



July 2026

Mobile phones and smart devices

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we prepare for the start of the new school year, our focus remains firmly on establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour to ensure our school is a welcoming, safe and highly focused environment for all pupils and staff. To protect learning time and support student wellbeing, we are writing to outline our updated mobile phone and smart technology policy and our approach for the upcoming academic year.

Government guidance and our stance

Evidence increasingly highlights the disruptive impact of mobile devices on young people's focus and mental health. The Department for Education's guidance on Mobile Phones in Schools states that:

"All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default"

While this guidance was initially non-statutory, the passage of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill into law means schools must provide a greater degree of reassurance that pupils are not accessing devices during the school day.

We appreciate that a number of schools are currently looking into or introducing physical barriers, such as phone lockers or specialised pouches. We recognise that this may be the best course of action for some settings. However, we are not currently introducing phone pouches or lockers. Instead, we are focusing our efforts on rigorous enforcement and significantly stricter behavioural sanctions for any phone use on site.

Expectations for the new school year (Years 7-11)

To ensure absolute consistency, mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality (such as smartwatches capable of receiving notifications or messages) will be classified as prohibited items.

This policy strictly applies across the entire **school site**, including:

- During formal lessons and the transition time between classes.
- Throughout breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- In unstructured environments or areas outside of direct staff supervision, such as toilet cubicles.

Expectations for the new school year (Years 12 and 13)

We recognise that our Sixth Form students are preparing for the independence of university and the workplace, and we believe it is important to grant them a greater degree of autonomy and responsibility in managing their own time. Consequently, Sixth Formers will be permitted to use mobile devices, but this access is strictly confined to the Sixth Form Centre - including rooms M2 and M3. Phone use remains entirely prohibited in any other area of the school, including corridors, study areas and classrooms. We trust our senior students to model these boundaries responsibly and maintain the focused environment of the wider school community.

Consequences and sanctions

The vast majority of our students are exceptional at adhering to our mobile device policy to ensure all students are able to enjoy the benefits of a school day free from digital distractions. That said, we need to be clear about our expectations. Moving forward, a phone being visible or accessed on school site (anywhere on site) will be treated with the utmost seriousness.

A student breaching these expectations will be classified as displaying defiance (an explicit failure to follow a reasonable instruction) and presenting a safeguarding risk to the school community. Accordingly, the sanctions will be significant to reflect this.

As standard:

- The device will be immediately confiscated by staff and securely stored until the end of the school day.
- The school will put in place significant sanctions if a student fails to cooperate with staff instructions or repeatedly fails to comply with expectations.

Communication and Support

We understand that parents occasionally want to contact their child during the day. As is our standard policy, all contact must go directly through our school office (01843 864941).

Thank you in advance for your support as we take this positive step for your child's education and wellbeing. Should you wish to raise any specific issues or questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Year Leader or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Jones
Executive Head Teacher

FAQs

Why is the school strengthening its current mobile phone and smart technology policy?

The Department for Education guidance on Mobile Phones in Schools states that “All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default”.

“All schools must have a Behaviour Policy which is aligned with the school’s legal duties and standards relating to the welfare of children. This is essential in establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour ensuring that the school is a calm and safe environment for all pupils and staff. As part of this policy, schools should develop a mobile phone policy that prohibits the use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video) throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.”

What about medical needs?

We make reasonable adjustments for students who require a phone for health monitoring (Equality Act 2010). Students who require access to a device for medical reasons (for example, diabetes monitoring) will have an alternative arrangement agreed with the school. Families will be contacted individually.

I track my child on their phone as they travel to and from school

There are a range of GPS tracking devices/tags available. The tags are available for iOS (e.g. AppleAirTag) and Android devices.

My child checks their phone because it has their timetable on it

This is not permitted. All pupils receive a paper copy of their timetable at the start of the academic year and if there are any changes to their timetable, they will receive an updated copy.

My child uses their phone to access Google Classroom and other learning resources

This will still be possible, from home.

What if there is a school emergency, such as a fire or a lockdown situation?

We direct our pupils and staff to safety first, following our emergency protocols and policies. There is no need for a child to use their mobile phone to follow this.

Will my child be allowed their phone on school trips?

As standard, students will not be permitted to use phones on a school trip.

How can I contact my child during the school day?

As is currently school policy, all contact should always be through a call to the main school office (01843 864941) or an email to the year team, either of whom will pass on a message.