in our care.

This policy addresses the Online Safety and the taking of photographic images or video for media purposes at our sites. Every student in our care deserves to be protected from the misuse of the online dangers or photographic and video images of themselves, whilst they attend school. The internet forms an integral part of learning within programmes and to ensure ADO River Valley conform to the minimum requirements we use the Department of Education's, '**Teaching Online Safety**' as a guidance. This policy focuses on the impact of online and media access by the student.

ADO River Valley Staff are restricted in using their own mobile telephone devices which are kept in a secure lockbox in the staff offices onsite during lessons, sessions or events during the school day. They can use their own mobile communications during breaks but only in the designated Staff Zone F area, which is out of bounds for students.

ADO River Valley staff can use the schools' assets which may include smart phones, tablets, laptops or cameras, but these are only to be used for recording students' attendance, or to allow observations to be recorded as part of their learning experience and as evidence for syllabus or qualifications. All ADO River Valley devices are secured with managed usernames and passwords. Using wireless technology, the ADO River Valley domain is secured with a very strong encrypted wi-fi password onsite and is monitored and controlled by a Smoothwall firewall as a barrier to outside influence.

ADO River Valley staff and students are strictly prohibited from bringing their own devices or technology onto site, including SSD memory or digital cameras from home.

This policy also extends to students accessing our services onsite. Devices that student may access are controlled to allow internet access only to sites or apps that have been installed as part of their learning or therapeutic experience.

All technology assets have an administration lock to stop staff or students from installing third party software or apps that are not officially supported. Devices are locked down with permission-based attributes to stop any interference with changing passwords or altering the operating system or apps.

This policy is linked very closely to the [Privacy Policy](#), [Cyber Policy](#) and the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

ADO River Valley School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all staff, guests and students who use our services, especially those aligned to our school. It is

also important that teaching and learning can be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary online distractions or disruptions. It is important that students' mobile smart phones cannot disrupt their own learning or therapeutic aims and objectives, whilst on site. Although technology is a useful tool, it is only useful when planned into a session for a specific purpose. This policy sets out those commitments and how we meet them, when the use of technology is present.

2. Scope

This policy informs all members of the ADO River Valley staff and student community about the appropriate use of mobile phones or smart devices at school. This applies to students, staff, visitors and delivery personnel, attending our site. This policy covers, but not limited to, any devices capable of communicating outside the site, gaining internet access and capturing images, video or sound. It also covers any wireless or networked devices that can connect to our domain or through other mobile networks. ADO controls this domain exclusively.

These may include;

- Mobile Telephones
- Tablets or Mini Notebooks
- Desktop Computers, Mini-Computers or Servers
- Laptop Computers
- Smart Devices such as Smart Watches, E-readers, Fitness Devices or Music Playing Devices (i-Pods)
- Cameras or Video Devices

This policy scope also includes any new technology or advancements in technology that have the potential to connect to a network either direct or through wireless, that can access our networks and is capable of data transfer and image or video capture or can directly or indirectly influence our internal network and data security.

Only official and registered assets are allowed to be used onsite.

3. Policy Statement

The listed devices in section two are considered to be everyday items in today's society and many, a valuable tool to aid learning. Mobile smart phones and personal devices can be used to communicate in a variety of ways with texting, cameras, voice recording and internet access, all common features. However, mobile phones and personal devices can present a number of problems and distractions when not used appropriately:

- They can undermine classroom discipline and disrupt learning.
- They are valuable items which may be stolen or damaged.
- Their use can render subjects to online (cyber) bullying.
- Internet access on their own phones and personal devices can allow students to bypass ADO security settings and filtering.
- Mobile phones and devices with integrated cameras and other recording systems could lead to safeguarding, child protection, sexting, bullying and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images of other students or staff.

There is a need therefore to set clear guidelines and limit their use during the school day to avoid unnecessary interference with sessional activities, teaching and learning and to ensure the safety and well-being of all students are not affected.

4. Guidelines For Staff, Students and Families

The general guidance is that under no circumstances are personal mobile phone or smart devices to be used at any time on site during school hours. At a very base level, ADO River Valley would prefer that none of these devices enter site, but understand they are an everyday personal item, enabling students to have a means of contact arriving and leaving site.

