Meersbrook Bank

Community Primary School

Mobile Devices Policy

October 2026

The National College®

Summary of Policy:
This policy sets out the organisational structure of responsibilities for and the methods by which we will manage pupils' mobile devices in our school setting.

1. Revision history

Date	Changes	Author(s)
October 2026	New Policy	G. Harvey based on National College policy

2. Approval

Date	Approver(s)	Minute number
6/10/2026	Full Governing Board	16.8

3. Review: This policy will be reviewed annually

Date due for review:
Oct 2027

To be read in conjunction with:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Acceptable User Policy (Pupils)
- Acceptable User Policy (Staff)
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

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1. Statement of intent

Mobile phones, tablets and other personal electronic devices have become widely available and accessible to pupils. This policy is designed to prohibit the use of mobile phones and similar smart technology throughout the school day, including break and lunch times.

Meersbrook Bank Primary School accepts that personal mobile phones and tablets are often given to pupils by their parents to ensure their safety and personal security; however, such devices pose inherent risks and may jeopardise the learning environment. The school also recognises the safeguarding risks associated with pupils having unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile networks during the school day.

As a school, we must strike a balance between personal safety and a suitable educational setting. We understand that parents may wish for their child to carry a mobile phone for their personal safety, whilst pupils may wish to bring additional devices to school for other reasons. This policy establishes how personal electronic devices should be used by pupils in school to ensure both personal safety and an appropriate learning environment.
Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to the following items:

- Mobile phones
- Smart watches
- Personal digital assistants (PDAs)
- Handheld entertainment systems, e.g. video game consoles, iPods
- Portable internet devices, e.g. tablets, laptops
- Wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems, e.g. devices used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture and/or recording, sound recording, and information transmitting, receiving and/or storing

2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory and good practice guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Mobile phones in schools'
- DfE 'Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents'
- DfE 'Behaviour in Schools'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school'
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff'

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board will be responsible for:

- The implementation of the policy and procedures.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and procedures.
- Ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Reviewing the policy annually.

The Headteacher will be responsible for:

- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- The day-to-day implementation and management of the policy.
- Informing parents and pupils of the Personal Electronic Devices Agreement.
- Communicating this policy to the relevant staff members and the wider school community.

- Communicating what devices can be brought to school and when they can and cannot be used.
- Deciding how best to achieve a mobile phone-free school environment.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Negotiating incidents of cyberbullying in conjunction with the headteacher, in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy.
- Applying this policy consistently and proportionately, including confiscating devices where appropriate.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns to the DSL, or deputy, where misuse indicates risk of harm.
- Teaching pupils about the risks associated with mobile phones, smart technology, social media and online activity in accordance with the school's Online Safety Policy.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Initiating and managing responses to incidents of upskirting with relevant staff members and in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Liaising with and reporting the relevant information to children's social care and/or the police, when it is necessary to do so.

Pupils are responsible for adhering to the provisions outlined in this policy.

4. Ownership and responsibility

Pupils are responsible for their own belongings. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing property that is lost, stolen or damaged either on school premises or travelling to and from school, and at school events.

Staff will be protected against liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to personal devices that have been confiscated as an appropriate sanction, provided that they have acted lawfully.

Pupils are responsible for replacing school property they lose, damage or steal, including electronic devices.

Pupils should enable a personal PIN, passcode or biometric login on all the devices they bring to school to protect their personal data, images and videos in the event that the device is lost, stolen or accessed by an unauthorised person.

5. Acceptable use

Where pupils are bringing personal electronic devices into school, they will be expected to make their parents aware of this. Pupils will hand their devices in to the school office when they arrive at school, where they will be stored in named wallets, until the end of the day when the pupils collect their device. Pupils are responsible for the safety and security of any personal devices brought into school once it has left the office and the school will not accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage.

Personal devices will not be used at any point during the school day, including during break and lunch times, or on the school premises such as before or after school, unless an agreed exception applies. Where an agreed exception is in place, use of a personal device will be limited strictly to the specific purpose outlined within that exception and will be subject to any conditions set by the school.

6. Specific restrictions and prohibited use

Personal devices must not be seen, heard, accessed or used by pupils during the school day or anywhere on the school site, unless an agreed exception or reasonable adjustment applies. Any permitted use will be limited strictly to the specific purpose and conditions agreed by the school.

Pupils must not use their personal devices to contact parents or carers during the school day. If a pupil is unwell or needs to contact home, this must be managed through the school office and the school's usual procedures.
Pupils may use their personal devices when travelling to and from school. However, devices must not be used during the school day to arrange or change travel arrangements. Where a pupil's circumstances mean that not

having access to a device could present a particular concern when travelling to or from school, parents and the school will discuss appropriate arrangements.

Personal devices must not be used:

- in changing rooms or toilets;
- to take photographs, videos or recordings without appropriate permission;
- to access, share or distribute inappropriate, offensive or harmful material;
- to bully, harass or intimidate others; or
- in any way that breaches the school's safeguarding, behaviour, acceptable use or social media policies.

Personal electronic devices must not be taken into examinations. They must be stored safely in accordance with the arrangements for the examination.

