Northgate Primary School

Explore ∞ Discover ∞ Aspire

Mobile Phone, Camera and Electronic Device Policy

Reviewed in:	November 2025
Next review due by:	November 2026

Mobile phones, alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance; however, there are also associated risks. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe.

The aim of this policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools - which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones on site and during off-site visits including residential trips and sporting fixtures. This includes Northgate Primary school staff, Governors, children, parents/carers and visitors.

Camera Mobile Phones, Smart watches and Tablets

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones, smart watches and tablets that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of e.g. Images of pupils/staff to other mobile phone users or email addresses or social media which could result in bullying or harassment.

It is also recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others. When mobiles phones are misused, it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

It is appreciated that it can be difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile phones is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

Staff Policy

Staff use of personal mobile phones during their working day should be:

- outside of their directed, teaching time
- discreet and appropriate e.g. not in the presence of pupils

Mobile phones should be turned to silent or switched off and stored in a safe place during lesson times e.g. handbags/cupboards and not seen on teacher's desks. The school cannot take responsibility for items that are lost or stolen.

If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil/parent, they should use the school telephones wherever possible.

Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images

that could be viewed as inappropriate. If this happens, this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head Teacher following safeguarding procedures and the Trust's Code of Conduct.

Staff will be able to use personal mobile phones when participating in off-site visits, sporting fixtures and residential trips. However, this use should be limited to emergency contact with school if needed during time with the children.

With regard to camera phones or other electronic devices that have the capability of taking still or moving images, a member of staff should never use their own personal device to photograph a pupil(s) or allow themselves to be photographed by pupils. This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff and the school. Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy and the school Code of Conduct is likely to result in the enforcement of the Whistleblowing policy and associated procedures.

Under no circumstances should staff take photographs of children's injuries on any device.

Pupil Policy

While we fully acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision, Northgate Primary School does not permit pupils bringing mobile phones in year groups below Year 5 & 6.

When a child needs to bring a phone into school the phone must be left in the school office at the start of the day (from 8.30 a.m.) and collected at the end of the day. Phones should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone. Parents are advised that Northgate Primary School accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into school or on to the school grounds.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone in school, the phone will be confiscated from the pupil, handed to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The pupil may collect the phone at the end of the school day. Parents will be informed of inappropriate use and pupils will be reminded of the school policy and practice. If this practice continues more than three times, then the school will confiscate the phone until an appropriate adult collects the phone from a Senior Leader.

Pupils are not permitted to use their phones whilst on the school site and, if a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and the pupil will receive a consequence in line with the school's behaviour policy. If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a senior leader.

Should a pupil be found to be using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a phone into school. Pupils are not entitled to log on to the school network using their mobile phones or other personal electronic devices.

Should parents need to contact pupils or vice versa during the school day, this should be done via the usual school procedure of contacting the school office via phone or email.

Smart watches which have the capability to take images are **not** permitted in school. If a smart watch needs a primary device to work i.e. a mobile phone, this can be worn as long as the mobile phone is not able to connect to it during school hours. If pupils in years 5 and 6 do bring the two linked devices to school then the mobile phone, which must be held securely in the school office or teacher's cupboard, must be turned off.

Parents, Visitors and Volunteers Policy

Parents, visitors, volunteers and Governors are not permitted to use their mobile phones in the presence of pupils anywhere within the school building. Visiting adults are not permitted to use their mobile phones or any other electronic device to photograph pupils or make video recordings anywhere on the school site or when accompanying pupils on off-site visits or at sporting fixtures.

Parents are permitted to take photos and videos at Class Assemblies, plays and sports days but they are reminded that they are the data controller for such imagery, and this should only be recorded for their own personal use and should not be shared on any form of social media.

Policy Reviewed by:	Richard Coath- IT Subject Lead Katie Penny-Head Teacher
Signed: 	Chair of Governors Roger Smith
Dated: 05.11.25	