For staff, once they have reached the Teachers Office in Zone J, personal phones are stored in the department lockbox. Staff must not carry their personal phones with them outside of this area and into teaching areas. Staff will be disciplined for ignoring these guidelines.

For students, at the point of entry, once onsite, after passing through the student reception entrance, Zone G, all mobile phones and smart devices shall be handed over to a member of staff, to be stored in a safe box and locked away in a secure cabinet. The devices will then be

returned when the student exits back through the customer reception, following the completion of their school session. Exceptions to this guidance can be found later in the policy.

- Students can bring their own mobile phones or devices into the setting at their own risk.
- Parent-carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the ADO River Valley Office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child or young person is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.
- In general, students should not bring valuable items to ADO River Valley as they can be easily lost or stolen, which is often distressful for them. Parent-Carers need to be aware that mobile phones or other personal devices are brought to ADO River Valley entirely at the owner's risk and ADO River Valley accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones or other personal devices.
- Devices will be stored in the safe box, for safekeeping until the end of their school day. The mobile phones or other personal devices must remain switched off whilst at ADO River Valley.
- Mobile phones and personal devices must be stored in the safe box at all times and not on their person. ADO River Valley staff will transport the devices in the safe box to the locked secured cabinet.
- ADO River Valley reserves the right to ask a student to complete a Mobile Phone Agreement if we feel it is required. All students must adhere to the school handbook before enrolment start date.
- If any infringements of the handbook or forms terms and conditions occur, the mobile phone or other personal device will be confiscated. Repeated infringements will lead to escalated consequences including following the levels on our 'Self Discipline' Tree.
- If a student uses or highlights that they have a mobile phone or other personal device at ADO River Valley without prior arrangement with the team, the phone will be removed from the student for safekeeping. The phone will be stored safely in the ADO River Valley onsite office safe box and the Parent-Carer will have to collect the

mobile at the end of the day.

- If students are unwell, they should report to the staff so that we can contact parent-carers and record the illness. Students should not contact themselves to arrange to go home or leave site. This is very important for safeguarding reasons and attendance records ensuring the safety of all our students. Parents are advised not to contact their child-young person during teaching and transition hours, but if an emergency arises during these hours, they should contact the school office.
- Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to trusted friends and family members. Students will be instructed in safe and appropriate use of mobile phones and personal devices and will be made aware of boundaries and consequences.
- Phones and devices must not be taken into examinations. Students found in possession of a mobile phone or other personal device during an exam will be reported to the appropriate examining body. This will result in the student's withdrawal from that examination.
- ADO River Valley staff may confiscate a student's mobile phone or smart device if they believe it is being used to contravene this policy or any other policy aligned to this including but not limiting to safeguarding and anti-bullying. If the device is suspected to contain inappropriate or malicious content it may be searched by a member of the Management or designated staff leaders. If the student refuses to comply (e.g. providing access) the device will be confiscated, and parents will be required to provide access or in cases where criminal or harmful material are suspected the device will be handed over to the police for further investigation. *(See DFE Guidance Searching, Screening and Confiscation)*

5. Device Use Exceptions

We recognise that in exceptional circumstances a mobile phone or smart device may be needed to stay within easy reach of a student for medical reasons. Some students may require access to an installed App on their device for medical reasons, to monitor a condition or illness they have. They may also have a speed dial to a doctor or specialist at a hospital in case of severe allergic reactions for example.

In these exceptional cases the exact procedure of operating this App or calling an emergency service should be explained by the Parent-Carer, before the student attends their session(s), in writing to the Headteacher. The device can then be operated by a staff member in an emergency in the correct manner and any accompanying procedures can be carried out accordingly. The device will remain in the possession of the staff member throughout and then handed over to the Parent-Carer at the end of the session.

6. Guidelines For Staff, and Visitors

ADO River Valley recognises that this group will bring their personal mobile phones and smart devices to the site. For staff, the use of personal devices is restricted to break and lunchtime and only within the Staff Only Area – Zone F. At all other times of the day staff mobile phones will be switched to silent and stored within the safe box of the Staff Only Area.

6.1 ADO Assets

ADO supplies and provides certain designated members of staff an asset smart phone to be used for work purposes only.

These assets should be used according to the principles of this policy.

