Brentwood School

Mobile phone policy

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MOBILE PHONE POLICY

This policy is applicable to all pupils including those in the EYFS.

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Statement of intent

The purpose of this Mobile Phone Policy is to work together in partnership with parents to:

- To safeguard pupils by helping to protect them while they are at school from:
    - harmful content online or on social media
    - being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
    - harmful online behaviour, for example, cyber-bullying or making, sending or receiving explicit images
    - risks such as online gambling or exposure to inappropriate advertising (KCSIE, Part 2, September 2026)
- To provide for pupils in the Prep School and in Years 7-11 a phone-free environment on the School site to enable every pupil to focus on their learning;
- To recognise the importance of ensuring pupils are preparing for the adult world by allowing our Sixth Formers access to their phones for school use in designated areas on the School site which are not used by younger pupils;
- To help Sixth Formers develop increased independence and responsibility when using mobile phones and to recognise their position as role models to younger pupils;
- To support the emotional wellbeing and mental health of our pupils by enabling them to be free from the distractions of social media and notifications during the school day;
- To enable every pupil to build healthy, in-person friendships and to develop the resilience to deal with difficulties around friendships when these arise;
- As per the DfE guidance to schools, to ensure that, where access to a mobile phone is permitted in clearly defined circumstances to and from fixtures and on trips, including residential visits, this does not disrupt the pupils' educational experience;
- To help our boarders to limit their screen time outside the school day and engage fully with the opportunities available to them both during and beyond the school day;
- To ensure there are clear systems in place to meet the DfE statutory guidance to schools on mobile phones.

This policy includes any type of mobile phone and extends to the use of wearable devices.

Wearable Devices

The DfE guidance to schools on mobile phones includes other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video).

Whilst the school recognises that wearable technology is increasingly common, we must ensure that privacy and safeguarding standards are maintained.

- **Banned Devices** - pupils are not permitted to bring into school, or use on school-related activities, including fixtures, trips and visits:
    - Any device capable of recording or storing visual information, such as smart glasses, is not permitted;
    - Any wearable device that can connect directly to a mobile network (e.g., cellular-enabled smartwatches) is not allowed.
- **Permitted Devices:**
    - Smartwatches and fitness trackers that require a paired mobile device to connect to the internet are allowed, as the mobile device will be stored in a signal-blocking pouch during the school day;
    - These permitted devices should be used only for timekeeping or health tracking and must not be used for communication, filming or recording.

Medical Conditions and Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments

As stated in the DfE guidance to schools on mobile phones, 'whilst schools are expected to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day to reduce distraction and disruption, they must comply with their other legal duties such as the duty to make reasonable adjustments where necessary.' In accordance with this, the school will work together with the pupil, parents and our Learning Support Department, and will make reasonable adjustments as per the guidance, for example for a disabled pupil where access to a phone is necessary due to the nature of their disability.

Medical conditions

Following the DfE statutory guidance to schools, 'Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school', in some circumstances where agreed with the school, supporting a pupil with their medical condition can involve the use of a mobile phone. Those pupils, for example, with Type 1 diabetes who use continuous glucose monitoring with a sensor linked to their mobile phone to monitor blood sugar levels will be permitted to use their phone for this purpose.

Other exceptional circumstances

Additionally, there may be individual circumstances where a pupil will be permitted to use their phone in school. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis, for example those pupils who are young carers, where other options for contact home or contact from home with the pupil are not possible.

Agreement to the above does not mean that these pupils are exempt from all restrictions on the use of their mobile phone.

The role of staff

All staff

Staff should model appropriate behaviour by not using their mobile phone during lesson times or in the presence of pupils, except for emergencies or operational purposes, for example, for taking a register in a location when it is not possible to access the school's wifi network or for staff who are 'on-call' for school duties.

Senior School

Senior School Tutors will check at morning registration that pupils have locked their phone securely in their pouch.

All staff are expected to enforce the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, both in school and on trips and fixtures.

Prep School

As the Prep School maintains a strict policy where pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones in their possession, all staff are expected to consistently uphold and enforce this rule across all areas of school life. This includes monitoring during the school day, as well as on school transport, during fixtures, and on residential trips. Any devices brought for travel purposes must be handed in to the designated storage area immediately upon arrival.

