WAYLAND STABLES CARE FARM

MOBILE PHONE, SMART DEVICE, SMOKING AND VAPING POLICY

A no-phone, smoke-free and vape-free site

Version: 1.0
Policy owner: Jake Payne, Business Manager
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Effective date: On approval
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Status: Updated for approval

> **THE SITE RULE**
> Personal mobile phones and other connected or recording devices must be switched off and stored before entry. Smoking and vaping are prohibited in every building, outdoor area and vehicle under WSCF control. The rule applies to children, adult participants, staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors. Only a documented medical, disability, emergency or authorised operational exception may apply.

1. Purpose and commitment

Wayland Stables Care Farm (WSCF) provides a calm, attentive and safe environment. Personal devices can distract from supervision and learning, enable unauthorised recording or contact, compromise privacy and create additional risk around animals, tools, vehicles and machinery. Smoking and vaping expose people to avoidable health, fire, battery and role-modelling risks.

WSCF therefore operates as a no-phone, smoke-free and vape-free site. The policy is designed to protect children and adults at risk, maintain professional boundaries, support data protection, reduce fire hazards and make expectations consistent for everyone.

DfE status: WSCF adopts the Department for Education's 2026 mobile-phone-free standard as its site benchmark. The DfE guidance is statutory for schools from 1 September 2026. Where WSCF delivers provision for a school or college, the commissioning setting's policy and any stricter contractual requirements also apply.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all children and young people attending WSCF, including those on placement or visiting with another setting;
- all adult participants, learners, service users and accompanying carers or support workers;
- employees, sessional staff, volunteers, agency staff, students and trustees;
- parents, carers, visitors, professionals, contractors, delivery personnel and members of the public while admitted to the site; and
- all WSCF buildings, barns, workshops, fields, animal areas, yards, entrances, car parks and vehicles, plus off-site activities while people are under WSCF supervision or control.

For this policy, “phone” or “device” includes a personal mobile phone, smartphone, tablet, connected smartwatch, smart glasses, personal camera, audio recorder, handheld gaming device, connected earbuds or any personal technology capable of communication, notifications, photography, video or audio recording. WSCF-owned radios and approved work devices are excluded when used in accordance with this policy.

“Smoking” includes cigarettes, cigars, pipes, shisha, herbal smoking products and heated tobacco. “Vaping” includes disposable or refillable e-cigarettes, vape pens and any nicotine or non-nicotine inhalation device. Medically licensed nicotine replacement therapy is not vaping and may be supported through an individual health arrangement.

3. The mobile-phone and smart-device rule

3.1 Before arrival and entry

- **Leave personal devices at home wherever possible.** WSCF cannot guarantee the safety of valuables that are not required for the visit.
- **Journey phones must be powered off before entry.** A device brought for travel safety must be kept in a locked personal vehicle or handed in at reception for designated secure storage. Silent mode, aeroplane mode and “do not disturb” are not sufficient.

- **Wearable devices must be stored.** If an ordinary watch function is needed, all communication, notification and recording functions must be disabled before entry; otherwise the device must be stored.
- **Stored devices remain inaccessible.** They are returned when the person leaves, or earlier only under an approved exception. WSCF records devices accepted for safekeeping and takes reasonable care, without excluding any liability that cannot lawfully be excluded.

3.2 While on site or under WSCF supervision

No person may use a personal phone or device to:

- make or receive calls, messages, notifications or social-media content;
- take, view, store, share or livestream photographs, video or audio;
- use personal email, internet, artificial-intelligence tools, games or entertainment;
- contact a child, adult participant or family through a private account or number;
- charge a personal device on WSCF premises; or
- use connected earbuds or headphones, unless specifically authorised as a reasonable adjustment or part of an agreed activity.

The restriction continues during breaks, meals, toileting, transport and time in the car park or other outdoor areas. A person who needs to make a private personal call must first be relieved of any duty, leave the site completely and return only when ready to resume; this is not available to a child or adult participant without an agreed plan and safe supervision.

4. Expectations for each group

4.1 Children and young people

- Parents and carers should not send a child to WSCF with a device unless it is needed for the journey, a health plan or an agreed disability-related adjustment.
- A journey phone is switched off and handed in on arrival. It is normally returned at departure, taking account of the child's journey safety and any serious incident that requires return to a parent or carer.
- Parents and carers must use WSCF's published office contact route for urgent messages. WSCF will pass on necessary messages without giving the child personal-device access.
- WSCF will explain the rule in accessible language and respond to breaches calmly, consistently and proportionately.

4.2 Adult participants and learners

- Adult participants follow the same switch-off and storage rule, including during breaks and supported travel in a WSCF vehicle.
- Where a person needs a device because of disability, communication, health monitoring, capacity-related support or personal safety, WSCF will agree an individual arrangement before attendance wherever possible.
- A person who chooses not to comply may be moved away from an activity and asked to leave or arrange collection, subject to immediate safety, safeguarding duties, contractual obligations and reasonable adjustments.

