

23rd February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to update you on the Department for Education's (DfE) latest national position regarding mobile phones in schools. The DfE has recently strengthened its guidance, stating clearly that **all schools should be mobile-phone-free environments by default** throughout the entire school day, including lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes and transitions between lessons.

The government's updated direction emphasises that mobile phones and similar smart devices can cause distraction, disrupt learning, and present safeguarding concerns, including issues relating to online bullying and social media use. The DfE also notes that reducing mobile phone use in schools contributes to calmer, safer environments and helps pupils stay focused and engaged in their learning.

In addition, the Education Secretary has written to schools to encourage consistent application of these expectations and to ask for parental support in ensuring that school policies are upheld. Ofsted will also be reviewing how schools implement their mobile phone policies as part of inspections from April.

As a school, we have not been immune to the issues that mobile phones cause. This academic year alone we have dealt with the following:

- students being bullied in groups they did not consent to join
- sharing of explicit images of students
- children being maliciously influenced by adults they do not know on social media
- regular access to pornography
- harassment of staff and other students through social media
- cheating using AI
- likely addiction to social media, requiring significant support for their mental health
- purchasing illegal drugs
- insufficient sleep, often staying up until the early hours online

Almost all of these concerns occurred at home, without parents being aware of what their child was accessing or experiencing.

How you can help

We kindly ask for your support by ensuring that:

- If your child brings a phone to school, it remains switched off and stored according to school procedures.
- You reinforce with your child the importance of not using their phone during the school day.
- Any urgent messages to your child are directed through the school or house office, rather than by mobile phone.

If you choose to provide your child with a smart phone, please consider maintaining control over its use: limit screen time, block social media apps and insist that devices are charged and kept downstairs overnight.

Parental control tools are available on both major phone operating systems:

Apple calls it 'Screen Time' (<https://support.apple.com/en-gb/105121>)

Android calls it 'Family Link' (<https://families.google/intl/sw/familylink/>)

What this means for our school

In line with this strengthened national guidance, we will be ensuring that our mobile phone policy reflects the expectation that pupils do not use mobile phones at any point during the school day. This aligns with the DfE's recommendation that phones should not be seen, heard, or used, and that exceptions should only be made where **absolutely necessary**. We will ensure that all students are provided with a printed copy of their timetable.

Support and Special Considerations

The DfE acknowledges that some pupils may require access to phones in exceptional circumstances—such as medical needs or other specific personal situations. If this applies to your child, please contact the house office so that we can discuss appropriate arrangements.

We will be sharing our updated expectations on mobile phones with students this week during a whole school assembly. Following this assembly, should your child be seen with a mobile phone, it will be immediately confiscated until the end of the school day when students will be able to collect it from their house office. If there is a repeated occurrence of this, parents or carers will be required to collect the phone from school.

To further strengthen our position on mobile phones, we are currently researching various 'pouch' options. You may have seen in the media, that many schools have implemented pouches, whereby students lock their phones away in a pouch throughout the school day and can only access the pouch at the end of the day. We want to ensure that the option we choose is the most effective for our students, so we will be taking this half term to make on a decision on this.

We appreciate your continued support in helping us maintain a safe, calm and focused learning environment for all pupils. If you have any questions about our policy or the recent government guidance, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully,



Vicky Lloyd