



St John Henry Newman
Catholic School

Scalegate Road, Carlisle, Cumbria CA2 4NL

Headteacher: Mr D McArdle BA (Hons)

Tel: 01228 404942

Email: office@newman.cumbria.sch.uk

Website: www.newman.cumbria.sch.uk

6 February 2026

Dear parents, carers and families,

On 19th January 2026, the government issued updated guidance for schools with regards to pupil use of mobile phones. The full guidance can be found here: [Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK](#).

The guidance states that “all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default” and clarifies that this applies “during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.”

In light of this guidance, we need to make a change to our current school policy which allows the use of mobile phones at breaktimes and lunchtime when pupils are outdoors.

We are aware that other schools use different methods of enforcing mobile phone bans including phone lockers, pouches and form tutors collecting them in. At this stage, we believe it is appropriate to adopt the simplest approach first, this is particularly important given that many of our pupils walk to and from school and may need access to their phones for safety outside of school.

Therefore, from Monday 13th April (after the Easter holidays), our policy will be that mobile phones should be neither seen nor heard during the school day. Phones should be switched off and stored in pupils’ bags or lockers (not pockets). We trust our pupils to follow this expectation without the need for more restrictive measures.

Sixth Formers will be permitted to use their phones in the Sixth Form Common Room ONLY.

If a pupil’s mobile phone is heard or seen in any way by a member of staff, it will be confiscated and taken to student services where the pupil can collect it at the end of the day. If the phone is confiscated on three occasions, a parent or carer will be contacted to collect it. This remains unchanged from the current policy. Should this approach prove ineffective by the end of the Summer Term, we will consult with parents and carers on alternative methods of enforcement.

Our proposal offers very little change from the current policy – the only difference is that pupils will not be allowed to use their phones outside at breaktimes and lunchtimes. The rules within the building have always prohibited mobile phones.

We recognise that a small number of our pupils use their phones for medical needs such as tracking blood sugar or for translations if necessary. Please be assured that these will still be

allowed. If currently agreed with school, there is no need to contact us. If there is a medical need for your child to use their phone during school hours that we do not already know about, please contact their Head of Year to put an agreement in place.

Thank you for your support.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David McArdle'.

Mr D McArdle
Headteacher