Mesne Lea Primary School

Working together for individual excellence

Mobile Phones in School Policy

Reviewed By: Victoria Unsworth

Date of Issue: March 2026

Next Review Date: March 2027

Contents

1.Introduction 2
2. Aims 2
3. Pupil Use of Mobile Phones 2
4.Sanctions for Inappropriate Use 3
5.Parent/Carer Mobile Phone Use on the School Site 3
6.Staff Use of Mobile Phones 4
7. Contact During the School Day 4
8. Liability 4
9. Communication and Review 5

1.Introduction

The Department for Education updated its guidance on 19 January 2026, requiring all schools to operate as mobile-phone-free environments for the entire school day, including lessons, transitions, breaktimes and lunchtime, except where a school has identified specific, limited exceptions. This policy sets out how our school meets these expectations to maintain a calm, safe and focused learning environment for every pupil.

2. Aims

- To minimise distractions and maximise learning time.
- To keep pupils safe by reducing opportunities for online bullying, inappropriate content sharing and misuse of digital devices (risks highlighted in national guidance).
- To set clear expectations for pupils, staff and parents.
- To ensure our approach aligns fully with strengthened DfE expectations for phone-free schools

3. Pupil Use of Mobile Phones

3.1 Bringing Mobile Phones to School

- Any pupils who travel to and from school on their own are permitted to bring a phone to school for their safety
- All phoned must be switched off and handed to the class teacher on arrival
- Phones will be returned to pupils at the end of the school day.

3.2 Mobile phones on site

- Pupils must not have phones seen, used or heard anywhere on the school premises during the school day, in line with DFE expectations for phone-free environments.

3.3 School Trips and After-School Clubs

- Mobile phones are not permitted on school trips

- Children attending after-school clubs must keep their phones switched off until they have left the building.

3.4 Smartwatches

- Pupils are not allowed to wear smartwatches in school. These devices offer features similar to mobile phones and therefore fall under the Department for Education's expectations for mobile-phone-free environments.

3.5 Confiscation

- Any mobile phone that has not been handed in will be confiscated immediately
- Parents/carers will be contacted to collect the mobile phone from the school office

3.6 Safeguarding Concerns

- Using a phone to take photographs, videos or audio recordings of pupils or staff is treated as a serious incident and will lead to consequences in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
- Where material may provide evidence of a criminal offence, the phone will be handed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher for further investigation.

4. Sanctions for Inappropriate Use

- If misuse of a mobile phone occurs (taking photographs, videos, recordings) the school may withdraw the privilege of bringing a phone to school.
- There are certain behaviours constitute criminal conduct, for example:

. sexting (sharing nude or semi-nude images)
. up skirting
. threats of violence
. Abusive communication targeting protected characteristics

School will involve police or other appropriate agencies in such instances.

5. Parent/carer Mobile- Phone Use on School Site

To support our phone-free environment and model the expectations we set for pupils:

5.1 Use of Mobile Phones on School Grounds

• Parents must not use mobile phones on the school site, including during drop-off, pick-up and any time inside the building.

• This supports safeguarding, reduces distractions, and reinforces consistent expectations.

5.2 Photos and Videos at School Performances

• We strongly advise parents not to record or photograph school performances or assemblies while they are taking place.

• This is for safeguarding reasons, as some pupils cannot be photographed and filming can inadvertently capture other children. At the end of each performance, parents will be given an opportunity to take photos of their own child only. Staff will clearly indicate when photography is permitted

5.4 Modelling Behaviour

• Parents/carers play a vital role in helping children learn safe, responsible digital habits.

• Following these expectations helps model the same behaviour we require from pupils and staff.

6. Staff Use of Mobile Phones

The DfE states that staff should model the school's phone-free culture by avoiding personal mobile-phone use in front of pupils. Staff must therefore:

• Keep personal phones silent and out of sight during the school day.

• Not use personal phones in classrooms, corridors or playgrounds.

• Only use mobile phones in designated staff areas (e.g. staff room).

• Never use personal phones to photograph pupils, communicate with pupils or support teaching activities.

• Use school-issued devices only for authorised professional purposes (e.g., on trips).

7. Contact During the School Day

• If parents need to contact their child, they must telephone the school office.

• Pupils must not contact parents via mobile phones during the school day

8. Liability

Phones are brought to school at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility for any loss, damage or theft

9 Communication and Review

In line with DfE expectations that policies are clear and consistently communicated to staff, pupils and parents:

- This policy is shared with all families and staff and uploaded onto the school website.
- Key expectations are reinforced regularly.
- The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if national guidance changes