4.3 Staff, volunteers and agency workers

- Personal devices must be switched off and stored before duty begins. They must not be used in front of, or in areas shared with, children or adult participants.
- Personal devices must never be used for WSCF photographs, recordings, records, messaging, case discussion or contact with participants and families.
- Authorised work communication must use a WSCF-approved device, radio, account or office route. Information must be stored only in approved systems.
- A worker needing to deal with an urgent personal matter must inform the manager, be formally relieved of supervision or duty and leave the site before using the device, unless an emergency exception applies.
- Managers must model the rule. Seniority does not create an exception.

4.4 Visitors, parents, carers and contractors

- The rule is displayed before or at entry and reinforced during sign-in. Hosts are responsible for reminding visitors and challenging use promptly.
- A contractor who genuinely requires a device for a defined task must obtain advance authorisation. Use is restricted to the agreed purpose, time and location; recording functions remain disabled unless specifically approved.
- Delivery drivers and emergency responders may use necessary work communication only while carrying out their function and must not photograph, record or identify participants.
- A visitor who will not comply may be refused entry or asked to leave, provided this does not obstruct emergency action or a legal duty.

5. Exceptions and reasonable adjustments

A blanket rule must not prevent necessary health care, disability access or emergency action. WSCF will consider reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 and relevant health or care plans. An exception is based on need, not preference or job status.

An exception may be authorised for:

- medical monitoring or treatment, such as a phone-linked continuous glucose monitor;
- an accessibility or communication aid, including assistive technology;
- an immediate threat to life or safety when an approved device is unavailable;
- a documented lone-working, personal-safety or emergency-response requirement;
- a specific WSCF operational task that cannot reasonably be completed another way; or
- a contractor's essential work function, after a safeguarding and privacy assessment.

Except in an unforeseen emergency, authorisation must be recorded by the Business Manager or delegated manager. The record states the person and device, purpose, permitted times and locations, supervision, privacy controls, storage when not in use, review date and action if the device is misused. The least intrusive workable arrangement must be used and reviewed regularly with the person, and with a parent, carer, commissioner or clinician where appropriate and lawful.

> **EXCEPTION DOES NOT MEAN OPEN ACCESS**
> A medically or operationally authorised device may be used only for the agreed purpose. Personal calls, messaging, browsing, photography and recording remain prohibited unless separately and explicitly authorised.

6. Communication and emergencies

1. **Routine contact.** Parents, carers, commissioners and professionals use WSCF's published office route. Staff use approved WSCF channels.
2. **Urgent message.** The office or responsible manager receives the information, verifies it where necessary and passes it to the person safely.
3. **Emergency.** Call 999 using the nearest approved phone. If there is immediate danger and no approved device is available, any nearby personal device may be used for the emergency only.
4. **After emergency use.** The device is switched off and stored again when safe. The staff member records the reason and any personal-data or safeguarding issue arising from its use.

WSCF will maintain suitable official communication arrangements for planned activities, including when groups are working away from the main office or off site. No person should depend on a participant's personal phone for routine safety arrangements.

7. Safeguarding, photography and information handling

- Personal devices must never be used to photograph, film or record a child or adult participant, even where the person or family offers verbal consent.
- Authorised images or recordings may be made only on an approved WSCF device, for a defined lawful purpose, with the required consent or other lawful basis and in accordance with WSCF privacy and records procedures.
- Staff must not access or inspect the content of a personal device merely because it has been handed in. A device is not searched without consent or a clear lawful authority under a separate applicable procedure.
- Where there is concern about bullying, exploitation, sexual images, harmful content, covert recording, a crime or risk of harm, staff should preserve the situation, avoid deleting or forwarding material, minimise viewing and report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead decides whether parents or carers, a commissioning school, children's or adult social care, the police or another agency must be involved. A device believed to contain criminal evidence should not be explored by staff.
- Online harm connected with WSCF is addressed through the relevant safeguarding policy even if the content was created away from the site or outside attendance hours.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Victoria Addison. Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Jade Stott.

8. Smoke-free and vape-free rule

Smoking is prohibited by law in enclosed and substantially enclosed workplaces and in certain work vehicles. WSCF applies a stricter property rule: no smoking or vaping anywhere on its premises or during activities under its control, whether indoors or outdoors.

- No smoking or vaping is allowed in buildings, barns, workshops, shelters, toilets, yards, fields, animal areas, entrances, paths, car parks or WSCF vehicles.
- No smoking or vaping is allowed inside a private vehicle while it is on WSCF land or being used for a WSCF activity.
- Tobacco, heated-tobacco and vaping products must not be used, displayed, promoted, shared, sold, supplied or charged on site. Children and young people must not bring them to WSCF.
- There are no smoking or vaping breaks on site. An adult who needs to smoke or vape must first be fully relieved of all duties and supervision, leave WSCF property completely and comply with local law and the rules of neighbouring land.

