

NEWSTEAD WOOD SCHOOL

Avebury Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9SA



Mobile Device Policy

Review Body:	Headteacher & LGB
Leadership Group Responsibility:	Deputy Headteacher
Type of Policy:	Statutory
Review Period:	Annually
Reviewed:	September 2025
Next Review:	September 2026

Introduction and aims

As a school we are welcoming of new technology. We understand the value of such innovations in assisting in the process of teaching and learning as they raise achievement amongst our students and add to the value of the educational experience. We will take advantage of the opportunities these present, to enable our students to prepare for their future in an ever-changing world.

At Newstead Wood we recognise that mobile phones are an important part of everyday life for our children, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community. However, students are not required to have a mobile device in school and we support parents who make the decision that this is not necessary by ensuring that pupils are able to use school landlines to contact parents in an emergency.

For the majority of students and staff who choose to carry a mobile device, this policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for children, staff, parents and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies including Safeguarding, Behaviour & Rewards and Anti bullying

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage

Whilst we respect the wishes of parents that their daughters/sons have access to phones to and from school, and we recognize the potential educational benefits of using mobile phones, teachers and parents are both increasingly concerned at the extent and the number of students who are disengaging socially owing to mobile phone usage at break and lunch. We believe that this policy will have a positive impact on students' wellbeing and will address the concerns many parents and teachers have regarding the potential detrimental effects of too much screentime.

This Policy applies to 'standard' mobile phones as well as smart phones such as iPhones, Blackberries, Android and Windows phones, and other 3G/4G/5G and Wi-Fi enabled devices such as tablets, iPods and laptops.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Newstead Wood School's Student Acceptable Usage Policy, ICT acceptable use for staff, BYOD policy and Newstead Wood School's Behaviour Policy.

This policy is reviewed at least annually by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), who will report to the Local Governing Body (LGB) on its implementation on a regular basis. The school is committed to ensuring that the implementation of this policy is non-discriminatory, in line with the UK Equality Act (2010) and our Equality Scheme.

Roles and responsibilities

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy. Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

A common sense approach should be followed regarding the use of 3G/4G/5G and Wi-Fi enabled mobile devices. Teachers should always have the ability to override rules against mobile device use, where common sense prevails, although the following guidelines should be used:

Use of Mobile Phones

Years 7 – 11

- Students may bring their phones to school, but they must be switched off during the school day including break and lunchtime. Students should turn off their phones and put them away before registration in the morning and only turn them on again at the end of school day.
- Students should also put earphones and headphones away for the day in the same way.
- It is a student's responsibility to keep their phone turned off and out of sight in their bag or blazer pocket. If a student has a phone out or visible for any reason other than being asked to do so by a member of staff, or if the phone rings or vibrates, the phone will be confiscated, and the student will have to collect it from reception at the end of the school day.
- If a student has their phone confiscated on more than one occasion, parents will be asked to collect the phone from reception.
- Any refusal to hand a phone over to members of staff will result in a follow up sanction in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. This would constitute the refusal of a reasonable request by a member of staff.
- Staff will not require the use of phones for lessons. But in the extraordinary event of a member of staff requesting the use of phones to support a learning activity during a lesson, students must use their phones only for the task set. Any other use of the phone will result in the confiscation of the phone. At the end of the task, it is the students' responsibility to switch off their phones and put them away again.
- A teacher may grant exceptional permission during a lesson for a student to take photographs of their own academic work. There might be times when students will want to photograph different stages of a project, practical task or experiment. In all cases, students should seek authorisation from their teacher before using cameras to record their work. Staff may withdraw authorisation at any time and students should be mindful of the responsibility given in allowing use of personal devices.
- If a student has a genuine reason to need to make a phone call, they should report to reception where staff will make the necessary arrangements.

Sixth Form

- Students may bring their phones to school, but they must be out of sight during the school day except for independent study, break and lunch only in designated sixth form areas.
- It is a student's responsibility to keep their phone out of sight unless in a designated sixth form area.
- Students should also put earphones and headphones away for the day in the same way, to be used only in designated areas.

- It is important that sixth form students set an example to lower school students by not using their phones anywhere else in the school, including corridors, in the canteen and outside. If a student has a phone out for any reason other than being asked to do so by a member of staff in any area of the school except a designated sixth form area, the student should expect the phone to be confiscated and to have to collect it at the end of the school day.
- If a student has their phone confiscated on more than one occasion, the parents of that student will be asked to collect the phone from reception.
- If a member of staff requests the use of phones to support a learning activity during a lesson, students must use their phones only for the task set. Any other use of the phone will result in the confiscation of the phone.

Designated areas

Designated Sixth Form areas are the Sixth Form block, the Sixth Form Common Room and Art Concourse area.

