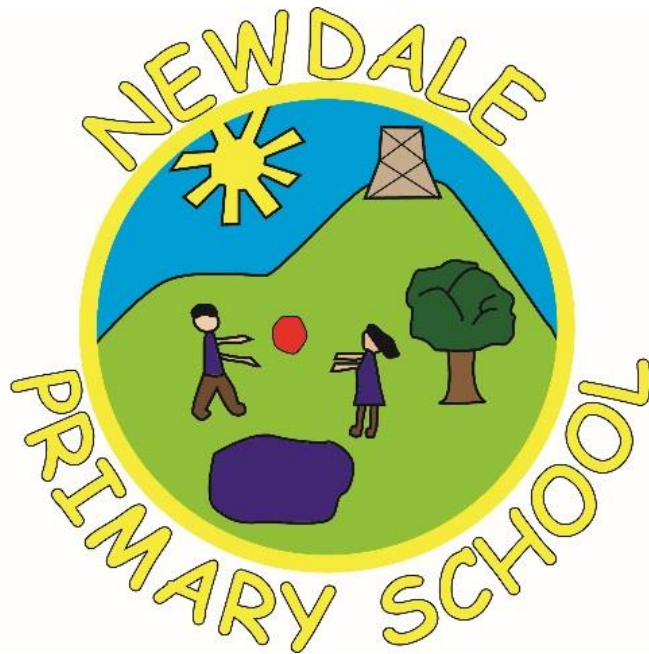


# Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy

Date of policy: October 2025



Reviewed: October 2025, February 2026  
Next review: September 2026

\*This policy applies to mobile phones and any other electrical communication devices (including smart watches).

## **Policy Outline**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Mobile phones in schools Guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day (February 2024- updated January 2026)
- DfE (September 2025) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- The Data Protection Act 2018

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

This policy prohibits the use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video) throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

## **Introduction**

Technology has become an integral part of society and has transformed the way we engage with services and consume content. This is especially poignant for young people. According to an Ofcom survey in 2025, 19% of 3-5 year olds, 30% of 6-7 year olds, 42% of 8-9 year olds and 82% of 10-12 year olds have their own smartphone (Ofcom, 2025). At Newdale, we embrace the use of technology, and we will continue to help and support our pupils to navigate and make sense of the digital world around them, whilst also teaching them and giving them a tool kit about how to stay safe online.

Recent guidance from the Department for Education states, "Every school has a duty to create an environment that is calm, safe and free from distraction so all pupils, whatever their background, can learn and thrive. One of the greatest challenges facing schools is the presence of mobile phones. Today, by the age of 12, 97% of pupils own a mobile phone." (Mobile Phones in Schools- Guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day, February 2024).

## Rationale

All points in this policy apply to any device which is internet-enabled including (but not limited to):

- Mobile phones including Android phones, Phones, Smartphones.
- Personal Digital Assistants.
- Handheld entertainment systems and associated equipment including games consoles, CD players, DVD players, MP3 players, iPods and earphones.
- Portable internet devices such as iPads.
- Internet-enabled watches including Smart watches, GPS watches, FitBits, Fitness Trackers, Besties.
- Electronic reading devices (E-Readers) including Kindles.

Newdale School's policy regarding mobile phones and all the above electronic devices is that they should not be used whilst on the school site for the following reasons:

- Using these items during the school day could potentially disrupt teaching and learning.
- Some of these devices can be used to bully, harass or emotionally harm others.
- As mobile phones and other personal electronic devices are equipped to record sound, take photographs and video images, this technology is open to significant abuse.
  - Devices with cameras present risk to vulnerable students and students in vulnerable situations such as in the toilets.
  - These items are usually of high value and are therefore at risk of being stolen in school or on the way to or from school.

At Newdale, we believe our number one priority is the safety and happiness of every child. We have a legal obligation to keep children safe from harm and ensure we exercise our duty of care to teach students how to keep themselves safe. By removing mobile phones from the school day, we can create a safe space where pupils are protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media and cyber-bullying, as well as the peer pressure and possible stigma associated with owning expensive devices. As a school, we have a legal responsibility to ensure we are actively supervising and monitoring what students are accessing online by physically monitoring as well as having filtering and monitoring systems in place throughout the school day and therefore, mobile phones and smart technology, is not to be used whilst children are on the school premises.

Many mobile phones, such as the iPhone, now include additional functions such as an integrated camera, video recording capability, instant messaging, mobile office applications and mobile access to the internet. These allow immediate access to

email, searching for information on the internet and other functions such as access to social networking sites e.g. Facebook, twitter and blogging sites. There has been an increase in the number of issues to do with online abuse via mobile phone technology and social media. As a result, students' wellbeing and mental health is being affected by this abuse of mobile phone technology.

Although we recognise that there is a positive side to mobile phone technology, such as pupils using them as a means of communication for parents/carers before and after school, there is no need for students to use their mobile phones during the school day.

If a pupil does bring a mobile phone into school, they should:

**Mobile phone handed in on arrival** -On entry to the school, the pupil will hand in their device to a member of staff at school. This will then be sealed into a secure envelope and stored in a secure location (the school office) for the duration of the school day. Pupils will have no access to their mobile phones throughout the school day. The device will then be handed back to the class teacher/ teaching assistant to give the pupil at the end of the school day. The device should not be switched on again until the pupil has left the school site.