- Staff, volunteers and accompanying adults must model healthy and safe behaviour and must never smoke or vape while responsible for a child or adult participant.
- Disposable or damaged vapes must not be placed in general waste because of battery and fire risk. Any item surrendered or found is isolated and disposed of through an appropriate battery or electrical-waste route by an authorised adult.

WSCF will respond supportively to nicotine dependence and may signpost staff or participants to NHS stop-smoking support or occupational health. Asking for support does not remove the site rule. Medically licensed nicotine replacement products may be used discreetly when safe and, for a participant, recorded in an appropriate health or support plan.

9. Responding to breaches

Responses must be prompt, calm, proportionate and recorded where the breach is repeated, serious or linked to safeguarding. Staff consider age, disability, special educational needs, communication, capacity, medical need, trauma, vulnerability, journey safety and the circumstances of the incident.

1. **Stop the immediate risk.** Ask the person to stop using the device or to stop smoking or vaping. Move people away from animals, tools, traffic, combustible material or other hazards where necessary.
2. **Restate the rule.** Explain the reason briefly and check whether an approved exception or unmet health or disability need applies.
3. **Secure the item safely.** A phone may be switched off and placed in designated storage by agreement or under the attendance terms. A child or adult should not be physically searched. Staff should not use force simply to obtain an item.
4. **Escalate appropriately.** Inform the responsible manager and, for a safeguarding concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Contact a parent, carer, commissioner or employer when appropriate and lawful.
5. **Apply a proportionate outcome.** This may include a reminder, revised support plan, supervised collection, removal from an activity, being asked to leave, contract action or the staff disciplinary procedure.
6. **Review and learn.** Record significant incidents, any exception or adjustment considered, the outcome and any change needed to risk assessments, signage, induction or supervision.

> **SERIOUS OR ILLEGAL CONCERNS**
> Suspected supply of tobacco or vapes to a child, illegal substances, sexual images, exploitation, threats, covert recording or other criminal or safeguarding concerns must be referred without delay under the relevant safeguarding procedure. Call 999 where there is immediate danger or a crime in progress.

10. Roles and responsibilities

- **Business Manager — Jake Payne.** Owns the policy; ensures suitable storage, official communications, signage, training and monitoring; authorises operational exceptions or delegates that authority in writing.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead — Victoria Addison.** Advises on child and adult safeguarding concerns, information handling and referrals. Jade Stott is the Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
- **Managers and session leads.** Explain and enforce the rule consistently, plan reasonable adjustments and ensure nobody is left without an appropriate emergency communication route.
- **All staff and volunteers.** Model the rule, challenge breaches, use approved systems and report incidents or concerns promptly.
- **Participants, families, visitors and contractors.** Follow arrival, storage and smoke-free requirements; disclose necessary medical or accessibility needs early; use official contact routes.

11. Implementation, records and review

- The policy is provided before placement or attendance where practicable and is reinforced through induction, visitor information and clear signs at entrances and key areas.
- WSCF provides an identified storage and return process for journey phones and ensures only authorised staff can access stored items.
- Staff receive instruction on exceptions, emergencies, safeguarding referrals, privacy and safe handling of found or damaged vaping products.
- Exception records, serious breach records and related personal information are limited to what is necessary, held securely and retained under WSCF's records schedule.
- The Business Manager reviews implementation at least annually and after a serious incident, relevant complaint or material change in law, statutory guidance or commissioned-service requirements.

12. Related WSCF policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Adult Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct and safer working practice
- Behaviour, anti-bullying and online-safety arrangements
- Data protection, privacy, photography and records policies

- Health and Safety, Fire Safety, First Aid and Medical Needs policies
- Complaints, whistleblowing and staff disciplinary procedures

13. Legal and guidance framework

This policy reflects the following sources as at 4 August 2026. DfE mobile-phone guidance becomes statutory for schools on 1 September 2026; Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 also comes into force on that date. KCSIE 2025 remains in force until 31 August 2026. The Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026 includes powers for further regulations, so WSCF will check commencement and secondary legislation at review.

- Department for Education — Mobile phones in schools — updated 29 June 2026; statutory for schools from 1 September 2026
- Department for Education — Keeping children safe in education — 2025 guidance remains current to 31 August 2026; 2026 guidance applies from 1 September 2026
- GOV.UK — Smoking at work: the law — smoke-free workplace, signage and work-vehicle duties
- Health Act 2006, Part 1 — statutory smoke-free provisions for England
- Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026 — received Royal Assent on 29 April 2026; relevant provisions and regulations must be checked as they commence
- GOV.UK — Single-use vapes banned from 1 June 2025 — sale and supply prohibition and battery-waste context
- Equality Act 2010 — reasonable-adjustment and non-discrimination duties
- Data Protection Act 2018 — handling personal information, images and recordings

Approval

Approved by: _____

Role: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____