



# Edgewood Primary School

**Building skills and values for life**

## **Pupil mobile phone and other devices policy**

Edgewood Primary School does not allow pupils of any age to have mobile phones, devices linked to smart phones (Apple Watches or other wearable devices that link to mobile phones or may be able to take photos or send and receive messages) or any other electronic device from home in school or on any school related activity (such as visits, trips, residential or before or after school activities run by the school). Any further reference within this policy to a mobile phone means any and all devices listed above or any other device that can be used to take pictures, access the internet or send and receive messages of any form brought into school from home.

This is an important part of our safeguarding arrangements as it ensures that children are not accessing material online via their device or sending or receiving inappropriate messages in school, taking images or children that can be used, shared or manipulated, as well as ensuring these devices are not a distraction to their learning.

This policy has been written following the government issuing new, toughened guidance to schools ([Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mobile-phones-in-schools)) which makes it clear that schools should not allow mobile phones during the school day.

School are aware that some parents wish their child to bring a mobile phone with them if they are walking to and from school on their own. However, school feels it must point out that a mobile phone does not guarantee safety and, if parents are concerned that their child might not be safe walking home without a device, then they probably should not be letting their child walk home unsupervised at all. The choice you make here is wholly your choice as a parent and any liability rests with you.

No other children should be bringing phones or other devices to school at any time. If children are being collected the parent should bring the phone with them and not let the child bring the device into school. If you feel there is another reason your child needs to bring a phone into school then please speak to the school before you send your child in with their phone. Regardless of the reason for sending your child with a phone, they must be handed in in line with this policy.

To accommodate parents who wish their child to have a phone as they walk to and from school, school will allow pupils to bring phones with them but they must be handed into the office each morning before entering the school grounds and collected from there at the end of the day. This will involve waiting and will delay their departure from school and any party choosing this option must accept these delays and be patient while waiting. Please see the Handing in and Collecting Procedure section below for more details and restrictions.

Please note that any devices brought to school is done so wholly at the risk of the parent. School accepts no liability for any devices brought into school whatsoever or any loss caused by their damage or loss. The devices are left in a box in Reception and not locked away and, while that area is usually supervised, it is not continually manned.



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## **What school will do if a child breaches these rules**

If school suspects a child has brought a device into school and not handed it in as required we have the right to search children in line with DfE guidance and confiscate any prohibited items. Please note that legally, this policy defines mobile phones as prohibited items in school. If a mobile phone or similar device is found parent(s) will be called and any confiscated items will only be handed back to a parent, even if this takes more than one day. If other prohibited items are found they will be dealt with in line with guidance which may mean some have to be reported and handed to the police. It may also mean that the child does not have the device when they are walking home or may need to wait at school for a parent to collect if you do not feel they are safe walking home without a device.

If the failure to hand in the phone is a genuine mistake on the child's part, no behaviour sanctions will be given.

If staff believe it was an intentional act to hide the phone then a Red Card will be issued in line with our behaviour policy for a first offence. Please note, a second 'mistake' will also result in a Red Card being issued as children must take responsibility if they are choosing to bring these items in to follow school policies and procedures. Please note, in line with DfE behaviour guidance, that we will act with behaviour sanctions on a balance of probability and not a legal threshold of proof.

For any subsequent occurrences after a Red Card has been issued, the school will seriously consider whether to issue a suspension as this is a flagrant breach of elements of the school's safeguarding policy.

After issuing the Red Card children will not be allowed to bring a phone in for the rest of the term (or following term if in the last two weeks). If this restriction is intentionally breached then the school will be looking at the most severe punishments. Should children repeatedly fail to hand phones in as required they will not be allowed to bring them to school again. Parents will be wholly responsible for making other arrangements around collection if they do not think their child is safe walking to school without a device. School bears no responsibility for the consequences of these rules being breached such as increased costs to parents or impact on their job or any other impact.

Refusal to hand over a phone when instructed will be treated with the highest possible consequences and is likely to be considered as grounds for suspension under the category of use or threat of use of an offensive weapon or prohibited item that has been prohibited by a school's behaviour policy.

If a child is found to have a mobile phone on a trip, visit, after school club or residential, parents will be called and asked to come and collect the child and device from the trip and the child will not be allowed to remain on the trip or club. If a child is believed to have taken a device on a previous trip, school reserves the right to search that child's belongings in advance of any future trip and, if found, the child will not be permitted to go on the trip. Any money paid by the parents will be forfeited in all scenarios where a child is unable to go on a trip due to a failure to follow school policies and instructions as this voids any right to refund.

The new DfE guidance is very clear that confiscation as a punishment is appropriate where a policy is clearly breached. It also sets out that the law protects staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to items they have confiscated as a sanction as long as they have acted appropriately (in line with the guidance and this policy.)

## **Concerns or complaints**

If parents have any questions, concerns or complaints regarding this policy they should follow the school's process for addressing parental concerns followed by the complaints policy if unresolved.

## **Handing in and collecting procedure**

### **Handing in**

To reduce the impact of handing in phones on the office staff and so children can walk through school to their classes, children must come the Main Entrance to school to drop phones off just before 9am.

They will need to wait outside the reception door (and not blocking the door) until the door is opened by a member of the office staff. At that point they will all be allowed in to drop their phone off and at 9am, they will then be allowed to walk straight down to class.

This timing is so that school can guarantee there will be staff in classes before this time as people may be on the gate and so the office, who are often extremely busy at this time, are only disturbed once. Please do not send children to wait outside the main entrance too early as there is no shelter or supervision for them before 9am at this entrance.

### **Collecting**

At the end of the day, children will need to wait until all other children have been dismissed before they are taken to the office to collect their phones. They will then need to leave by the main entrance. This will mean these pupils are slightly later in leaving school.

### **Trips or visits**

On any residential, trip or visit, pupils must hand their phones into the office before either entering school grounds or leaving on the trip and not collect them until they are about to leave the school site. They must not go beyond the entrance with a mobile phone at any time.

At no point will any staff collect devices in (aside from those being confiscated which will then be retained in the front office until a parent comes to school to collect them) or keep them in any other location other than the front office. Any confiscated items will be stored separately in the front office to ensure they are not inadvertently handed out to the pupil at the end of the day.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed no later than Autumn 2027 and will be integrated into the school's behaviour policy at that point.