

Mobile Phone-Free School: Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ is designed to help parents and carers understand the new DfE (Department for Education) guidance and how our school is working to create a calmer, more focused environment for all our pupils.

1. Why has the school introduced this policy now?

The Department for Education has updated its national guidance (January 2026) with the expectation that all schools in England become **mobile phone-free environments** by default. Research shows that phones can be a major distraction in lessons and a primary driver for cyberbullying and social anxiety. By removing them during the school day, we aim to improve focus, mental health, and face-to-face socialising.

2. How will the ban be enforced?

Depending on our school's specific model, phones must either be:

- Left at home.
- Handed in to staff upon arrival.
- Stored in a secure locker.
- Kept "Never Seen, Never Heard" (switched off in bags). If a phone is used, seen, or heard without permission, it will be **confiscated** in line with our school's Behaviour Policy.

3. How can I contact my child in an emergency?

We understand that not being able to text your child can feel worrying. In an emergency, **please call the school office directly**. Our staff are trained to handle urgent messages sensitively and will ensure your child is supported and reached immediately. This ensures that children receive important news in a supervised, supportive environment rather than via a notification in a busy corridor.

4. What if my child needs their phone for a medical reason?

We fully support pupils with medical needs. Under the **Equality Act 2010**, we make "reasonable adjustments" for students who require a phone for health monitoring (e.g., tracking blood glucose levels for diabetes). Please contact your child's Head of Year or the SENCO to arrange a formal adjustment.

5. Can my child use their phone for the journey to and from school?

Yes. We recognise that many parents want their children to have a phone for safety while travelling. Pupils are permitted to bring phones for the commute, but they must be managed according to the school's storage rules (e.g., kept in a locker or bag) the moment they pass through the school gates.

6. What about Sixth Formers?

Sixth-form students are often granted more independence as they prepare for university or work. They may be allowed to use phones in **designated areas only** (like the Sixth Form Common Room), provided they do not use them in front of younger pupils or in a way that disrupts the school's "phone-free" culture.

7. Will the school be responsible if the phone is lost or damaged?

While we provide secure storage (such as lockers or collection boxes), the school generally cannot accept liability for the loss or damage of expensive personal items. We strongly encourage students to use basic "brick" phones for travel if you are concerned about the safety of a high-value smartphone.

8. Are staff also banned from using phones?

To lead by example, DfE guidance states that staff should not use their personal phones for non-professional reasons in front of pupils. You may still see teachers using devices for school-related tasks, such as recording attendance or using multi-factor authentication for school systems.

We hope that this answer some of the questions that you may have regarding the recent changes to phone use. If you have concerns and would like to discuss them with the team then please contact: