



Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

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MOBILE DEVICES POLICY (PUPILS)

In line with [Section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026](#) and the revised Mobile Phones in Schools guidance issued by DfE with effect from June 29th 2026.

For clarity, the term 'mobile device' covers the following:

- All types of mobile phones - e.g Smart and non-smart phones
- Smart watches of all type and makes
- Tablets and laptops or similar
- Bluetooth headphones
- Any other device that has the capacity to connect to the internet

This Policy is intended to ensure that:

- The school day is not disrupted by interruptions from mobile devices, including pupils viewing messages, etc
- Pupils will be responsible users and stay safe while using their mobile devices
- Pupils will be protected from bullying and inappropriate contacts (child-on-child abuse, cyber bullying, harmful sexualised behaviour, deep fakes, discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour)
- Pupils, parents and carers understand clearly the expectations regarding mobile devices in Trust schools

This policy will be applied differently according to the school phase / type:

- First, Primary, Special and AP schools will collect mobile devices in from children daily if they are brought to school.
- Post 16 pupils are permitted to use their mobile phones and other mobile devices, but only in designated areas - study rooms, common rooms, etc.
- Middle and Secondary schools will use a pouch storage system to manage mobile devices in school.

We expect pupils to only have mobile devices in school if they are secured inside a pouch that cannot receive mobile or internet signal - IT IS NOT acceptable for pupils to have mobile devices simply switched off and in their bags or lockers. This applies to all pupils of statutory school age - up to and including Year 11.

If parents/carers and/or pupils feel they do not wish to use a pouch, they must leave their mobile devices at home.

1. Purpose

- This policy, which is applicable to all schools in the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership Trust, provides staff, pupils, parents and carers guidelines and instructions for the management of mobile devices in school following renewed guidance from the Government.
- Where Trust devices have been issued to pupils, this policy applies at all times.
- This Policy also applies to pupils during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities both on the school site and off-site, except where teachers or leaders have given permission for a mobile device to be used for safety purposes, or to check in with parents in residential settings, etc.

2. Rationale

- The Trust acknowledges that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life and that providing a child with a mobile device/phone gives parents reassurance. However, the recommendation is still that expensive equipment is not brought into school. **Where these devices are brought into school, responsibility for them rests with the pupil. The Trust/school cannot accept any financial responsibility for damage, loss or theft, overall any such technologies need to be used appropriately.**

3. Responsibility

- It is the responsibility of pupils who bring mobile devices to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.
- The decision to provide a mobile phone/device to pupils should be made by parents or carers. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to understand the capabilities of the device.
- Parents/carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile device to school it is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss or damage. The Trust cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred as a result of damage or theft.
- Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, **the school office is the appropriate point of contact which will ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way.** Passing on messages through school reception also reduces the likelihood of disrupting lessons inadvertently.
- Pupils should not use their phone or mobile device to contact home about feeling unwell, or to inform parents of sanctions that have been implemented within the school day.

4. Acceptable Uses

- Mobile devices should be switched off and kept in a pouch (if they are not collected in by the school)
- Parents/carers are requested that in cases of emergency they contact the main school office so that the school is aware of any potential issue and so that the school can make any necessary arrangements.
- Pupils are of course able to use their phones to and from school. However, pupils should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to close friends and keeping a note of who they have given them to. This can help protect the pupil's number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant messages, images etc.
- Whilst the Trust recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile devices, **teachers or other staff are not permitted to ask pupils to use their mobile device to aid teaching and learning.**

5. Unacceptable Uses: (for example, to and from school or at other times outside of the normal school day)

- Using mobile devices to bully and threaten other pupils is unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence it is unacceptable, regardless of whether 'consent' was given.
- It is forbidden for pupils to use their mobile devices to take any pictures of any member of staff. In the event that this happens by accident, the pupil will be asked and expected to delete those images and may face having the phone confiscated.
- It is forbidden for pupils to use their mobile devices to take videos or recordings and pictures of acts to disparage and humiliate another pupil and then send the pictures to other pupils or upload it to a website or social media platform for public viewing. This also includes using mobile devices to photograph or film any pupil without their consent. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages, social media posts and emails can be traced.
- Pupils are not permitted to wear headphones whilst on school sites, unless as directed in their EHCP.

6. Recordings

- The MNPS prohibits the recording of any meetings using mobile devices. Should recordings be requested for minute taking or accessibility purposes these recordings will remain the property of the Trust. Recordings will only be made if all attendees are in agreement. They will be deleted immediately after transcription.

- If recordings are made without permission the Trust may determine that damage has been done to the organisation or an individual and may seek legal advice to address the breach of data protection.

