



Policies

Mobile Phone Policy

Next review date: February 2029



February 2026 - Mobile Phone Policy

1. Introduction and aims

At Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College, we aim to provide an environment free from the distractions and risks associated with mobile technology. In line with current DfE guidance, we are committed to maintain a phone-free environment throughout the school day for all children.

For the purposes of this policy **the phrase 'mobile phone' relates to any internet-enabled smartwatch and other wearable tech**. In line with DfE recommendations, these devices should not be used to receive notifications, messages, or access the internet at any time during the school day. If a student uses a smartwatch or other wearable tech to circumvent any aspect of the mobile phone policy, it will be treated as a mobile phone policy breach and sanctioned accordingly.

We recognise that carrying a mobile phone provides security for pupils traveling to and from school before the start of the school day and after the school day ends. However, the school operates a full ban on children having possession of and freedom of access to their mobile phone at any point during the school day from the start of tutor time to the end of the final lesson.

As mobile phones have become integral to our everyday lives, it is *accepted* that *most* pupils in all year groups will bring a mobile phone with them to school. By enabling families to be in touch with their children on their journey to and from school, mobile phones help to keep children safe. However, once safely in school, it is not necessary for pupils to have unrestricted access to a mobile phone *during* the day. Furthermore, mobile phones are not a requirement for learning whilst in school and are not needed during lessons.

The ban on mobile phones aims to:

- Secure an environment free from the distraction of mobile phones and social media
- Provide a safe, calm, focused learning and working environment for all.
- Protect pupils from online harm, the risks and inappropriate use of mobile phones.
- Support mental health and well-being of all by encouraging face-to-face social interaction

This policy

- sets out the expectations, responsibilities, rules and standards regarding the use of personal mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers as well as promoting their safe and responsible use.
- covers the use of any other communication device with internet capability including, but not exclusively, smartwatches.

The Mobile Phone Policy policy should be read alongside other policies including, for example, those relating to e-safety, data protection, safeguarding and behaviour.

The procedures and processes detailing the implementation of this policy can be found in appendix 1 and 2.

2. Roles and responsibilities

- All staff are responsible for enforcing this policy, must model professional behaviour and consistently apply sanctions for non-compliance.
- Volunteers (or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.
- Parents are responsible for supporting the school's phone-free policy, ensuring that their children understand it and fully comply with it

- All students are responsible for complying fully with the ban on mobile phones in school as detailed in this policy
- The Headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team with delegated responsibility is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy every 3 years and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation. This policy will be approved by the governing body following each review and may receive updates relevant to the use of mobile phones in school

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phone use by staff

- Staff must act as role models. They are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone in any way including making or receiving calls or sending texts, using social media etc when they are working directly with children. This includes during lessons, whilst on duty and any other time when they are supervising children.
- Use of personal mobile phones to make or receive calls or send texts must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where children are not present.
- There may be certain circumstances where the Headteacher will allow a member of staff to use their phone for **personal reasons** (including, particular health conditions) during the time that they are working directly with children. Staff must speak directly to the headteacher about these particular circumstances so that they are known and clearly understood.

3.2 Using personal mobiles for work purposes by staff

It may be appropriate, convenient, necessary or staff may wish to use personal mobile phones for *work purposes*. In these cases, staff will:

- Always use their personal mobile phone in an appropriate and professional manner as well as the acceptable use of ICT and data protection policy.
- At their discretion, staff may choose to use their mobile phone to access the school's MIS.
- Staff may wish to use personal mobile phones for other aspects of work including, but not limited to trips, visits, performances, sports fixtures, open evenings, fairs and other school events. The default position is that an appropriate app will be used for trips and visits to ensure that a colleague's personal mobile is safe when being used for work purposes on trips and visits. The IT team will advise on this. If staff do not wish to use their personal mobile phone in these situations, every effort will be made to provide a school mobile phone. If one is not, then staff will be consulted about the use of the right app to ensure that they can use their own mobile safely and appropriately.

