

MILDMAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Robin Way, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 8AU

Telephone: (01245) 250021
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Website: www.mildmayprimary.org

Headteacher: Mr D Mulholland



28th September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers of Years 3 to 6.

Re: Mobile Phones in Schools

In summer 2026, the DFE document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' updated its guidance to state that no child should have access to a mobile phone (or other smart device) while at school.

I write to advise of our stance on the use of mobile phones and also to address another associated issue around smart-phones and online activity.

School Recommendations - Important Guidance for Parents

Mildmay Primary School discourages all children from bringing mobile phones to school, they are not necessary for their education, and they are not covered for theft, loss or damage by our insurance.

However, we also recognise that, in the 21st century, they can be a support for independence and safety so we accept that children **in Years 5 and 6 only** (who may be travelling to and from school unaccompanied) may wish to bring them to school for these reasons.

Children choosing to do so, **MUST** hand their phone or other smart devices (eg. Smartwatch) to their class teacher on arrival who will store it securely throughout the day in a locked box. These items will be returned to the children shortly before dismissal at the end of the day.

No child is permitted to keep their phone on them (or in their bag) through the school day and they should not be in a position to send or receive communications from a personal device between 8.55am and 3.20pm. Children found to have access to their device will have it confiscated and parents will be asked to collect it from school.

Additional Guidance – WhatsApp, Other Social Media & Gaming

Despite national efforts to protect children and teens from the potential harm caused by social media apps and online gaming, they do continue to pose an issue, especially where direct messaging is available.

Our school curriculum does address safe and appropriate use of technology, however issues do still persist despite the fact that no child at Mildmay has reached the required age to use WhatsApp or other social messaging (usually 13 years old).

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I would like to advise all parents that we really cannot be drawn into online/messaging feuds between children and families; we have no control over the phones you provide, the apps you have approved or for the (unmonitored) access you might give to your children. The safe and appropriate use of phones and apps is a parenting issue.

Please be aware that if the school is contacted about WhatsApp or other social media messaging, there is very little we can actually do to address the issues raised other than offer the following guidance.

Our guidance, in order of severity, will always be:

- 1) (Children) Resolve the dispute amicably by talking face-to-face.
- 2) Leave groups/chats where any unpleasantness is taking place.
- 3) Block the numbers of any people you do not wish to hear from.
- 4) Apply parental controls to gaming communications (and stick to the age-appropriate PEGI rating)
- 5) Uninstall social media apps and await the approved age for use (13 years in most cases)
- 6) Report harassment, threatening behaviour, crime, etc. to the police or CEOP.

We will, of course, support children to resolve their differences and reach amicable solutions where it is making their life uncomfortable in school, but we cannot resolve issues that are essentially arising and escalating at home.

For more information and guidance of e-safety issues, including messaging apps, please refer to our website: <https://www.mildmayprimary.org/E-Safety/>

Thank you for your understanding and support in this matter.

Kind regards,

Dominic Mulholland

Headteacher