7. Theft or damage

- Pupils should mark their mobile devices clearly with their names and make a note of their IMEI number. Lost and stolen mobile devices in the U.K. can be blocked across all networks making them virtually worthless because they cannot be used. In the event of a loss or theft the pupil should notify their network provider of their IMEI number so that the phone can be blocked.
- It is strongly advised that pupils use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised use of their mobile device is prevented. Pupils must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile devices and/or passwords may not be shared, and should be locked when not in use.
- Mobile devices that are found in the school should be handed in to reception.
- The Trust accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile devices.
- The Trust accepts no responsibility for pupils who lose or have their mobile devices stolen while travelling to and from school.

8. Inappropriate conduct

- Mobile devices are banned from all examinations. Pupils are expected to leave their mobile devices, switched off and in their pouch. Any pupil found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination will have that paper disqualified. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified.
- Any pupil who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile device to bully another pupil will face disciplinary action.
- Pupils must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading, racist, other prejudicial or pornographic images. The transmission of such images is a criminal offence. Similarly, 'sexting' – which is the sending of personal sexual imagery - is also a criminal offence. Should this be reported to the school they may consider it appropriate to involve the police.
- Child-on-child abuse via mobile devices outside of school will not be tolerated and victims of child-on-child abuse will be supported, believed and never blamed for the actions of a perpetrator. Schools will use their full statutory powers to discipline perpetrators of child-on-child abuse and where necessary, will refer concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Behaviour Lead for the school.
- Harmful sexualised behaviour that is conducted via mobile devices will not be tolerated. Again victims will not be blamed and perpetrators will be sanctioned within the full statutory powers of schools. Incidents of this nature will be referred to the safeguarding team or DSL for further actions and potentially the police.

9. Exceptions

- In exceptional circumstances, a few pupils may require pouches that are secured by velcro. These are pupils who require access to mobile devices in order to manage certified medical conditions - e.g Type 1 diabetes. Any variation to this policy requires the school (specifically a member of the Senior Team) to agree via an Individual Health Care Plan. To be clear, having an EHCP will not automatically entitle pupils to have a different provision for mobile device storage.

10. Specific Guidance for management of mobile devices in Trust Middle and Secondary schools

- Middle and Secondary schools will follow the process set out below but please be aware that some deviations from the list may be necessary in some settings.

EXAMPLE DAILY PROCESSES for schools using Pouches

(please note, there may be some variation in some settings)

Beginning of the Day

Pupils must bring their pouch to school with them each day.

As pupils arrive to school they will:

1. Turn their phone off.
2. Open their pouch by tapping it against the Unlocking Base - these are found on exterior walls of schools using this system, or could be hand-held locking controllers with staff.
3. Place their mobile devices (e.g phone, smart watch and AirPods/Earbuds) inside the Pouch and secure it in front of school staff.
4. Store it in their bag for the day.

Phones must be locked at the stations. We will assume that unlocked pouches on the school site are being kept unlocked for the purposes of phone use during the school day and a sanction will be applied.

End of the Day

Pupils will:

1. Open their Pouch by tapping it against the unlocking base (either wall mounted, or hand-held by staff)
2. Remove their mobile devices
3. Close their Pouch and lock it
4. Keep their pouch in their school bag overnight.

Late Starters or Early Leavers

Pupils arriving late to school should put their phone in their pouch as they are signing in.

Pupils leaving school early will be able to unlock their pouch as part of the signing out of school procedure.

Staff (teaching and non-teaching) will carry out routine and spot checks during the day to make sure that pouches have not been damaged and that mobile devices are secured within them.

Pouch Damage or Lost Pouch

If a pupil damages or loses their Pouch, a new pouch must be purchased and the pupil will not be allowed to bring their phone to school until they have a new pouch.

Deliberate pouch damage will be dealt with through the school behaviour policy.

Examples of damage:

- Ripped fabric
- Cut
- Torn
- Bent/cut pin
- Signs of force to black button on flap
- Damage to the black ball
- Pouch opens without unlocking station

Mobile device seen during the school day

If a pupil is found in possession of a mobile device outside of a pouch, these will be confiscated and this will result in an appropriate sanction in line with the school behaviour policy.

Forgotten Pouch

If a pupil forgets their Pouch, mobile devices will be collected by a member of staff. Pupils may have to complete a detention as would be the case with other forgotten items of school equipment.

If a pupil consistently forgets their Pouch, it will be considered lost. Therefore, a new pouch must be purchased and the pupil will not be allowed to bring their phone to school until they have a new pouch.

Unlocking Stations

If a pupil is found in possession of an unlocking station, or a similar strength magnet used to unlock the pouches, this will be considered a serious offence under the school behaviour policy.

Accidental Damage

In the event of accidental damage, please notify the school immediately explaining what happened. If any damage is spotted at a pouch check it will be considered intentional unless a pupil has raised the issue of damage in an appropriate manner - e.g discussion with their tutor.

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