Should a member of staff decide to use their personal mobile phone for work purposes, the following conditions must be adhered to:

- The device must be protected by a PIN and/or biometric data
- The device must be kept up to date with security updates and must have a remote wipe feature in case it is lost or stolen (eg Find my Iphone)
- The date, time and event details that any images, recordings and videos of children are taken must be logged to aid any future subject access requests.
- Any images, recordings and videos taken of children must be uploaded to the school system (Google Drive) within 24hrs and then deleted from the device as well as from the deleted items folder and any automatic online backups.
- Personal information about children must not be shared on a member of staff's personal social media accounts, chat forums such as WhatsApp, Messenger, etc

3.3 Data protection and safeguarding

Staff must not:

- use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.
- give their personal mobile phone number to parents or pupils and should take appropriate steps to avoid publicising their personal contact details on any social media platform, messaging app or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils.

3.4 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

3.5 Use of mobile phones by 'non-staff' people on site.

Non-staff people who are on site (including parents, contractors, governors, volunteers and visitors) must adhere to this policy whilst on site.

This includes:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event
 - Examples of public events include but not exclusively, school fairs, concerts and other performances.
- Not posting photographs or recordings on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils
- Not taking photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils and students

4.1 Children in the mainschool

- The mobile phone policy at Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School is that in year groups 7,8,9 10 and 11 pupils are not permitted to have their mobile phone on their person, available to them or accessed by them during the school day. At the start of tutor time, all mobile phones must be switched off, stored and locked in the child's own locker for the entire school day including break and lunch until after the end of period 5. Once the bell has gone for the end of period 5, children are only then allowed to go to their locker and retrieve their phone.

4.2 Students in the Sixth Form College

- In years 12 and 13, students must only use their mobile phone in social areas within the Sixth Form college. They are not permitted to use their mobile phone for any reason in any part of the mainschool and their phone should not be visible in school when outside of the college building. College students must adhere to all policies relating to the appropriate use of IT.
- The use of mobile phones in lessons is at the teacher's discretion. The default position is that unless a member of staff specifically agrees to it, there should be no mobile phones on display or being used at any time in the lesson. If the teacher agrees, mobile phones being used in sixth form lessons must *only* be used as a tool to support specific aspects of learning. Mobile phones should not be used in a classroom for any other reason unless there has been specific guidance provided by the classroom teacher.

4.3 Exceptions

- The **only** exception to the ban on access to mobile phones during the day is where a child has a *specific medical condition*, supported by written medical evidence from a doctor or medical professional that explicitly requires the child to have access to a mobile phone.
- Exemptions to this policy are granted solely at the discretion of the Headteacher or senior leader with delegated authority

4.4 Contact during the school day between home and a child

- If for any reason, home needs to contact their child during the day, this must only be via a phone call to school reception. Information will then be passed to the child as soon as possible. Parents must not call, message or communicate with their child via their personal mobile phone during the school day including break and lunch.
- If a pupil needs to contact home, they must go to reception or their hub office at break or lunch where an appropriate member of staff will make contact on their behalf.

4.5 Exams and assessments

- Any mobile phone found on a pupil's person in a formal examination hall, even if switched off, will result in immediate reporting to Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). In accordance with JCQ regulations this may result in disqualification from that paper and potentially all subsequent exams. All students are required to follow and strictly adhere to all JCQ protocols and requirements in the Exams Policies and Guidance section of the school website

5. Implementation of policy and dealing with non-compliance from pupils

- The rules and expectations pertaining to the implementation processes specific to the management of mobile phones is detailed in **appendix 1**.
- The process for managing compliance and sanctions for breaking the rules pertaining to mobile phone use is detailed in **appendix 2**

5.1 Searching the content of mobile phones and confiscation of phones

- The school is legally permitted to conduct a search for phones that they feel are being carried by pupils and may confiscate them. Under the Education Act 2011 and updated KCSIE guidance, the Headteacher and authorised staff have a statutory power to search a pupil's phone if they suspect the device contains prohibited data. If there is reason to believe the phone may contain pornographic images, inappropriate material and content, if it is being used or has been used to commit an offence, cause personal injury, engage in inappropriate behaviour including but not limited to any form of bullying or harassment, the contents of the phone may be searched.
- Certain types of conduct can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to: consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos, upskirting, threats of violence or assault, abusive calls, emails, social media posts, messages or texts directed at someone for example, on the basis of their ethnicity, religious beliefs, gender or sexual orientation
- If anyone suspects or finds that any other person has inappropriate content on their phone or that it is being used in any way as detailed above, they should report this to a senior member of staff immediately
- Details of how searches for phones will be conducted can be found in appendix

6. Loss, theft or damage

- Pupils and staff must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions and data.
- In order to mitigate against loss, theft or damage, pupils must ensure that their phone is locked in their locker every morning at tutor time. Phones handed in to reception will be securely locked away
- The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

7. Searching for and confiscation of mobile phones

- The school follows the DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. Headteachers and any staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have any prohibited item or any other item that the school identifies as an item which may be searched for.
- Schools do not have to inform parents or carers before conducting a search. Any authorised member of staff can search lockers, desks and bags in the presence of the pupil and in the presence of another member of staff *except in cases where it's not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff*. Staff are also authorised to use a scanning wand to check for phones and other items
- Where the Mobile Phone Policy is breached, (for instance where a mobile phone is used by a pupil or is heard ringing in a pupil's bag) schools are able to use their power to search for and confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty for whatever length of time they deem proportionate. Confiscated phones will be stored securely until they are collected either by the pupil or by the parent depending on the arrangement.
- 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.

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from teachers, parents and pupils
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

Appendix 1 - Implementation of mobile phone policy in school

1.1 The implementation process for managing mobile phones in the main school applies to **all year groups including years 7 to 11**. Students are required to follow the process detailed here and staff are required to consistently apply this. The purpose of this is to grow a culture of compliance and to ensure that the policy and practice is fully embedded across all year groups in the main school.

1.2 Who is responsible for implementation of this policy on a day to day basis?

The member of staff responsible for each tutor group is responsible for implementing this policy at the start of each day and must ensure that the procedure detailed here is carried out as well as check that this is done by all of the pupils in the group. Thereafter, it is the duty of every member of staff to ensure that the policy is enforced throughout the school day.

1.3 Process for years 7 through to 11

- **Tutors are directly responsible for managing the efficient lockup of all mobile phones at tutor time.**
- **Mobile phones MUST be locked away at the start of each tutor period.**
- As soon as children arrive at the **beginning** of the tutor period, the tutor (or other adult responsible for the tutor group) will:
 - inform ALL pupils that they must switch off their mobile phone
 - take the register
 - visually check that the phone is off
 - directly supervise them placing it in their own personal mobile phone locker
 - ensure that each pupil makes sure that their own locker is securely locked
- All tutors are required to keep an accurate record of which child uses which locker.
- It is not permitted for children to keep their phone in their bag or anywhere on their person instead of using a locker. Tutors are required to be vigilant and to act and challenge if they *suspect* that the child has a mobile phone.
- Tutors are authorised to and are expected to conduct regular spot checks during tutor time to ensure that locked lockers contain the students phone
- If tutors require support for serious issues regarding compliance with practice, they should do so by firstly and by default calling the year group team. If there is no response tutors should only then call reception who will radio for support
- Tutors must sanction any and all mobile phone policy breaches using bromcom following the process in appendix 2
- Pupils are not permitted to check their phone during the school day or to collect their phone from their locker at any time during the day including lunch or breaks.
- After the bell has sounded for the end of the school day, all pupils must return to their tutor room and collect their own phone from their own locker before going home.

1.4 What if a pupil is late to school or is leaving before the end of their school day?

What if a pupil is late to school after the school gate is locked?

