

## **SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE ACADEMIES TRUST (SLAT)**

# **Mobile Phone Policy**

**Aspire - Challenge - Achieve**

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|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| A Roffe            | J Curson                   | September 2026          |
| <b>Policy Type</b> | <b>Date of Next Review</b> | <b>Approved by</b>      |
| Trust Wide         | September 2027             | Chief Executive Officer |

# Mobile Phone Policy Year 7 -11

## Mobile phone free school, tutor-based phone storage system

### 1. Purpose

This policy sets out the school's approach to mobile phones and similar smart devices during the school day. It supports the Department for Education guidance on mobile phones in schools, which states that schools should be mobile phone free environments by default and should prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day, including lessons, movement time, break and lunch.

- Reduce distraction and improve focus in lessons.
- Support calm, safe and orderly behaviour across the school.
- Reduce safeguarding risks linked to filming, messaging, social media and online bullying.
- Make expectations clear for students, parents and staff.
- Provide a fair and consistent process for storage, collection, sanctions and reasonable exceptions.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all students during the school day and includes mobile phones, smart watches, ear buds, headphones and any other device with similar communication, recording, messaging or internet functionality. The school day includes tutor time, lessons, movement between lessons, break, lunch, assemblies, interventions, internal support areas and any supervised school activity unless a specific exception has been agreed by Headteacher.

### 3. Daily Process

#### Morning routine in tutor time

- Students must switch off their phone immediately on entering the school grounds. Silent mode is not enough.
- Students place their phone in their allocated numbered slot in the tutor group lockbox.
- The tutor completes a quick visual check against the tutor group and follows up any missing phones.
- The tutor locks the phone box and secures the key in line with the school process.
- If a student says they do not have a phone, this is recorded. Repeated concerns will be followed up by the pastoral team.
- Where there is reasonable suspicion that a student has not handed in a phone, staff must use the On Call system to inform the pastoral team. School leaders will follow the school's behaviour, search, screening and confiscation procedures.

#### Storage during the day

- Phones remain in secure tutor storage throughout the school day.
- Students must not access their phone during lessons, movement time, break or lunch.

- Access during the day is only permitted where there is a clear agreed reason, such as a verified medical need.
- Parents who need to contact their child during the school day should contact the school office. Students who need to contact home must do so through the school office or pastoral team.

### **Collection during the school day**

- If a student leaves school during the day for an appointment or authorised reason, pastoral staff or the school office will arrange for the phone to be collected and returned before the student leaves site.
- For fixtures, trips or off-site events, the trip leader will confirm the phone arrangements before departure. The default position remains that phones are not used during the school day unless the trip leader has agreed a specific exception.
- Students attending interventions, assemblies or support areas must follow the same phone process. Phones remain secured and are not taken to these sessions.

### **End of Day Collection**

- Students collect their phones during tutor time.
- Tutors manage the return calmly and in order, checking that students only take their own phone.
- Phones must remain switched off and away until students have left the school site.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Students**

- Hand in phones promptly each morning.
- Must not bring a second phone into school or hand in a broken phone into the lockerbox
- Do not carry, use, see or hear a phone during the school day.
- Follow staff instructions first time.
- Take responsibility for any phone when brought onto the school site. Phones are brought to school at the student's own risk.

### **Tutors**

- Lead the daily collection and return routine.
- Keep the process calm, quick and consistent.
- Record missing phones, concerns or repeated issues.
- Escalate concerns to the pastoral team or senior leaders.
- Lock the box and secure the key
- Must not handle the mobile phone where possible.

## Teaching Staff

- Record mobile use on the system
- Challenge any phone that is seen, heard or used, and activate a pastoral response via On Call.
- Apply the policy consistently and log phone incidents on SMHWK
- Do not use personal phones in student areas.

## Pastoral / SLT

- Monitor patterns, repeated breaches and students who regularly claim not to have a phone.
- Support tutors with storage routines and collection issues.
- Meet parents where concerns are repeated or serious.
- Check that the policy is understood and applied consistently across the school.

## 5. Sanctions

**Key principle: seen, heard or used means confiscated.**

- **Stage 1:** Phone is seen, heard, used or not handed in. The phone is confiscated, the incident is logged, 2-day internal isolation is put in place, parents are informed and phone collected 48 hours after confiscation during re-entry meeting.
- **Stage 2:** Repeated breach leads to escalation of sanctions, and a further parent meeting. This will be supported by a clear warning about further escalation.
- **Stage 3:** Repeated mobile phone issues will result in a mobile phone ban, this will be directed as a sanction and will only be reviewed at the end of the academic year.
- **Stage 4:** Persistent or serious refusal may lead to further sanctions, including removal from lessons, loss of privilege to bring a phone onto site, or suspension where the behaviour warrants it.

## 6. Post 16 Students

Post 16 students are trusted to use their mobile phones sensibly and only within designated Post 16 areas. These areas must be away from Lower School students and clearly communicated to students and staff.