- Under no circumstances should assets be used for any other purpose than for the role they are designated.
- Staff assets must never be used for personal communication, messaging or sending of images outside of the domain of the school.
- Only designated technology assets are to be used for recording, for example: to take photographs or videos of students learning.
- Staff are not permitted to use their own personal phones for contacting students or their families within or outside of the setting.

6.2 Visitors

All visitors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones or smart devices within the customer reception area. Where students are present, they should leave offsite if possible. Should phone calls and or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas described which are not accessed by students in order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others. Visitor devices will be taken and locked away when at the point of signing in and registering their presence.

Visitors requiring devices to record onsite images for maintenance, monitoring, repairs, projects or for any purpose can use an ADO asset during school hours. Any data or images will then be forwarded on after approval. Visitors may use their own devices only after school hours (from 15.30 onwards) or at weekends when there are no students remaining onsite.

7. Inappropriate Use

The following examples of using devices outside of this policy or those devices as not intended for purpose, will be considered inappropriate use and may result in serious action taken.

- Harassment - Inappropriate use of mobile phones or devices will include any child or adult using them to bully, intimidate or otherwise harass other people through any SMS or text message, photographic, video or other data transfer systems available on the device.
- Photographic – Video graphic use of mobile phones or devices - If anyone uses a device to take images or video footage of either other students or members of staff, not intended for purpose, this will be regarded as a serious offence and the management should decide on appropriate disciplinary action. If images of other students or members of staff have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the child or adult until the images have been removed either by the owner in the presence of a member of staff leading or by their Parent-Carer. Only designated ADO River Valley technical equipment and devices can be used.
- Criminal Action - It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile device or smart device to menace, harass or offend another person. In such circumstances the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

8. Liabilities

Any staff member, visitor, guest or student bringing a mobile phone or smart devices onto ADO River Valley site will be fully responsible for their own devices. Bringing any devices on site is at the preference and prerogative of the owner. ADO River Valley will offer to store them when not in use either in a safe box, as best endeavours, but will not be held liable in any circumstances for the loss or damage to these devices, for the reasons not limited to:

- Lost on site, during the school day.
- Stolen
- Physical damage through dropping a device, for example.
- Water ingress
- Wear and tear

- Cosmetic damage
- Device failure or faults
- Any repairs to broken screens or headphones for example.

As our site is an outdoor provision this increases the probability that such devices may be lost or damaged. We insist that any claims on lost or damaged devices are made with the owner's insurance. ADO River Valley is not insured for owners' personal belongings.

With this in mind, we recommend that screens or devices are protected with screen covers, protectors or screen wallets if they are brought onsite. In addition, we suggest that all devices that have a geographic locating feature, have this enabled in the case the device is lost onsite and needs locating.

9. Internet & Internal Networks Overview.

ADO River Valley has installed fibre broadband services. Between the fibre broadband connection and the internal network is a fully firewalled server, specifically used in education establishments, which protects and filters data. This allows us to add additional levels of controls and security when accessing our main data network attached storage systems. Our two main sites, Poets Corner Centre and 126 Upper Wickham Lane are connected via a secure VPN connection. Each user (staff member) has their own unique username and password. Each site has its own internet connection, monitored centrally. Our outdoor site has a meshed wireless network, all units individually secured with their own passwords. Internal data is stored and accessed through an additional password layer and access rights are user restricted dependent on the authorisation levels within the company. All systems are protected by both anti-virus and malware software.

ADO River Valley invested in the education security and network filtering system known as Smoothwall which specifically provides filtering and monitoring across all devices within our school. This is a blanket approach to security and filtering for any user, staff or student, on our internal network. Members of the Safeguarding Group are alerted to concerns to help us manage online safety which are flagged by Smoothwall.

9.1 User Agreements

Each user on our network is restricted by the policies as set out in this document. Staff are additionally restricted to the policies and procedures of the **Staff Employee Handbook**. Students must adhere to policies of the **Student Handbook** which is specifically where the students have to agree to its contents as part of the enrolment process. There are strict regulations set out in the aforementioned policy and although we expect a level of trust if they are learning online, there are also many safeguards to stop them gaining access to any

ADO River Valley internal networks or data. In fact, the access they are allowed is quite often restricted to Apps rather than carte blanche internet access.

Smoothwall has been configured for staff and student group access permissions. Students for example are automatically blocked from accessing adult websites and are flagged if they attempt to access these websites.