Personal electronic devices must not be connected to electrical outlets on the school premises without the express permission of the headteacher. Any device permitted to be connected must have appropriate electrical safety certification, including a current PAT where applicable.

7. Parents, carers and visitors

Parents, carers and visitors are asked to use mobile phones and other personal devices responsibly while on the school site. The school recognises that parents and carers may need to use their phones while waiting in outdoor areas, including the playground, and does not seek to prohibit reasonable use in these circumstances.

Within the school building, parents and carers should not use mobile phones or other personal devices unless this is necessary or they have permission from a member of staff. Phones should normally be kept away during meetings, appointments, assemblies and other school activities.

Parents, carers and visitors must not use personal devices to photograph, film or record pupils other than their own child without permission, and must follow any specific instructions given by the school regarding photography or recording at events.

Where a parent or carer needs to make or take an urgent call while inside the school building, they should move to an appropriate area or speak to a member of staff.

8. Safeguarding and inappropriate use

The school will not tolerate the taking, sharing or distribution of images or recordings of pupils or staff in circumstances where this could cause harm, distress, humiliation or safeguarding concerns.

Upskirting is a criminal offence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019. It includes taking or attempting to take an image under a person's clothing without their consent. Any allegation or incident involving upskirting will be reported to the DSL and dealt with in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where a mobile device is suspected to have been used inappropriately, the school may take appropriate action in accordance with its behaviour, safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

9. Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

The school will comply with its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments with regard to this policy where necessary. Adaptations may be made in exceptional circumstances and in response to a pupil's specific needs. For example, in order for a pupil to manage their medical condition effectively, such as diabetes.

Beyond these specific duties, the school recognises that a need for mobile phone access for some pupils may depend on their individual circumstances. The school will allow limited flexibility for these pupils where an agreed exception is required in the best interests of the pupil's safety and welfare, for example where a pupil is a young carer.

Where a pupil has an agreed adaptation or reasonable adjustment that requires access to a mobile device, this will be permitted only for the specific purpose and within the limits set out in the agreed plan.

10. Cyberbullying

All personal electronic devices will be used in line with our Online Safety Policy.
Incidents of cyberbullying will be dealt with and reported in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy.
As part of the school's ongoing commitment to the prevention of cyberbullying, regular teaching and discussion about online safety will take place as part of PSHE lessons.

11. Searching pupils

School pupils have a right for their private life to be respected under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). This right is not absolute, and the school can interfere with this right as long as it is justified, proportionate, and aligns with the powers to search in the Education Act 1996. All searches will be conducted in line with the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscations guidance.

The headteacher, and other authorised staff members, will have the power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item. Mobile phones and similar devices will be deemed as prohibited items that may be searched for in line with the Behaviour Policy.

In all cases the authorised member of staff will always:

- Seek the co-operation of the pupil before conducting a search.
- Ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted.
- Give the pupil the opportunity to ask any questions so that their agreement is informed.
- Have due regard to the DfE's 'Searching, screening and confiscation' guidance.

Staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers. Staff conducting a search must not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing - outer clothing means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear and includes hats, shoes, boots or scarves. Possessions means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control - this includes desks, lockers and bags.

A staff member may ask a pupil to show them what they are doing on their mobile phone or tablet if they reasonably believe that the pupil is using the device to cause harm. If it is judged reasonable, the staff member may inspect the files or data on a pupil's electronic device and delete them if necessary.

Staff members will ensure they have a good reason to examine and delete data on a pupil's electronic device. When determining a good reason to examine data, staff members will ensure they reasonably suspect that the data has been, or could be, used to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.

When determining a good reason to delete data, staff members will consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence and if so, choose not to delete the data. The data may be deleted if it is found likely to cause harm to any person, and the pupil and/or parent refuses to delete the data themselves.

If a search uncovers a device that is being used to cause harm, or which contains prohibited material such as pornography, a staff member can confiscate the device. If a staff member finds child pornography, it must be given to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. Where staff find stolen items like mobile devices, they must be given to the police as soon as reasonably practicable.

The staff member conducting the search must be the same sex as the pupil being searched. A witness to the search must be present; this should also be a staff member of the same sex as the pupil being searched.

Pupils are required to comply with any request to check their electronic device.

Pupils are required to comply with any request to disable the screen lock function of their electronic device and show any staff member what they are doing. Any pupil who refuses to comply with these requests will be disciplined in line with the Behaviour Policy.

12. Sanctions

The school will apply sanctions for breaches of this policy in a consistent and proportionate manner, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Where this policy is clearly breached, for example where a device is used, seen, or heard ringing, staff will feel confident to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty.

Confiscated devices may be retained for a proportionate length of time, as determined by the Headteacher and in consideration of the circumstances, including the pupil's age, SEND, and any agreed exceptions or reasonable adjustments.

Additional sanctions may include restorative conversations/reflection time or other disciplinary measures in accordance with the Relationship & Behaviour Policy.

Where a breach gives cause to suspect a pupil may be suffering, or may be at risk of, harm, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the DSL.

Confiscated personal electronic devices will be locked away securely in the school office or in the Headteacher's office.

Bullying via personal electronic devices will be dealt with in line with the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

13. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to members of staff, parents and pupils via the school website.