- If a pupil in **any year group including 7 to 11** arrives late for any reason **after the school gate is locked**, they must sign in at reception.
- The pupil will be required by reception staff to first switch off and then hand over their mobile phone where it will be stored and locked in a secure place and stored in reception.
- If the pupil claims not to have their phone when asked by reception staff, reception staff will inform the relevant year group team who will intercept the child and conduct a search. If the child is found in possession of a phone, the hub team will confiscate it, issue a behaviour point and the escalation route detailed in appendix 2 will be followed

- If a pupil does not follow the request to hand over their phone, reception staff will issue a behaviour point and the escalation route detailed in appendix 2 will be followed
- The phone must only be collected when and not before the pupil leaves school. All pupils must follow this reasonable request first time, without question and without objection.

What if a pupil is late to school before the school gate is locked?

- If a pupil in any year group including 7 to 11 arrives late for any reason **before the school gate is locked**, their name will be logged by late gate staff
- The pupil will be required by late gate staff to first switch off and then hand over their mobile phone where it will be stored and locked in a secure place.
- The phone must only be collected when and not before the pupil leaves school. All pupils must follow this reasonable request first time, without question and without objection.
- If a pupil does not follow this reasonable request, reception staff will issue a behaviour point and the escalation route detailed in appendix 2 will be followed

What if a pupil is leaving before the end of their school day?

- If a pupil in any year group including 7 to 11 is leaving school prior to the end of the school day, immediately before they are due to leave school, the pupil should go to reception where they will be issued with a permission slip that allows them to collect their phone from their tutor room. Permission slips will be named, date and time stamped and used only on that occasion.
- If a child is leaving school and their phone is stored in reception, assuming there are no conditions or sanctions in place, the phone will be returned to them at the time they leave but not before.

1.5 Searching for phones

- If the tutor suspects that the child has a phone but has kept it in their bag, or that the child is in possession of a second phone, the tutor must:
 - **firstly** *ask the child to show them the inside of their bag*, take belongings out etc so the child is able to demonstrate that they do not have a phone. In this case there is no need for a tutor to handle the child's belongings.
 - **following this stage**, if the tutor remains unconvinced, they should contact the relevant hub who will conduct a formal bag search and act accordingly.

Appendix 2. Managing pupil compliance regarding mobile phones

2.1 required actions from staff

If a pupil in years 7,8,9,10 or 11 is found by **any member of staff** to be in possession their phone at any time during the school day, **the member of staff must respond as follows:**

If any pupil is found in possession of a mobile phone **during break or lunch** the member of staff must:

- escort the pupil to reception where they will be instructed to switch their phone off and hand it over to reception team so it can be safely locked away until the end of the day
- log the incident log on Bromcom as a behaviour point
- If the child will not comply, this should be reported to the relevant hub office who will act on this directly
- the child will receive a warning from the relevant Hub office and parents notified.

If any pupil is found in possession of a mobile phone **during a lesson**, the member of staff responsible for the lesson must:

- log the incident log on Bromcom as a behaviour point
- immediately call for 'lesson support' to escort the pupil to reception where they will be instructed to switch their phone off and hand it over to reception team so it can be safely locked away until the end of the day
- lesson support staff must then escort the child back to their lesson
- the child will receive a warning from the relevant Hub office and parents notified.

2.2 - Sanctions relating to mobile phone non compliance

If a child refuses to comply with any aspect of this policy including refusing to hand their mobile phone at any time, refusal to allow a search to be conducted, or any other infringement, this will constitute defiant behaviour and result in an appropriate level of sanction in line with the behaviour policy and the following phone specific escalation plan will be followed:

First offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The pupil will receive a first warning from the relevant Hub office and parents notified.
Second offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Loss of all free time for a period up to three days and may be placed in internal isolation● Requirement to deliver their phone to the Hub office at the start of Tutor Time where it will remain until the end of the day● The pupil will be issued with their second and final warning and parents notified of the escalation.
Third offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Fixed term suspension or a period of Alternative Provision at another school● The phone will be stored in the relevant Hub office to be collected only by parents or carers

At the discretion of the school, additional, appropriate measures will be imposed to ensure compliance with this policy from the pupil at any point in the escalation of sanctions

REVIEW TIMELINE

Reviewed – February 2026

Next Review – February 2029