

Student use of mobile phones

Procedure & Guidelines



The school has a duty to create an environment that is calm, safe and free from distraction so all students, whatever their background, can learn and thrive. One of the greatest challenges facing schools is the presence of mobile phones. Today, by the age of 12, 97% of students own a mobile phone.

Mobile phones risk unnecessary distraction, disruption and diversion. One in three secondary school students report that mobile phones are used in most lessons without permission where phones are not currently banned. This not only distracts the single student using the phone, but disrupts the lesson for a whole class, and diverts teachers' efforts away from learning. The school should be doing what we can to remove distractions and enable them to be fully present and engaged in the classroom.

Students should feel safe at school. One in five students have experienced bullying online. By removing mobile phones from the school day, we create a safe space where students are protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media and cyber-bullying, as

well as the peer pressure and possible stigma associated with owning what are often expensive devices.

Three in ten students cite making and maintaining friendships and their mental health as a cause of worry, anxiety or depression. By removing mobile phones, children and young people can spend more time staying active and socialising face to face with their peers, activities which have a positive impact on wellbeing.

Without their mobile phone at school, students have the headspace and calm to focus on their lessons.

Mobile phones are not to be used during the school day¹. Every student is assigned a personal Yondr Pouch. While the Yondr Pouch is considered school property, it is each student's responsibility to bring their Pouch with them to school every day and keep it in good working condition.

DAILY PROCESS

1. When arriving at school students will make sure their pouch is unlocked²
2. In tutor time, students will turn their mobile phone off
3. Place their phone inside the Pouch and lock it
4. Tutor will check pouch is locked
5. Store it in their bag/rucksack/blazer etc for the day

At the end of the school day, students will open their Pouch via the unlocking stations situated outside of the front and back gates.

**Students arriving late or leaving early will pouch/unpouch their phones in reception*

THE ROLE OF STAFF

All staff should consistently enforce the school's procedure on the use of mobile phones. Staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of students throughout the school day. This will empower staff to better challenge students to meet the school expectations and effectively enforce the prohibition of mobile phones throughout the school day. There may be occasions where it is appropriate for a teacher to use a mobile phone or similar device, for instance to issue home learning, issue rewards and sanctions or use multi-factor authentication.

THE ROLE OF STUDENTS

All students should be clear on the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and should be reminded of the policy, and the consequences and sanctions for not following it, at the start of each school year and again, where appropriate, at regular intervals.

Students are taught³ the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure they understand the decision being taken by their school to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Students are taught the benefits of having a mobile phone-free environment and be encouraged to see

¹ The school day is defined as the time from some point during morning registration until the end of the school day – 3.05pm

² Students can use the unlocking stations at either gate if required

³ This happens via PSHE, Tutor time and assembly

such an environment as desirable and valuable. This helps to create intrinsic motivation to support the school culture.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents have an important role in supporting the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and should be encouraged to reinforce and discuss the policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

Where parents need to contact their child during the school day, they should be directed to the school office, where staff should be aware of the school's policy on relaying messages and facilitating contact.

Where parents have questions or concerns, staff should address these in a timely manner and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

VIOLATIONS

Pouch Damage

If a student damages their Pouch and it no longer functions as required, they will be issued with a new pouch and a £10 fee will be incurred by the parents/carers

Examples of damage:

- Ripped fabric
- Cut
- Torn
- Bent/cut pin
- Signs of force to black button on flap

Lost Pouch

If a student loses their Pouch they will be issued with a new pouch and a £10 fee will be incurred by the parents/carers

Forgotten Pouch

If a student forgets their Pouch, **their mobile phone will be collected in, stored securely returned to the student at the end of the school day. A call home will be made to remind the Parent/carer of the policy.**

If a student consistently forgets their pouch, it is considered lost. **Refer to the Lost Pouch Procedure above.**

Students caught using their phone during the school day

If a student is caught using their phone during the school day it will be confiscated⁴ and a parent/carer will have to collect the phone from school between the hours of 8am and 4pm. Repeated use in violation of the school's procedure will lead to the student being isolated, attending late school or suspended.

Searching students

The Headteachers, or staff they authorise, have a statutory power to search a student or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the student is in possession of a prohibited item as set out in legislation or any item identified in the school rules as an item that may be searched for.

Adaptions and reasonable adjustments

Whilst the school prohibits the use of mobile phones throughout the school day to reduce distraction and disruption, it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments where necessary.

The school has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to take such steps as is reasonable to avoid substantial disadvantage to a disabled student caused by the school's policies or practices. Allowing a disabled student access to their mobile phone during the school day, where it is necessary due to the nature of their disability, may be considered a reasonable adjustment and a failure to do so may be a breach of the school's duty.

The school has a duty under the Children and Families Act 2014 to have arrangements in place to support students with medical conditions. In meeting this duty, the governing body must have regard to the statutory guidance on supporting students with medical conditions at school. In some circumstances, supporting a student with their medical condition can involve the use of a mobile phone. For example, pupils with diabetes might use continuous glucose monitoring with a sensor linked to their mobile phone to monitor blood sugar levels. Where mobile phone use allows students to manage their medical condition effectively, it would not be reasonable for a school to prevent this.

The use of mobile phones outside the school day

Beyond year 7, students on residential trips are allowed access to their mobile phones, mainly to be able to use the camera facility to make the very important memories which form an important part of residential visits. On the residential trip to Osmington Bay in year 7 students are discouraged from bringing a mobile phone. This is due to the nature of activities they will undertake and due to security issues⁵

Students have access to their mobile phones when travelling to and from school and during extracurricular activities in order that they can contact parents should travelling/pick up arrangements need to be amended.

⁴ Schools have the power to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty. The law protects staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to items they have confiscated as a sanction, providing they have acted lawfully. Headteachers are backed by the DfE to confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate.

⁵ Rooms are not locked