Newton Primary School

Mobile Phones and Smartwatches Policy

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Headteacher	Sarah Hughes
Chair of Governors	Peter Roberts

1 Purpose and scope

At Newton Primary School, children should be able to learn, play and spend time together without distraction from personal phones or smartwatches. This policy explains when children may bring a phone, how it is handed in, and the expectations for adults on the school site.

It applies to pupils, staff, parents and carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors. Pupil rules apply throughout the school day, including breaks and lunchtime, and to school trips and residential visits. School-owned devices used for approved learning and school business are managed under the school's acceptable use and safeguarding arrangements.

2 Bringing a phone to school

Children may bring a mobile phone if they are walking home or going somewhere different after school. They must have permission from their parent or carer. Parental permission to bring a phone does not give permission to use it in school.

- The phone must be fully switched off before entering the school site. Silent or vibrate mode is not sufficient.
- On arrival, the child must hand the phone to Mrs Frost-Morris or Mrs Flintham in the school office. If neither is available, the child must ask another member of staff for help.
- Office staff will hold phones securely during the day. Phones must not remain in children's bags, pockets or classrooms.
- Children collect their phones from the school office at the end of the school day. Phones remain switched off until children have left the school site.

If a child leaves early, the phone should be collected from the office as part of the departure arrangements. School staff will take reasonable care of phones handed in; families should avoid sending unnecessary or valuable devices.

3 Smartwatches and other personal devices

Children must not wear or bring smartwatches to school, as they distract from learning. This includes smartwatches with messaging, calling, recording, internet or notification functions. Ordinary watches that simply tell the time are permitted.

Other personal devices with similar communication or recording functions must not be brought to school unless an individual arrangement has been agreed. The exceptions in section 6 apply to phones, smartwatches and other covered devices.

4 Trips and residential visits

Pupils must not bring mobile phones or smartwatches on school trips or residential visits, except where an individual arrangement under section 6 requires a device. Staff will manage contact with families through the arrangements communicated for the visit. Children who are worried, unwell or need help should speak to a member of staff.

5 When a child does not follow the rules

Staff will respond calmly, explain the expectation and take account of the child's age, understanding and individual needs. Responses will follow Newton's Behaviour Policy, including restorative conversations and reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

- If a phone has been left in a bag, staff will remind the child to hand it in to the school office.
- If a child is caught using a phone, staff will take the phone for secure storage in the office. School will telephone home and ask a parent or carer to collect it.
- A smartwatch brought to school will be handed to staff and held securely in the office. Parents will be reminded of the rule. If it is used for communication or recording, the same parent collection arrangement will apply.

Staff will explain collection arrangements to the family and consider any safety needs for the child's journey home. Repeated or serious misuse will be discussed with the Headteacher and parents, with any further response decided under the Behaviour Policy.

6 Individual needs and reasonable adjustments

The Headteacher will consider exceptions for medical needs, disability, SEND, safeguarding or welfare circumstances. These will be discussed with parents and relevant staff, including the SENDCo or DSL as appropriate. Necessary access to a device, such as for medical monitoring, must be supported.

Agreed arrangements will be recorded, specify when and how the device may be used, identify responsible staff and include a review date. They will also apply during trips where necessary. Staff will make sure children can access essential support and will explain differences sensitively without sharing private information.

7 Staff expectations

Staff must keep personal phones out of sight and use them only during breaks away from children. Exceptions for emergencies or medical needs must be agreed with the Headteacher. In an immediate emergency, staff should act to protect children and inform the Headteacher as soon as possible.

Photographs and recordings of children must be taken only on school devices and managed in line with the school's safeguarding, photography and data protection arrangements. Personal phones must not be used to photograph or record children. Staff must use approved school communication channels when communicating with families.

8 Parents and visitors

Parents, carers, visitors, volunteers and contractors must keep mobile phones out of children's sight. Anyone who needs to use a phone should speak to a member of staff and move to an appropriate place away from children. Any essential medical or emergency use should be discussed with staff where possible.

During performances, parents and carers may take photographs in accordance with the instructions given by school. Images must not be shared online, including on social media. School may set additional restrictions for a particular event to protect children. Photography or recording elsewhere requires school permission.

Parents who need to contact their child during the school day must contact the school office rather than the child's phone. Children who need to contact home should ask a member of staff. Families must communicate changes to collection arrangements directly to school.

9 Safeguarding concerns

Concerns involving messages, images, recording, bullying or harmful content must be reported promptly to the DSL or a deputy DSL and managed under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff must not routinely inspect a child's phone or ask children to forward concerning material. Any proposed search or examination must follow current DfE searching, screening and confiscation guidance and school procedures. Suspected illegal images must not be copied, forwarded or deleted; staff must seek DSL advice immediately.

10 Responsibilities and review

The Headteacher oversees implementation. Staff explain and apply the rules consistently; office staff manage hand-in and collection. Parents support the rules and ensure children understand them. The full governing board approves the policy and receives assurance about its implementation. The policy will be published on the school website and explained to families, pupils and staff. Leaders will review incidents and feedback annually, and sooner if guidance or school arrangements change.

Reference: DfE Mobile phones in schools, updated 29 June 2026, to be followed from 1 September 2026. Also refer to current Keeping children safe in education, Behaviour in schools and Searching, screening and confiscation guidance.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools

Newton Primary School

We want children to enjoy learning and time with friends without distraction from phones or smartwatches. Please support these arrangements.

When may my child bring a phone

Your child may bring a phone if they are walking home or going somewhere different after school, with your permission. It must be switched off before they enter the school site.

Where does the phone go

Your child must hand it to Mrs Frost-Morris or Mrs Flintham in the school office on arrival. It will be held securely and collected from the office at the end of the school day. It must stay switched off until your child has left the school site.

Can my child wear a smartwatch

No. Smartwatches are not permitted because they distract children from learning. An ordinary watch that simply tells the time is allowed.

What if my child forgets to hand it in

If the phone is left in their bag, we will remind them to hand it in. If your child is caught using it, we will telephone you and ask you to collect it from school.

What about trips and residentials

Children must not bring phones or smartwatches on trips or residential visits. School staff will manage any necessary contact with families.

What if my child needs a device for medical or other reasons

Please speak to the Headteacher so that appropriate individual arrangements can be agreed. We will consider medical needs, disability, SEND and safeguarding or welfare circumstances.

How can I contact my child

Contact the school office. Children who need help or need to contact home should speak to a member of staff. Please tell school directly about any changes to collection arrangements.

What are the rules for adults

Please keep phones out of children's sight. At performances, photographs may be taken under the arrangements announced by school, but images must not be shared online.

NEWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our phone rules

A simple guide for Newton pupils

Can I bring a phone

Only if you are walking home or going somewhere different after school, and your parent or carer has given permission.

What do I do when I arrive

Switch your phone off before you come onto the school site. Hand it to Mrs Frost-Morris or Mrs Flintham in the office. If you cannot find them, ask an adult for help.

Can I keep it in my bag

No. Give it to the office so it can be kept safe.

When do I get it back

Collect it from the office at the end of the school day. Wait until you have left the school site before switching it on.

Can I wear a smartwatch

No. Leave your smartwatch at home.

What if I forget

An adult will remind you to hand your phone in. If you use it in school, we will contact home and ask your parent or carer to collect it.

Can I take it on a trip

No. Leave phones and smartwatches at home for school trips and residential visits.

What if I need help

Tell your teacher or another adult. They can help you and contact home if needed.

What if I have a special arrangement

Some children need a device to help with their health or other needs. Adults will explain your agreed rules to you.

If you are unsure, ask an adult. We are here to help.