

SCHOOL POLICIES

Mobile Phone & Smart Device Policy



This policy was adopted by the Governors on: September 2026

The last review of this policy was: September 2026

This policy is due for review on: September 2028

Signed Headteacher: N. Craddock

Signed Chair of Governing Body: D. Garside

1. Our approach

At Hudson Primary School, we want every child to be able to learn, play and develop positive relationships in a calm, safe and focused environment.

Our approach to mobile phones and smart devices is rooted in our school values:

Ready. Respectful. Safe.

We recognise that mobile phones and smart devices can be useful outside school, particularly for children who travel independently. However, during the school day they can create distraction, disruption, safeguarding concerns and opportunities for inappropriate recording or communication.

Hudson Primary School is therefore a **mobile-phone-free school during the school day**, in line with current Department for Education statutory guidance.

Everyone experiences excellence.

2. Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to:

- All pupils
- Nursery and Reception children
- Children in Years 1-6
- Pupils attending our autism resourced provision
- School staff
- Supply and agency staff
- Volunteers
- Visitors and contractors working with children

It applies throughout the school day, including:

- Lessons
- Breaktimes
- Lunchtimes
- Assemblies
- Clubs and activities
- Movement between lessons or areas of school
- Educational visits where the school day is continuing

The DfE guidance specifically expects pupils not to have access to mobile phones throughout the school day, including break and lunchtime.

3. What counts as a mobile or smart device?

For the purposes of this policy, a mobile phone includes smartphones and other devices with similar functionality.

This may include:

- Mobile phones
- Smartphones
- Smartwatches capable of sending or receiving messages or notifications
- Devices capable of recording audio or video
- Personal communication devices
- Other connected wearable technology

The DfE guidance makes clear that schools can include other smart technology with similar communication or recording functionality within their policy.

4. Pupils bringing mobile phones to school

Years 1-5

Children in Years 1-5 should **not bring mobile phones to school**.

There is no routine requirement for children in these year groups to have access to a mobile phone during the school day.

Year 6

We recognise that some Year 6 children may begin to develop greater independence in travelling to and from school.

Where a Year 6 child needs to carry a mobile phone for their journey to or from school, the phone must:

- Be switched off before entering the school site
- Be handed to the school office on arrival
- Remain securely stored during the school day
- Be collected at the end of the school day

The phone must not be accessed during the school day.

This arrangement means that a child can have access to their phone when travelling independently while remaining within Hudson's mobile-phone-free school environment.

5. Phones must not be used during the school day

Pupils must not:

- Use a mobile phone
- Check messages or notifications
- Make or receive calls
- Take photographs
- Make video or audio recordings
- Access social media

- Use messaging applications
- Use a phone to access the internet
- Use a smartwatch for messaging or communication

This applies even if the device is being used quietly or discreetly.

6. Smartwatches

Smartwatches can present the same concerns as mobile phones.

Children should therefore not wear smartwatches that can:

- Send or receive messages
- Make or receive calls
- Receive notifications
- Record audio or video
- Access social media or the internet

A basic watch that does not have communication or recording functionality may be worn.

Where there is uncertainty about whether a device is permitted, families should check with school before the child brings it.

7. Exceptional circumstances

We recognise that there may be circumstances where a child needs access to a mobile phone or smart device during the school day.

This may include:

- A medical condition
- Use of health technology
- A disability
- A specific SEND requirement
- An identified safeguarding need
- Other exceptional circumstances agreed by the Headteacher

Any agreed exception will be recorded and managed on an individual basis.

Where a device is required for medical or assistive purposes, school will agree how the device is managed so that the child's safety and dignity are protected.

The DfE guidance specifically recognises that schools may need to make reasonable adjustments and exceptions for individual pupils, including those with SEND, disabilities or medical conditions.

8. Contacting children during the school day

Parents and carers should **not contact their child directly on a mobile phone during the school day.**

If a parent/carer needs to contact their child urgently, they should contact the **school office**.

Likewise, if a child needs to contact home, the school will facilitate this through the appropriate school arrangements.

The DfE specifically recommends that parents are directed to the school office when they need to contact their child during the school day.

9. Educational visits

Mobile phones will not normally be required by pupils on educational visits.

Where a child has an agreed individual need to carry a phone, the visit leader will ensure that appropriate arrangements are made.

For residential visits or activities where older pupils may have specific arrangements, these will be communicated to families in advance.

10. Taking photographs and recordings

Children must not use personal devices to photograph or record:

- Other children
- Staff
- Visitors
- Lessons
- School activities

unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff as part of a planned activity.

