



SANDWELL ACADEMY



Mobile Phone Policy

July 2026

Policy Title:	Student Use of Mobile Telephones
Policy Reference:	Sandwell Academy / Student
Description:	This document sets out how the Academy expects students to use mobile telephones
Status:	Non-statutory
Category:	Academy / Student
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Change Record		
Version	Date	Description
1.1	January 2024	
1.2	September 2024	Updated confiscation of mobile phones following police recommendations and advice
1.3	May 2025	Bromcom replaced by Class Charts Reference to DfE guidance on mobile phones Changes to consequences
1.4	July 2026	Full update of policy in line with updated government guidance. Updated to school consequences.

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1. Introduction and aims

At Sandwell Academy mobile phones are not required during the school day and we prioritise face-to-face interaction, focused learning, and safeguarding. We acknowledge that many students carry phones for emergencies and for safe travel to and from school; however, phones can be used inappropriately and are potentially targets for theft and bullying.

Therefore, our policy aims to:

- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones
- Provide clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of section 36 of the [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026](#), and the Department for Education (DfE)'s [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers and support staff) are required to actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

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.

The Deputy Head for Behaviour is responsible for monitoring the policy, reviewing it every year and holding staff and students accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone during the school day, while children are present and/or during contact time e.g., when teaching, during breakfast/lunchtime in the restaurant. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to times/venues where students are not present.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The staff member must have verbal agreement from their line manager when this is the case. Staff are encouraged to use the school number as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT).

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or students, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or students.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student.

If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson / school trip / activity, this must be done using school equipment e.g., visualisers or camera (available to book with IT department).

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones or a similar device e.g., tablet, during the school day in front of students for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Staff monitoring behaviour events on Class Charts
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their devices in an appropriate and professional manner
- Not use their devices to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers

Staff should request (where possible), an Academy mobile phone from the site manager, to use during offsite trips and residential visits.

4.5 Work phones

The Senior Management Team and some key staff are provided with a mobile phone and/or tablet by the school for work purposes. Phones are also available in each venue and office.

Staff must:

- Only use school phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is always appropriate and professional, in line with our staff code of conduct

4.6 Consequences

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

5. Use of mobile phones by students

The DfE's mobile phone guidance states that the use of mobile phones is prohibited throughout the school day, therefore the Academy's stance on mobile phones is that they are "**never used, seen or heard**".

This means:

- Mobile phones should be **switched off** as soon as students enter onto the grounds of the Academy e.g., as they walk through the main gates.
- Mobile phones must remain off throughout the whole school day, including Session 3.
- Students are not permitted to use their mobile phone until they leave the Academy site e.g., through the main gates of the Academy.
- Mobile phones must be kept in student **rucksacks** or in their internal zipped **blazer pocket**.
- That students are not permitted to 'carry' a mobile phone in their hand at any time.
- No calls, messages, music, games, or social media use at any time during the school day.
- Phones must not be used during Personal Tutor (PT) time, breakfast, lunchtimes (including on the hard play), or between lessons/during transition.
- The phone is the student's responsibility.

All students must complete and sign the **Acceptable Use Agreement** (appendix 1) before bringing a mobile phone in school.

In the case of emergency, students can ask their Personal Tutor or subject teacher to use an Academy phone. They may also go to reception and/or the Welfare/Safeguarding Hub, where a phone will be made available to them.

Students will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure they understand the decision 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 will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by students

The DfE's [mobile phones guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

As a result, students are **not permitted** to bring/wear smartwatches to the Academy.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

The school may permit students to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. For example, for specific medical purposes e.g. for diabetic students who use continuous glucose monitoring systems that connect to a smart device.

Permission will only be granted where there is a documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, students or parents/carers should contact Mrs Chapman, via email jchapman@sandwellacademy.com.

Staff will be made aware, by the Academy nurse, which students this arrangement applies to.

Any students who are given permission must keep their phone in a visible clear pouch (which will be provided by the Academy) and then must adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 2).

5.3 Curriculum Trips

Students may be permitted to use mobile phones on curriculum trips where this supports their learning. For example, students may use their phones to take photographs of artwork, exhibits, or other relevant materials for use in a curriculum project.

Teachers will inform students when mobile phones may be used and for what purpose. Phones must only be used at these designated times and for the educational activity authorised by staff.