10. Arrangements and Training

Media plays an important part in users students progress and achievements. ADO River Valley complies with the GDPR guidelines on all data that is kept on ADO networks. A complete guide to this and our compliance can be found in our [Privacy Policy](#).

ADO River Valley staff have successfully completed the relevant Online Safety Training Courses to ensure that students are effectively safeguarded at all times. ADO River Valley staff engage in refresher training at the appropriate points.

11. Photographic Images and Purpose

These are taken solely for the purpose of ADO River Valley or our students with full permission. We never share images with third party or partner organisations, except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed with all parties involved. It is our policy to only use photographic images or video taken to support, but not limiting to;

- The visibility of ADO River Valley as a brand
- Marketing purposes
- Media presence
- Highlight good work in the community.

In addition, our students and stakeholders benefit from images for the purposes of record keeping as part of OFSTED regulations, or supportive evidence for learning. Images may be taken and stored on secure software and company devices for any one of these reasons;

- For the benefit of parent-carers to view their children or young person (CYPs) progress.
- Support the learning of each CYP individual record.
- To highlight our students' activities and experiences.
- A record of outcomes, or any other recorded analysis that are agreed to.
- Supportive and evidence-based learning records for qualifications
- Supportive and evidence-based learning records for authorities

These images or videos are then subject to Release Management to ensure that full permissions are given before publishing. The Office Administration team hold a record of those students with agreed permissions to publish.

11.2 Image Use Permissions

All students will at some point agree to terms, or contractual agreements with the choice of allowing photographs or video to be used or refuse permission accordingly.

Permission for standard photographic images or video is obtained in a number of ways via Online Referral Forms, as part of the 'New Starter Process' or through paper records. Parent-carers can advise at this stage that they do not provide permission for any photographic images or video to be used for marketing or social media purposes, for example, which forms part of our data protection policy ongoing.

For ADO River Valley, the default stance on permission to use images is set to prohibited. This is to say that no images will be used of children and young people by default unless express permission is gained from the parent-carers or authorities and for reasons of special conditions or for supportive-educational circumstances.

In the case of the ADO River Valley staff team or outside agencies taking photographs for promotional and marketing purposes at outside one –off trips, the company will seek written, parental-carer-organisation permission to agree for students to be included at the time. Should a Parent-Carer prefer their CYP not to take part, then any images taken will be deleted within 24 hours. Individual CYP will not be included in a group image if written permission is not given by the CYPs designated guardian.

11.3 Storage and Security of Images

The Staff team operate ADO River Valley controlled smart devices capable of taking photographic images or video. These are locked away when not in use within the company demise in an offline position. Images are taken using official company equipment only. Once a month all images or video on these devices is removed and backed-up on the ADO River Valley data network. The devices are then returned cleaned of old images. Retention is determined by the [Privacy Policy](#).

11.4 Security Images and Purpose

There is CCTV security system currently installed in the outdoor areas of our school. We do have sporadic wildlife cameras situated within the woodland for the purpose of research and student study. The purpose of these cameras is to always ensure the safety of our students and staff following department of education guidelines on safeguarding and security. Full details can be found in the [CCTV Policy](#).

11.5 Retractions

If a Parent-Carer-organisation would like to retract their permission for the use of images or video, they should do so in writing to the main office, details to be found in the General Terms and Conditions of ADO River Valley.

12. Review

All ADO River Valley policies and procedures follow ITIL guidelines to ensure version control, change control and release management of any documents. As a matter of policy, documents can be updated at any time to reflect changes to ADO River Valley procedures, legal changes, OFSTED directives or any other reason to ensure the policies and procedures are accurate and correct. This involves consultation with stakeholders and approval from the directors and the ADO River Valley governance committee. All policies and procedures are reviewed at the very least on an annual basis. Regular communication through newsletters, social media, text systems and through our website within the ADO River Valley Library is part of our Release Management.

13. Contact

This document was produced by the ADO RV Operations Consultancy Team (Kylanja Ltd). This version supersedes any previous versions and will be reviewed annually.

All correspondence with regard to this policy, or any other operational policy and procedure should be directed to the ADO RV Business Manager by e-mailing education@adorivervalley.co.uk or calling 0208 855 6778, requesting to speak to the Business Manager or in writing to ADO River Valley School, Main Office, 126 Upper Wickham Lane, Welling, Kent, DA16 3DP.