Students of all year groups are allowed to use mobile devices in the library but for study purposes only and under the discretion of the member of staff present who at all times can revoke this privilege.

Contacting Children and Parents/Carers

In non-urgent situations, parents wishing to contact their child during the school day should ring the school. We have a well-established and efficient system for getting messages to children and pastoral support if it is needed. Children who need to contact parents during the course of the school day should speak to their form tutors or another member of staff who will make a phone available.

School trips

- If students use their own devices on an informal basis to take photographs of other students whilst on school trips, they must give due consideration to the appropriateness of uploading any photographs or video to social media sites. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how students use mobile phones and other devices even when students are not in school.
- No content recorded by a student on a personal device should be uploaded to a social media, video sharing or photograph sharing site, without the permission of those being filmed, including members of staff. Doing so could result in disciplinary action.

Acceptable Usage Policy and agreement

At Newstead Wood School students sign an Acceptable Usage Agreement in conjunction with our Bring Your Own Devices Policy which reminds them of the rules and procedures they must follow if they bring their mobile devices to school.

Sanctions for Misuse of Mobile Devices

Any misuse of Mobile Devices or a breach of the Acceptable Usage Policy by a student will be considered a breach of the schools Behaviour Policy, and as such, we will issue a sanction in line with this policy.

Any misuse of Mobile Devices or breach of the Acceptable Usage Policy by staff will be considered in line with the Staff Behaviour Policy.

The school will apply appropriate sanctions to any student or member of staff who uses their mobile phone, or other device, for bullying, intimidation, or for keeping or disseminating inappropriate text or images.

Mobile Device Guidelines for Staff

- Staff personal mobile digital devices should be switched off (or in silent mode) during lessons, or at times where they are responsible for the supervision of students.
- Staff should not use a personal mobile digital device, or similar, during lessons (or when supervising students) to receive or send personal calls, texts or post content to personal social media platforms.
- If a member of staff feels that it is necessary to be available to receive a personal call or text on a personal mobile device during a lesson, for which there may be exceptional circumstances, they should explain this to their line manager beforehand.
- Staff should not use a personal mobile digital device, or similar, during lessons (or when supervising students) to access online resources, emails, apps or similar, unless it is considered that the outcome is essential to student learning and cannot be sourced through the school network (in which case, students should be made aware that the mobile device has been used for this educational purpose).
- Staff should not photograph or video students with a personal (mobile digital) device. If it is necessary to regularly take images of students for marketing purposes, then a school owned device should be provided, such as the surface pros that all teachers at Newstead Wood now have.
- Staff should endeavour to make any personal calls on their own mobile telephone, or similar, in a discreet fashion and away from any student area, for example in the Staff Room or in an office, behind closed doors.
- Staff should not give out their personal mobile phone numbers, or other communication contact information, to students.
- Inappropriate use of mobile devices is a serious offence; cases of misuse could lead to disciplinary action being taken against the individual concerned.
- If using a mobile device to take photographs, staff should:
 - be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded;
 - ensure that a member of the Leadership Team is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose;
 - ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability;
 - be able to justify images of students in their possession;
 - avoid making images in one-to-one situations.
- Staff should not:
 - have images of students stored on personal cameras, devices or home computers.
 - make images of students available on the internet, other than through the school website or other school managed social media platforms and always ensuring parents have given consent.

Staff should adhere to the Acceptable Usage Policy at all times.

Dealing with Inappropriate Content on Mobile Devices and Cyber bullying

If a member of staff suspects or is informed that a student has inappropriate content on their mobile device, the member of staff will act in line with the schools Behaviour Policy and DfE's [Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance](#) with more detailed information provided in [Screening, Searching and Confiscation – advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies](#). This includes 'any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for' ('Specific Banned Items').

The screening and searching advice details what should be done with items that have been confiscated during a search, including the circumstances under which the police should be involved, and when the use of force can be applied.

A member of staff will confiscate the device and staff have the power to search children's phones, as set out in the above guidance and Policies. This will always be done by a member of the SLT or Pastoral Team.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

In the case of staff, any instances of inappropriate use that might be classified as criminal conduct or pose a risk to children or young people must be reported immediately to the Headteacher, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Instances of cyber bullying will be punishable in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and may even result in exclusion (or in disciplinary action, in the case of staff).

Security of Mobile Phones and other electronic devices

Students and staff are advised to have their phones and other electronic devices security marked. They should not be left unattended and students should carry them in their valuables bags.

The school does not accept responsibility for mobile phones or other electronic communication devices or entertainment systems. Mobile phones and other such devices are not covered by Newstead Wood School's insurance policy. Staff should keep valuables on them at all times or keep them in a secure place.

Under no circumstances will any member of staff accept responsibility or become liable for any student's mobile device, or indeed any other valuable item that is brought onto school property.