This includes recording incidents of behaviour, disagreements or accidents.

Children should report concerns to an adult rather than attempting to record or share them.

11. Staff mobile phones

Staff should model the behaviour and expectations we establish for pupils.

Personal mobile phones should be:

- Kept out of sight during teaching and supervision
- Stored securely during the working day wherever possible
- Used only during designated breaks or in appropriate staff areas
- Never used while supervising children unless there is an emergency or an agreed work-related reason

Staff must not use personal mobile phones to photograph or record children.

School-approved devices should be used for school photography, communication and recording wherever possible.

12. Safeguarding and online safety

Mobile-phone use can create safeguarding risks, including:

- Unauthorised photography or recording
- Cyberbullying
- Inappropriate communication
- Access to unsuitable content
- Sharing images or information without consent
- Contact with people outside the school community
- Recording or sharing incidents involving other children

Any safeguarding concern arising from mobile-phone or smart-device use must be reported in accordance with Hudson's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

Where appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider whether further action is required.

13. If a pupil is found using a mobile phone

Our response will be **calm, predictable and proportionate**.

Staff will follow the school's behaviour procedures.

Where a pupil is found using a phone:

1. The pupil will be reminded of the expectation.
2. The phone will normally be confiscated.
3. The device will be taken to the agreed secure storage location.
4. Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate.
5. The phone will be returned in accordance with the school's behaviour procedures.

Repeated breaches may result in additional consequences in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

The DfE confirms that schools can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices as a disciplinary measure where the school policy has been clearly breached. Headteachers have powers to determine the length of a proportionate confiscation.

14. Individual circumstances

When responding to a breach, staff will consider the individual circumstances of the child.

Particular consideration will be given to:

- Age
- SEND

- Disability
- Medical needs
- Safeguarding circumstances
- Whether an agreed exception is in place
- Whether the child understood the expectation
- Whether the device was being used for an approved purpose

The DfE specifically expects schools to consider individual circumstances, including age and SEND, when applying confiscation or other consequences.

15. Searching for mobile phones

Mobile phones and similar devices may be identified within the school's Behaviour Policy as items that may be searched for where the legal requirements for a search are met.

Any search will be undertaken in accordance with the school's **Searching, Screening and Confiscation** procedures and current statutory guidance.

Staff should not routinely search children simply because they believe a phone may be present.

16. Lost, damaged or stolen phones

Children bring personal devices onto the school site at their own risk.

Where a phone is brought to school under an agreed arrangement, it must be handed in and stored as directed.

The school will take reasonable steps to store handed-in devices securely but cannot accept responsibility for personal devices that have not been handed in or have been brought to school contrary to this policy.

17. Supporting children to understand the policy

Children will be taught why Hudson operates a mobile-phone-free environment.

This will include age-appropriate discussion about:

- Focus and learning
- Relationships
- Online safety
- Privacy
- Consent
- Cyberbullying
- Recording and sharing
- Digital wellbeing
- Making safe choices

We want children to understand that the policy is not simply about taking phones away; it is about creating a school environment where children can **learn, play, talk and build relationships without the distraction and risks associated with personal mobile devices.**

The DfE recommends explicitly teaching pupils about the risks associated with mobile phones and the benefits of a phone-free environment.

18. Parents and carers

Parents and carers are asked to:

- Support the school's mobile-phone-free approach
- Avoid contacting children directly during the school day
- Speak to school if their child has a particular need for a device
- Ensure children understand the expectations before bringing a phone to school
- Support appropriate digital habits at home

The school will communicate the policy clearly to families and remind parents and pupils of the expectations at appropriate points throughout the year.

19. Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring the policy is implemented
- Agreeing any exceptional arrangements
- Ensuring staff understand their responsibilities
- Monitoring implementation
- Reviewing the policy

Staff

All staff are expected to:

- Apply the policy consistently
- Model appropriate phone use
- Follow safeguarding procedures
- Manage confiscated devices appropriately
- Consider individual circumstances

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Follow the mobile-phone-free school rule
- Hand in devices where required
- Respect the privacy of others

- Never photograph or record others without permission
- Speak to an adult if they have a concern

Parents and carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Support the policy
- Use the school office for communication during the school day
- Discuss safe and responsible phone use with their child
- Inform school about any exceptional circumstances

20. Our Hudson standard

READY

Ready to learn without unnecessary distractions.

RESPECTFUL

Respecting people's privacy, personal space and right to learn.

SAFE

Keeping ourselves and others safe online and offline.

Our school day is for learning, playing, talking and belonging.

Mobile phones stay away.

Everyone experiences excellence.