



New Mills Primary School Mobile Phone Policy

Mobile Phone Policy

Policy date: September 2026 | Review date: September 2027

1. Purpose and scope

New Mills Primary School is a mobile phone free environment for pupils. Children must not use or keep personal mobile phones with them while in school, except where an individual arrangement has been agreed to meet a specific need. Phones needed for the journey to and from school must be handed to staff for secure storage.

This policy protects learning, play, relationships and privacy. It supports our values of Caring, Collaborative, Curious and Creative and applies to lessons, breaks, lunchtime, school run clubs, visits and residential trips. The pupil rules also apply at school plays and PTA events on the school site. Expectations for adults are set out below.

Throughout this policy, "mobile phone" includes smartphones and other personal smart technology with similar functions, including smartwatches, messaging or recording devices and internet enabled personal devices. It covers devices that can send or receive messages or notifications, access the internet, take photographs or record audio or video. Ordinary watches without these functions are permitted. School provided technology remains subject to our acceptable use and online safety arrangements.

2. Bringing a phone to school

Children should leave mobile phones at home. Where a phone is needed for the journey to or from school, parents or carers should inform the class teacher and agree the hand in arrangement. In this policy, "parents" includes carers and people with parental responsibility.

The phone must be switched off before the child enters the school premises, unless an agreed medical or disability arrangement requires otherwise.

The child must hand the phone to their class teacher promptly on arrival. Children attending a before school club must hand it to the supervising member of staff on arrival.

Phones must not be kept on the child's person or in bags, coat pockets, classroom trays or other possessions during school time, apart from the brief period needed to hand them to staff on arrival.

Staff will store handed in phones securely. Phones will be returned when the child leaves school, or transferred securely to club staff if the child stays for an after-school activity.

After collecting a phone, the child must keep it switched off and put away until they reach the school gates.

3. Contacting children during school time

Parents must contact the school office rather than calling or messaging their child directly. Staff will relay messages and arrange contact where needed. Children who need to contact home should speak to a member of staff. Parents should ensure the school has up to date emergency contact details.

4. Medical needs and reasonable adjustments

We will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and support children with medical conditions. A child may need a phone to use assistive communication technology or to receive continuous glucose monitoring information from a diabetes sensor. A device required for these purposes must remain available and connected as their needs require.

Parents should discuss the need with the headteacher or SENDCo. We will agree and record the arrangements with the family and, where appropriate, health professionals. These will explain the permitted functions, access, storage, staff support and review arrangements, using an individual healthcare plan or other support plan where appropriate. The same arrangements will be considered for clubs and trips.

We will also consider exceptional welfare or safeguarding circumstances individually, including young caring responsibilities. Restrictions will apply only where compatible with the agreed support. Children will not be penalised for using a device in accordance with their arrangement. Urgent needs will be addressed promptly while arrangements are recorded.

5. Breaches and confiscation

If a child keeps a phone contrary to this policy, fails to hand it in or uses it without permission, staff will ask them to hand it over. The phone will be kept securely in the school office and parents contacted to arrange collection. It will normally be returned to a parent or an adult they authorise, rather than to the child.

The response and length of retention must be reasonable and proportionate. Staff will consider the child's age, understanding, SEND, agreed adjustments and circumstances. Before withholding a phone needed for the journey home, staff will agree a safe alternative with the family. The headteacher may authorise a different return arrangement where necessary for safety or welfare. A device needed for medical monitoring or disability support will not be withheld in a way that compromises that support.

Further responses will follow the school's Behaviour Policy. Repeated breaches will lead to a discussion with the family. Serious misuse, including bullying or unauthorised recording, will be referred to a senior leader and, where appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead. Relevant incidents, confiscations and return arrangements will be recorded.

6. Safeguarding and device content

Concerns about harmful messages, images, recordings or online behaviour must be reported promptly to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy. A child who needs to show staff an online concern can have supervised access to their device where appropriate. Staff will support the child and follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

A confiscation does not give staff an unrestricted right to inspect a device. Any examination of content must have a lawful basis and follow DfE guidance. Staff must not intentionally view, copy, print, save or share suspected indecent images of children. They must secure the device and refer the concern to the designated safeguarding lead. Potential evidence must be preserved and police advice sought where appropriate.

7. Clubs visits and residential trips

Children must not use personal phones during school run clubs or school events. Phones brought for travel must remain in staff storage until departure. Families attending school plays or PTA events should keep children's devices put away. External club providers will be informed of the policy and expected to follow equivalent safeguarding arrangements.

Children must not bring phones on day visits or residential trips unless required under an agreed individual arrangement. Staff will provide families with contact arrangements and facilitate communication when needed. Parents should contact the school or the nominated trip contact rather than children directly.

8. Staff volunteers and visitors

Staff and volunteers must model responsible use. Personal phones must be kept securely away and must not be used for personal reasons in front of children or while supervising them. Personal calls should be made during breaks, away from children. Emergency personal use should be agreed with a senior leader when practicable, with supervision maintained.

Necessary work use, such as authentication, emergency communication or trip coordination, must follow school procedures and must not distract from supervision. Staff must not use personal devices to photograph or record children, store pupil information or contact pupils. Approved school devices must be used for school photographs and recordings, in line with safeguarding, data protection and image permissions.

Visitors attending during the school day must switch off or silence their phones and hand them to the school office for secure storage, unless an exception is agreed by a senior leader, for example for an essential professional or medical purpose. Parents collecting or dropping off children should keep phones put away while interacting with children and staff. Personal devices must not be used in early years teaching or care areas, toilets or changing areas. Agreed medical or disability use remains permitted; essential emergency communication must protect children's privacy.

9. Photographs recordings and privacy

Parents and visitors must not photograph, film or audio record children or staff on the school site without the school's permission. At performances or events, the school will explain whether photographs or recordings are permitted. Any permitted family recording must be for personal use; images identifying other children must not be posted online or shared outside the family without the relevant parents' permission. Photography or recording is never permitted in toilets, changing or intimate care areas.

10. Care of devices and concerns

We will take reasonable care of phones handed in or confiscated. Families should avoid sending valuable devices unnecessarily. The school cannot guarantee against loss, damage or theft, particularly where a device has not been handed in. This does not remove any legal duty or liability the school may have.

Questions or requests for an adjustment should be raised with the class teacher, SENDCo or headteacher. Concerns about the application of this policy, including searches or confiscation, can be raised through the school's Complaints Procedure.

11. Implementation and review

The headteacher oversees implementation. Staff will apply the rules consistently and explain them in an age-appropriate way. Children will learn about online safety, privacy and the reasons for phone free learning through the curriculum. The policy will be published on the website, shared with families and explained at the start of each school year and when new pupils join.

School leaders and governors will review this policy annually, or sooner if guidance or circumstances change. It must be read alongside the Behaviour Policy, safeguarding and child protection procedures, online safety and acceptable use arrangements, medical support arrangements, staff code of conduct and data protection policies.

Guidance and legal framework

This policy has regard to the DfE Mobile phones in schools' guidance, revised in January 2026 and updated on 29 June 2026 when it became statutory, for schools to follow from 1 September 2026. Relevant duties also arise under the Education Act 1996, the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014 and applicable data protection law.

[DfE Mobile phones in schools current guidance](#)

[DfE Searching screening and confiscation guidance July 2022](#)

[DfE Keeping children safe in education current guidance](#)

[DfE Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)

[DfE EYFS statutory framework for group and school based providers](#)