

July 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

You may be aware that the government introduced guidance on mobile phone use in schools on 19 February 2024, which will become statutory under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026. Schools are required to have regard to this when setting behaviour policies. Further information is available in the Department for Education guidance: [Mobile phones in schools guidance](#).

In line with this guidance, Ascend Learning Trust schools will operate as mobile phone-free environments throughout the school day, including lessons, transitions, break times and lunchtime, from 1 September 2026. This approach is designed to reduce distraction, support positive behaviour and help students focus fully on their learning, friendships and wellbeing.

### **Bringing a Mobile Phone or Smart Watch to School**

Families may choose that their child does not bring a mobile phone or smart watch to school.

For any student who does bring a mobile phone, arrangements for handing in and storage during the school day will be in place. At Noremarsch Junior School, this will include:

- Phones & smart watches must be handed in to the classroom teacher as soon as they enter the classroom.
- Phones & smart watches will be stored safely in a drawer or cupboard
- Phones & smart watches will be returned at the end of the school day
- Phones & smart watches should not be used on the school site, even after they have been returned, and must only be used once students have left the premises.
- Phones & smart watches are brought to school at the student's own risk

If a student needs to leave the school premises during the day, a clear process will be in place to allow access to their phone and smart watch in these circumstances.

Students will still be able to use their phones/smart watches before and after school when travelling to and from the site.

### **Sixth Form Students**

Expectations for Sixth Form students will reflect their increasing independence and responsibility. National guidance allows for some flexibility in how mobile phone use is managed for this age group.

Further information will be shared directly with students and families, including when and where phones may be used.

Sixth Form students remain subject to the school's behaviour policy, and expectations will ensure that younger students are supported within a mobile phone-free environment.

### **Communication During the School Day**

If you need to contact your child during the school day, the school office will continue to support this, as it does currently.

Students who need to contact home will also be able to do so through our pastoral or medical teams.

We recognise that some students may require access to a mobile phone for specific medical needs. In these cases, appropriate arrangements will be discussed and agreed with families.

### **Expectations and Behaviour**

If a student brings a mobile phone to school, it will need to be handed in as required. Refusal to do so will be treated as a failure to follow a reasonable instruction and will be managed in line with the school's behaviour policy...

<https://noremarshjuniorschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/behavioural-policy-july-26.pdf>

Where a mobile phone or smart watch is used at a time or in a way that is not permitted, it will be treated as a banned item and dealt with accordingly.

In line with Department for Education guidance on searching, screening and confiscation, schools have the legal power to search for banned items and to confiscate them where necessary.

Where there is reason to believe a student has not handed in a mobile phone or smart watch, we reserve the right to carry out appropriate checks. This may include screening using a hand-held detector, which is non-intrusive and does not involve physical contact, as well as searches of bags or possessions in line with national guidance.

We know that, like us, you want the very best outcomes for your child, academically, socially and emotionally. Research shows that reducing access to mobile phones during the school day can improve focus, support wellbeing and strengthen relationships between students. By working together, we can help create a calm and focused environment where all students are able to thrive.

Thank you for your continued support as we introduce this approach.

Yours sincerely,

Hilary MacMeekin

Headteacher