



# **Milford Haven School**

## **Mobile Phone Policy**

### **2024 - 2025**

Date adopted: 10 July 2024

Date to be reviewed: 10 July 2025

Policy created and reviewed by: Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour, Culture & Ethos



## 1 Purpose

The ever presence of mobile phones and devices presents significant challenges to how pupils behave and learn in school settings. Increasingly, there is mounting evidence suggesting that the unchecked use of mobile phones in schools is having a detrimental impact on pupils' mental health and academic progress, while also draining the energy of school staff who must manage resulting problems. These detrimental impacts have been highlighted by organisations such as PISA, UNESCO, and Estyn.

For example, data from the PISA 2022 survey showed a lack of personal resilience among students, with 45% reporting feeling anxious without their phones. Regarding lessons, 65% of students reported being distracted by digital devices in some Maths lessons, and 59% said their attention was diverted due to other students using phones, tablets, or laptops. The PISA data also underscores the correlation between digital device usage and learning outcomes, noting a significant drop in Maths scores among students who spent more than an hour per day on mobile devices.

Similarly, in a 2021 report titled "We Don't Tell Our Teachers," Estyn identified five main issues associated with mobile phone use as reported by pupils. These include peer pressure for online popularity, online bullying, sexual objectification, catfishing, and negative attitudes towards female characters in digital games. Additionally, Estyn noted in a case study on a secondary school in South Wales that the eradication of mobile phones during the school day has led to significant academic and pastoral benefits.

In addition the banning of mobile devices is a perfect opportunity for us to support developing children's social interaction skills during break and lunchtimes as they have grown less engaged with one another in conversation, replacing texting each other rather than speaking.

## 2. Rationale

This policy is being implemented to tackle classroom disruption, improve learning and protect pupils from cyber bullying. Staff have noticed many pupils repeatedly disengaging with their learning and a minority using texts to request to go to the toilet or messaging one another in order to meet up with friends, disrupt learning and truant the corridors. This is not only a significant waste of staff time and resources but more importantly is having a detrimental impact on their academic progress.

2.1 All schools are required by law to have safeguarding and behaviour policies aligned with the school's legal duties and standards relating to the welfare of children. This is essential for establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour, ensuring that teachers can effectively deliver the curriculum, and fostering a calm and safe environment for all pupils and staff.

2.2 To support these policies, Milford Haven Schools mobile phone policy prohibits the use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality throughout the school day, including during lessons, breaks, and lunchtime. This mobile phone policy is integral to upholding the school's statutory behaviour and safeguarding policies.

2.3 It is our policy to prohibit the use of mobile phones in school as there is overwhelming evidence to show that this will contribute to:

- Reducing distractions in lessons
- Reducing staff time spent on mobile-related matters
- Improving academic performance
- Enhancing social interactions between students



- Tackling cyberbullying
- Promoting students' health and well-being
- Strengthening students' resilience
- Preventing security/safeguarding concerns related to video recordings
- Preventing cheating
- Supporting equality

2.4 Our rural setting and wide travel to work area for working parents presents challenges when it comes to communications. The school recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well. Therefore we understand that pupils may have mobile devices for travelling to and from school. However before entering the school site all mobile devices **MUST** be switched off and put away in bags for the duration of the school day.

### 3. Safety

Our School accepts that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently. However, once on school site **any mobile device that is seen will be confiscated and only returned to a parent when they come to the school during opening hours to collect it.** Therefore if a pupil wishes to bring a mobile phone to school they **MUST** keep them switched off and stored in bags.

### 4. Wider implications

4.1 The school has considered the legal implications, such as those related to the [Equality Act 2010](#), [Children and Families Act 2014](#), as well as rights of confiscation and powers of searching for prohibited items under Sections 91, 93, and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#). The local authority is committed to fully supporting Milford Haven School issuing sanctions when pupils violate the school's mobile phone policy.

4.2 Whilst we have a policy prohibiting mobile phone use throughout the school day to minimise distractions and disruptions, we must also adhere to obligations such as the duty to make reasonable adjustments where necessary. There may be exceptional circumstances where the school will consider adapting the policy for specific pupils. The school will evaluate each case individually along with necessary medical evidence provided by the parent/carer.

4.3 Under the [Equality Act 2010](#), we are obligated to take reasonable steps to prevent substantial disadvantage to disabled pupils caused by school policies or practices. Granting a disabled pupil **access** to their mobile phone during the school day, if necessary due to their disability, may constitute a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act, 2010. Additionally, under the [Children and Families Act 2014](#) we will have arrangements in place to support pupils with medical conditions.

4.4 However, please note that providing flexibility for individual pupils does not entail exempting them from all restrictions on mobile phone use. Should such pupils abuse the policy and use their mobile phone for reasons other than agreed for medical purposes, then the mobile phone will be confiscated in line with the school policy. In other words, pupils who have special consideration must use their mobile phones for specific purposes at designated times and locations, such as in a school office.

### 5 Banning of mobile devices

5. 1 The use of mobile phones is prohibited on the school premises



5.2 We encourage parents/carers and visitors to the school to role model this example to our pupils. Therefore all phones are respectfully requested to be switched off/do not disturb during meetings.

5.3 It is unacceptable to use a mobile device or similar linked devices whilst on site at the school. In the event that this happens the pupil will be asked to hand over their phone and it will be confiscated until a parent/carer comes to the school to collect it during school hours. Parents/Carer will be contacted and informed.

5.4 Pupils whose mobile phones are being used inappropriately (where they have a proven medical exception) at any time and not inline with the policy will have the device confiscated. In the event that this happens the pupil will be asked to hand over their phone and it will be confiscated until a parent/carer comes to the school to collect it. Parents/Carer will be contacted and informed.

5.5 The confiscated mobile will be stored in secure storage in the reception area until collected.

5.6 Failure to hand the phone over will result in the pupil being placed into Pastoral Support until compliance or receive an internal exclusion for continual refusal.

5.7 Please note that any confiscated mobiles will not be given back to a pupil, they will only be returned to a parent/carer.

## 6 Staff

6.1 Consistent enforcement of the school's mobile phone policy by staff is crucial for its effectiveness. Staff should not only enforce the policy but also educate and exemplify expected behaviour, serving as role models for pupils. This approach enables pupils to witness and emulate good habits, fostering an environment where they feel confident to learn in a mobile phone-free environment. Staff should respond consistently, promptly, and assertively to any breaches of the mobile phone policy, aligning with the school's behaviour policy.

6.2 Where staff use mobile devices for the purposes of their work, as teachers do not have phones in their classrooms, school mobiles must be identified with the logo, so that pupils understand they are school devices being used for the purposes of everyday activities at the school and/or safeguarding, for example taking registers in PE and use by the first aid team or SLT.

6.3 The 2006 Act also provides a defence for school staff in confiscating items, such as mobile phones, from learners as a disciplinary penalty if they are being used to cause a disturbance in class or they are being used to contravene the school behaviour and/or anti-bullying policy. Headteachers are supported by the local authority to confiscate mobile phones

## 7 Damage or Theft

7.1 Mobile phones that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to the front office reception.

7.2 The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

7.3 The school accepts no responsibility for pupils who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

7.4 Should it be proven that a mobile device is damaged or lost once it has been confiscated then the school will accept responsibility for repairing the damaged mobile phone or replacing a lost one.



7.5 We would like to highlight that we do not undertake to investigate/search for mobile phones if they are lost or damaged. We advise you to check whether the mobile is covered under your own insurance.