- Post 16 students may use their mobile phones in agreed Post 16 areas only.
- Mobile phones must not be used in corridors, classrooms, dining areas shared with Lower School students, toilets, assemblies or any area where younger students are present.
- The school's not seen, not heard policy is retained for Post 16 students outside the agreed designated areas.
- If a Post 16 phone is seen or heard outside a designated area, staff will challenge this and the usual behaviour and confiscation procedures may be applied.
- Post 16 students must not use phones to record, photograph, message inappropriately, access social media in lessons, or involve Lower School students in phone use.
- Any misuse linked to safeguarding, bullying, filming, sharing images or refusal to follow staff instructions will be treated seriously and managed through the behaviour and safeguarding policies.

## 7. Exceptions and Reasonable Adjustments

- The school recognises that a small number of students may need an agreed exception, for example for medical monitoring, disability related support or a specific safeguarding reason. These exemptions must be verified by a medical professional.
- Any exception must be agreed in advance by the Headteacher and a mobile phone exemption card given to the student.
- Where possible, the school will use alternative arrangements so that students are not reliant on personal mobile phones during the school day.
- Exceptions will be reviewed regularly and should not undermine the school's mobile phone free approach.

## 8. Safeguarding, Searching and Confiscation

The school will manage mobile phone related concerns in line with its behaviour policy, safeguarding policy, online safety policy and the DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. Staff will follow school procedures where there is a concern about refusal, misuse, filming, sharing images, bullying, harassment or any safeguarding matter.

## 9. Practical Arrangements

- Each tutor group has a secure lockbox with numbered slots.
- Spare keys are held securely in reception or another agreed central location.
- Access to master keys is limited to named staff, such as pastoral leaders, heads of school and senior leaders.
- Reception, student support, internal support areas and pastoral offices should have a clear process for collecting or returning phones when needed.

## 10. Communication with Parents and Students

The school will make expectations clear to students, parents and staff, and will remind students regularly through tutor time, assemblies and behaviour reminders. Parents will be asked to support the policy by not contacting students directly during the school day and by using the school office for urgent messages.

## 11. Monitoring and Review

The policy will be monitored by school leaders and pastoral teams. Leaders will review behaviour logs, confiscation data, parent feedback and staff feedback to check that the approach is consistent, fair and effective.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually or sooner if DfE guidance changes.

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we have communicated with you, from September, we will be updating our mobile phone arrangements for students in Years 7 to 11. This follows the latest Department for Education guidance, which says that schools should be mobile phone free environments by default and that mobile phones should not be used during lessons, movement time, breaktime or lunchtime.

We know that many students bring a phone to school because it helps with travelling to and from school. We also understand why parents may want their child to have a phone before and after the school day. However, during the school day phones can distract from learning, add unnecessary pressure for students, and may create safeguarding concerns.

Our aim is very simple: **we want students to focus on learning, enjoy calm social time with friends, and feel safe in school without the pressure of phones, notifications or online conversations during the day.**

#### What students must do each day

Students in Years 7 to 11 who bring a phone to school must switch it off as soon as they enter the school site. Silent mode is not enough. During morning tutor time, students will place their own phone in their allocated numbered slot in the tutor group lockbox. Phones will then be stored securely during the school day and returned at the end of the day during our afternoon registration period.

Students will be unable access their phone during lessons, movement time, break, lunch, assemblies, interventions or support sessions.

If a student needs to leave school during the day for an appointment, staff will arrange for their phone to be returned before they leave site.

#### How parents can contact students during the day

If you need to contact your child during the school day, please contact the school office through our new school app – **Reach More Parents**. If your child needs to contact home, they should speak to the school office or pastoral team. Please do not message or call students directly during the school day, as this makes it harder for us to keep the policy clear and consistent.

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## New sanctions from September

The key message for students is: if a phone is seen, heard, used or not handed in, it will be confiscated.

| Stage for mobile phone confiscation | What will happen?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Stage 1                             | If a phone is seen, heard, used or not handed in, the phone will be confiscated (including second phones). The incident will be logged, parents will be informed, and the student will complete two days in internal isolation. The phone will be collected 48 hours after confiscation during a re-entry meeting. |
| Stage 2                             | A repeated breach will lead to further escalation of sanctions and a further parent meeting. This will include a clear warning about what will happen if there are any further incidents.                                                                                                                          |
| Stage 3                             | Repeated mobile phone issues will result in a mobile phone ban. This will be directed as a sanction and will only be reviewed at the end of the academic year.                                                                                                                                                     |
| Stage 4                             | Persistent or serious refusal may lead to further sanctions, including removal from lessons, loss of the privilege to bring a phone onto site, or suspension where the behaviour warrants it.                                                                                                                      |

### Exceptions

We recognise that a small number of students may need an agreed exception, for example for medical monitoring. Any exception must be agreed in advance by the Headteacher and supported by appropriate medical evidence. Where an exception is agreed, we will make this clear to the student and relevant staff.

### How parents can support this

- Please talk to your child before September so they understand the new expectations.
- Please remind them that phones must be switched off on entry to school and handed in during tutor time.
- Please do not contact students directly during the school day. Use the school office if a message is urgent.
- Please support the school if a sanction is issued. Consistency from home and school will make the policy much easier for students to follow.
- **Please remember that phones are brought onto the school site at the student's own risk.**

We appreciate that this is a change, particularly for students who are used to having their phone with them during the day. However, we believe this approach will help students focus, reduce unnecessary disruption, and support a calmer and safer school environment for everyone.

Thank you in advance for your support. It really does make a difference when school and home give the same clear message.

Yours sincerely,