



MOUNT HOUSE
SCHOOL
INSPIRING EVERY INDIVIDUAL

11/7/24

Dear Parents and Carers,

New Mount House School Mobile Phone Policy

In line with many schools across the country, Mount House is moving towards becoming a smartphone (and smart watch) free school for students in years 7-11. Sixth form students may bring smartphones to school, but they can only be used in the 6th form common room and 6th form study area, not around the school site. We work closely with external organisations such as Papaya <https://www.papayaparents.com/> to support families navigating the challenges of smart phone use in young people. We are also working with local schools in Barnet and more widely and encourage parents to join the Smart Phone Free Childhood Movement <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/> where parents can find details of the impact social media is having on young people.

Our Policy will be that students in years 7-11 will no longer be allowed to bring a smartphone to school, including for travel on the school bus. If students wish to carry a phone for travel purposes, the smartphone free childhood website has recommendations of **simple** phones to suit all price brackets: <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/alternatives>. Additionally, parents who wish to know their child's location can purchase an apple air tag which can be attached to their child's keys or rucksack. Simple phones will be handed in when students arrive at school, and collected when students leave the school site. Should students wish to phone home during the school day, they may ask at Reception. The majority of secondary age students have access to a laptop or iPad at home, and through this they can access educational apps. As current parents are aware, student homework is written in planners and is also published on an app Satchel One; this will continue to be the case. The School is currently developing a student device policy which we expect to share with parents before January 2025.

While the School can have no jurisdiction over smart phone use at home, we are asking all our parents not to purchase smart phones for children prior to the end of Year 11. We recognise that there will be a transition period while this policy works through as many of our students, particularly in Year 9 and above, already have smartphones. Even if your child does have access to a smartphone at home, we would like to be clear that it is our expectation that our students in years 7, 8 and 9 in the school year 2024/5 should not be given access to social media platforms such as Snapchat and TikTok. Parents should check their children's messages regularly, and under **no circumstances should parents allow students access to any group chats**.

We accept that many families have already purchased smart devices for their children and will bring in this policy over two years. You can find the details in the table below:.



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	2024/5	2025/6
Year 7, 8, 9	Students who enter Years 7-9 will not be allowed to bring smart phones onto the school site until they reach the Sixth Form. All simple (Nokia style) phones must be handed in at the start of the school day and collected when they leave. Parents are strongly advised that their children should not be given access to a smartphone at home.	
Year 10	Students who enter Year 10-11 in September 2024 are highly encouraged to not bring their smart phones to the school site and to instead invest in simple (Nokia style) phones. Should they need their smart phone for travel purposes then they must hand it in at the start of each day.	Students who enter Year 10 in September 2025 will not be allowed to bring smart phones onto the school site. All simple (Nokia style) phones must be handed in at the start of the school day and collected when they leave. Parents are strongly advised that their children should not be given access to a smartphone at home.
Year 11	Should students fail to hand their phones in, phones will be confiscated and kept securely by the Head of Year. The details of sanctions in this scenario are detailed in the School's Behaviour Policy (September 2024 update).	Students moving from Year 10 to 11 in September 2025 are highly encouraged to not bring their smart phones to the school site and to instead invest in simple (Nokia style) phones. Should they need their smart phone for travel purposes then they must hand it in at the start of each day.
Sixth Form	When a student reaches the Sixth Form, they will be allowed to bring smart phones to school but can only use them in the Common Room and Study Room. They should be leading by example and not be using them in areas visible to younger students. Sixth form students are encouraged to bring their own laptops to school for use in lessons, thus negating the need for phones to be carried around school. Sixth Formers who use smart phones elsewhere on school site will have the confiscated in line with sanctions which will be published in the School's Behaviour Policy (September 2024 update).	

We are grateful to our parents for their support in this matter, and hope that this policy will support parents in resisting pressure from children to have access to social media and smartphones.

Kind regards,

Sarah Richardson
Head