### **Searching pupils**

At Newdale, we are mindful that even if a pupil has handed in one mobile phone, they may have another mobile phone in their possession. The headteacher, or staff (that have been authorised) 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 searching, screening and confiscation in schools guidance regarding searching a pupil (July, 2022). [Searching, Screening and Confiscation \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/107122/searching-screening-and-confiscation-in-schools-guidance-regarding-searching-a-pupil-july-2022.pdf).

Headteachers are supported by the DfE to confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate. If mobile phones or other electronic devices are seen being used on the school site, they will be confiscated and taken to the Main Office, placed in a named envelope, locked away and will need to be collected by a parent or carer.

Any form of misuse of a mobile phone will be dealt with as a serious breach and will be dealt with in line with the Behaviour Policy. This applies to the misuse of mobile phones for which written permission has been given and/or non-permissible smartphones which are brought into school without permission.

## The use of sanctions

In any case where a mobile phone or any other personal electronic device is used in school to:

- Record, store, transmit, post or send inappropriate sound, photographs, videos or inappropriate messages
- Posting inappropriate messages on social networking/bloggging sites.
- Taking photographs and/or videos in school
- photographing or filming staff or other students without their knowledge or permission
- Photographing or filming in toilets, changing rooms and similar area.
- Send abusive, threatening, intimidating or inappropriate messages.
- Make abusive, threatening, intimidating or inappropriate phone calls including 'prank calling'.
- Bullying, harassing, humiliating or intimidating staff or students by the use of text, email or multimedia messaging
- Refusing to switch a phone off or hand over the phone at the request of a member of staff
- Groom or radicalise another person.
- The deliberate engineering of situations where people's reactions are filmed or photographed in order to humiliate, embarrass and intimidate by publishing to a wider audience such as on Facebook or YouTube
- The use of a mobile phone for 'sexting' (the deliberate taking and sending of provocative images or text messages)
- Posting material on social network sites with no thought to the risks to their personal reputation and sometimes with the deliberate intention of causing harm to others
- Making disrespectful comments, misrepresenting events or making defamatory remarks about teachers or other students
- general disruption to learning caused by students accessing phones in lessons
- publishing photographs of vulnerable students, who may be on a child protection plan, where this may put them at additional risk.

The following types of action will be taken:

- Where it is deemed necessary to examine the contents of a mobile phone this will be done by a member of staff- parental permission is not required for this. The action will be properly recorded in case it later becomes evidence of criminal activity. The record will include the time, who was present and what was found. This includes messages, emails, pictures, videos, sound files.

- The mobile phone or personal electronic device will be confiscated, and the data will be interrogated by school in line with guidance in paragraph 57 and 74 of Searching Screening and Confiscation (DFE, 2022).
- Parents/carers will be informed.
- Children may be requested to either delete or keep data.
- The police and/or social care may be informed.
- The Channel Panel may be informed.
- A school sanction such as an exclusion may be applied.

In considering whether a sanction is reasonable, the school will consider whether it is proportionate in the circumstances of the case and consider any special circumstances relevant to its imposition including the pupil's age, any religious requirements affecting them and any special educational needs or disability (SEND) they may have.

We will also consider whether the misbehaviour gives cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or may be at risk of harm. Where this may be the case, as set out in part 1 of keeping children safe in education, school staff should follow the school's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). They will consider if pastoral support, an early intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

### **Guidance for Parents/Carers**

We use the 'Toolkit for schools - communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools with parents' produced by the Department for Education to ensure parents/carers understand the school policy surrounding the usage of mobile phones and smart technology.

[Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents - GOV.UK](#)

Any parent/carer wishing to contact their child will be able to contact the Main School Office- the message will then be passed to the child. If a child needs to contact their parents/carers, they should go to the school office who will do this for them. Parents/carers should be aware that we take no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones or personal electronic devices either at school or travelling to or from school. Mobile phones and other personal electronic devices brought into school are done so at the owner's risk.

At Newdale, we believe that parents/carers have an important role in supporting the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones. We encourage parents and carers to reinforce and discuss the policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

### **The role of staff**

At Newdale, all staff will consistently enforce the school's policy on the use of mobile phones. Staff will not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. This will empower staff to better challenge pupils to meet the school expectations and effectively enforce the prohibition of mobile phones throughout the school day. There may be occasions where it is appropriate for a teacher to use a mobile phone or similar device, for instance to use multi-factor authentication.

### **The use of mobile phones outside the school day**

At Newdale, we prohibit the use of pupils using mobile phones on school trips and residential. We believe that our role is to ensure that pupils' educational experience on a school trip is not disrupted by the presence of mobile phones.

### **Our duty of care**

At Newdale, staff are continually aware and remain vigilant to risks relating to online safety. As a school, we ensure that online safety is reflected in all appropriate school policies. If a pupil has a problem with an issue that has occurred online, they are encouraged to speak to a member of staff. A pupil may wish to access their mobile phone where necessary when raising concerns with staff about issues which have occurred online. If this is the case, school would ask for a parent or carer to be present.

Advice and guidance has been taken from the Department for Education to support the contents of this policy:

[Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK](#)

Next review:

September 2026

(or sooner should legislation or advice differ)