Students are not permitted to use mobile phones to access messages, make calls, use social media, or engage in any other non-educational activity during the trip. Any misuse of a mobile phone will be dealt with in line with the school's behaviour policy.

6. Consequences

In the event of a mobile phone being '**used, seen or heard**', the student's phone will be confiscated immediately in line with sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Stage 1: First Offence

- The phone is confiscated by the member of staff and taken to the Welfare Hub.
- The student can collect the phone at the end of the school day from the Restaurant.
- A log will be added onto the student's Class Charts record.
- Parents/carers will receive a notification, by email, of this confiscation event from Class Charts.
- The student is issued a **60-minute conduct review**.
- The student will be given a reminder of the mobile phone policy by their PT.

Stage 2: Second Offence

- The phone is again confiscated and kept in the Welfare Hub Safe.
- This will be logged on a student's Class Charts record.
- Parents/carers will receive a notification, by email, of this confiscation event from Class Charts.
- A parent/carer is contacted, by the student's Personal Tutor, and informed of the repeated breach.

- The student will spend **1 day in the Academy Reflection Hub**.

Stage 3: Third Offence

- Phone will be confiscated again and kept in the Welfare Hub Safe.
- This will be logged on a student's Class Charts record.
- Parents/carers will receive a notification, by email, of this confiscation event from Class Charts.
- The student will receive a **one-day Fixed Term Suspension**.
- Parents/carers will be contacted by their child's Head of Year and asked to attend a meeting at the Academy.
- Student will be required to hand their mobile phone into Welfare Hub daily for the remainder of the half term.

Any further confiscations will lead to actions being taken in line with the Academy Behaviour policy.

Please note that staff have the power to search students' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows staff to search a student's phone if there is a good reason to do so e.g. such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person.

When confiscating phones the Academy will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances
- The student's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). This will include speaking with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy, who will consider if pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care, is appropriate

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment 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:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

7. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers

The Academy's stance on mobile phones is shared in the Academy's family guide which is shared with all parents at the beginning of each Academic year. Parents are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

All visitors to the Academy are provided with a slip (appendix 3) which summarises our stance on mobile phones.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of students, unless it's at a public event, or of their own child

- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, when working with students or while children are present
- Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

Parents/carers **must** use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must **not** try to contact their child directly on their personal mobile during the school day. Should a child use their mobile phone to answer a message/call from their parent/carer this will be treated as a breach of the Academy mobile phone policy. The mobile phone will be confiscated and the appropriate consequence put in place.

8. Loss, theft or damage

Students bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that their phones are placed away securely, in their internal blazer pocket or rucksack when not in use during the school day.

Students must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

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 students are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the Welfare Hub in a locked safe. A member of the Welfare Team will hand phones back to students in the restaurant at the end of each day.

Lost phones will be taken to main/student reception. The school will then attempt to locate/contact the owner.

9. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents/carers and students
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

Appendix 1: Acceptable use agreement

You must comply with the following rules to bring their mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone throughout the school day, including lesson times, in between lessons, at breakfast and/or lunchtime.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other students.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other students.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the school's behaviour policy. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating students or staff via email, text/messaging app and/or social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence. For instance, by 'sexting'.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

STUDENT DETAILS	
Student name:	
Year group/PT:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

Students who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its acceptable use agreement. The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a student does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Student signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Appendix 2: Acceptable use agreement (exceptional circumstances)

STUDENT DETAILS	
Student name:	
Year group/PT:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	
Reason for Exception	

Agreed conditions of use

You must comply with the following rules to bring their mobile phone to school:

1. The mobile phone must be switched off (or on silent) and kept out of sight at all times unless required for the agreed purpose.
2. The phone may only be used for the specific approved reason stated above.
3. You may **not** use your mobile phone throughout the school day, including lesson times, in between lessons, at breakfast and/or lunchtime.
4. You must follow any instructions given by staff regarding phone use immediately.
5. You understand that misuse of the phone may result in:
 - Temporary confiscation
 - Review or withdrawal of this permission
 - Further disciplinary action in line with school policy

Students who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its acceptable use agreement. The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a student does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Student signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Appendix 3: Mobile phone information slip for visitors

The following slip will be printed out and handed to visitors when they arrive at the Academy.

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where students are present. If you must use your phone, please do so in the main reception area.
- Do not take photos or recordings of students (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with students or while children are present

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the Academy website. [Useful Documents & Policies - Sandwell Academy](#)