POLICY: MOBILE PHONES

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Approved / Last Reviewed by:	Gabrielle Pinnock
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Policy basis	DfE

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Author	Notes
1.0			Historic
2.0	September 2026	Gabrielle Pinnock	Reviewed / Revised - Compliance

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KEY POINTS OVERVIEW

From the 29th June 2026, the governments mobile phone guidance became statutory and places a blanket ban on the use of mobile phones during the school day in schools for pupils. Mobile phone use in schools (DfE 2026)

Norwich Steiner School has been mobile phone free during the school day since 2024 when we introduced our mobile phone policy

We advise you read the full policy, but please ensure you are aware of and take note of the following:

1. Pupils are not be permitted to have phones in school.
2. The ban includes the following: Smart phones or otherwise (including non-smart phones), smart watches and any device with similar connectivity.
3. Hereafter, wherever the term 'mobile phone' is used, this refers to all electronic devices.
4. We strongly advise that pupils do not bring mobile phones to school.
5. If pupils do bring mobile phones to school for the journey, then they MUST hand the phone (any phone) in on arrival to the class teacher or guardian, who will secure it for the day.
6. Phones MUST be turned off when handed in.
7. If a phone is seen (pockets, hand, bags etc) after the hand in opportunity, whether in use or not, sanctions will immediately apply. Pupils who are late, must hand in to reception.
8. Parents are not permitted to use mobile phones, including for photographic purposes, whilst on the premises.
9. Where a parent or child needs to be in contact during the school day, they should do so via the school office.

The policy is informed by a combination of the school's experience of the damaging effect of mobile phones on pupil well-being and engagement in school life, along with the recently issued Government Guidance (Department for Education, 2024).

PUPILS' USE

Pupils may not use mobile phones whilst on the school grounds. A lock box will be provided by class Guardians/ Teachers at the start of the day, for any mobile phone that has been brought to school. The lock box will not be accessible until the end of the day. The school is unable to accept liability for loss or damage to mobile phones which are stored on the premises.

Older pupils who have been given the right to leave school during breaks, will not be allowed access to their phones until the end of the school day and will therefore need to bring alternative methods of payment if they wish to visit local shops during the school day.

Sanctions

The following sanctions have been framed on the basis that the school is not able to control the pupil's ownership of, or access to, mobile phones. Therefore, we request the co-operation of parents in response to any breaches.

If a pupil is found in possession of a mobile phone during the school day, rather than having handed it in on arrival, the following consequences will apply:

First occasion: Phone is confiscated for the remainder of the day. Pupil is reminded of the consequences that will apply with any future breaches. The pupil is required to serve 3 hours of community service to the school. Parents are informed.

Second occasion: Pupil is suspended with immediate effect and may only return to school once a parent meeting has taken place, and at the convenience of both school and parents. Any phone will be confiscated until the pupil is collected, or leaves the premises. The pupil is required to serve 5 hours of community service on return to school.

Third occasion: Pupil is suspended with immediate effect, returning to school only once parents have reassured the school in writing, that they have confiscated the mobile phone. On return to school the pupil will take part in 10 hours community service.

Fourth occasion: Pupil is suspended with immediate effect, and at this point, the school is likely to start the process of Permanent Exclusion (see Permanent Exclusions policy).

At any point above, a parent meeting may need to take place to consider if further pastoral support and/or safeguarding interventions are necessary.

Upper School pupils who bring their own computer to school

In the final 2 years of school, pupils are permitted to bring their own laptops to school. Before being permitted to do so, these pupils are required to write to the school to pledge to use their laptops only for work reasons and not for messaging or other inappropriate reasons.

If pupils are found in breach of trust:

First occasion: will be given a warning. Parents will be informed.

Second occasion: own device will be banned from use in school for a half-term

Third occasion: own device will be banned from use in school

Pupils with medical conditions

We recognise that there may be a medical condition such as type 1 diabetes where a pupil may need to use their mobile phone. In these cases, the pupil will be permitted to keep their mobile phone them and to use it only for reasons associated with their medical need.

References

Department for Education (2026). *Mobile phones in schools - Guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day.* *https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools*

Related policies

- Safeguarding and Child protection policies
- Permanent Exclusions Policy
- Behaviour & discipline Policy

Appendix A – Suggestions for non-smart mobile phones

There are many basic models of phone available to help support children from avoiding addiction. Some models are listed below.

- Nokia 8210
- Nokia 2660 flip
- Doro 6820 (flip phone)
- Nokia 880 Tough
- Doro 5860
- Nokia 3310
- Alba Flip
- Doro 6620

APPENDIX B – RECOMMENDED READING

- The following books/articles have been read by staff and have helped inform the creation of this policy.

- Chrisafis, A. (30 April 2024). *Stop children using smartphones until they are 13, says French report*. The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/30/stop-children-using-smartphones-until-they-are-13-say-french-experts-in-report

- Haidt, J. (24 March 2024). *Generation Anxiety: smartphones have created a gen Z mental health crisis – but there are ways to fix it.* The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/books/2024/mar/24/the-anxious-generation-jonathan-haidt-book-extract-instagram-tiktok-smartphones-social-media-screens

- Haidt, J. (2024). *The Anxious Generation*. Penguin Books.

- Marciano, L., Camerini, A. & Morese, R. (27 August 2021). *The Developing Brain in the Digital Era: A Scoping Review of Structural and Functional Correlates of Screen Time in Adolescence.* Frontiers in Psychology. 12

- Sohn, S., Rees, P., Wildridge, B., Kalk, N. & Carter, B. (2019). *Prevalence of problematic smartphone usage and associated mental health outcomes amongst children and young people: a systematic review, meta-analysis and GRADE of the evidence.* BMC Psychiatry 19 (356).

- Sunday, O., Adesope, O. & Maarhus, P. (2021). *The effects of smartphone addiction on learning: a meta-analysis. Computers in Human Behaviour Reports, 4 (2).* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2021.100114

MONITORING, AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE

This policy belongs to Norwich Steiner School, which is the operational name for the Charity the Norfolk Initiative Steiner School, registered charity number 1099377, company number 4815492

Compliance is monitored through internal audits, policy review as part of self-evaluation, and annual reporting to Trustees on concessions awarded, value, and any compliance issues.