All staff in the EYFS areas of school and around EYFS children

All staff in the EYFS areas of school and around EYFS children will not use mobile phones while working. They may, however, use phones during break and lunchtimes in an area not used by children. Photos and video images in Early Years are taken on school iPads using Tapestry software. Photos are then deleted and all devices are securely locked via password protection.

The role of parents

Parents play an important role in supporting the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones. They are also encouraged to discuss and reinforce the policy with their children at home, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment. If parents need to contact their child during the school day, they should contact the Headmaster's Reception (Senior School) or the Reception (Prep School) and a message will be passed on as appropriate.
Notices are displayed within the EYFS department advising visitors and parents that mobiles are not to be used within the setting.

Valuables and school-issued pouches

Parents are advised that their child(ren) should not bring valuable items into school, including expensive mobile phones. They are also advised to insure such items, should a parent wish their child(ren) to bring them into school.

If parents of pupils in the Senior School wish their child to bring their phone into school, a locker to store the phone in the locked pouch may be requested by their child via the form tutor.

In cases where the child has lost or damaged their pouch, parents will be charged for a replacement pouch.

The School will take all reasonable care to safeguard confiscated mobile phones. However, the School accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to confiscated devices.

The School cannot accept liability for the loss of, theft of, or damage to a mobile phone or pouch containing a phone.

Boarding

To safeguard and promote the wellbeing of our boarders, there are rules in place around the use of mobile phones for boarders outside the school day; these are outlined in the Boarding Handbook. Our boarding pupils do not bring their phones into school from the Boarding House during the school day.

Visiting pupils

The same restrictions apply to any pupils visiting the school site. Staff from the visiting school will be expected to ensure that their pupils' phones are locked in pouches or handed into them during the entirety of their visit. Staff who make the invitation to the visiting school will let them know of the protocols for phones on site before the visit.

Making a payment or donation

All pupils who wish to make purchases in the Tuck Shop and at school events, including to make charity donations, should use their pupil ID/tuckshop card or bring into school a cash card for this purpose.

Enforcing the policy

Searches

Following the school's Behaviour Policy, searches may be conducted where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil has a phone in school which is not locked securely in a pouch.

Spot-checks may be carried out by members of staff to check that pupils with phones on site have locked them securely in their phone pouch.

Sanctions

The purpose of all school sanctions is to enforce the school rules and to ensure a safe and positive learning environment for all.

To ensure that pupils understand that the importance of fairness, that the rules apply to all and that this policy is in place to help them focus on their learning and promote healthy, in-person interactions, as outlined in the objectives at the start of the policy, the sanctions below will be applied for any breaches:

A 3-hour Headmaster's Detention will be issued for the following (or equivalent) breaches:

- A pupil not locking their phone in a pouch where this is required by this policy;
- A pupil who is seen with a phone (other than a Sixth Former in the designated areas) or banned wearable device ;
- Tampering with, or attempting to tamper with, the phone pouch;
- Unlocking the pouch during the school day;
- Attempting to by-pass the systems in place (including trips and off-site activities), for example by bringing in a magnet which can be used to unlock pouches or a second phone/device.

In addition to the detention, the phone will be confiscated for a school day. Parents will be required to collect their child's phone from the HM's Reception on a school weekday after this period.

If a pattern of a pupil breaching the policy emerges, including in cases where a pupil repeatedly forgets to bring the pouch into school, we will refer to the school's sanction ladder, in addition to continuing to enlist the support of parents.

Appendix One: Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones on site (including Saturday on-site fixtures and other evening and weekend school activities)

Prep School

- Pupils should only bring a phone into school if they need it to and from their journey to school;
- Parents should provide formal confirmation if a child requires a personal device for travel purposes or due to parental separation and access arrangements;
- The school maintains a central register of these approved devices, noting the specific days they will be on-site;
- Pupils should ensure registered devices are handed in to the central storage location (Prep Reception) upon entry to the school site;
- For pupils participating in wraparound care, extracurricular clubs, or school fixtures, devices will remain in the school's possession and will only be returned at the point of final collection;
- After 5pm, they must be collected from the SLT staff on duty;
- In accordance with the school's behavior policy, any pupil found to be in unauthorised possession of a personal device, or who fails to hand in a registered device, will be issued a Deputy Head's detention;
- All staff are expected to monitor and enforce the expectations consistently, including during off-site trips, matches, and transport to and from events.

Senior School

Years 7-11 on the school site (including weekend activities and on-site fixtures)

- Pupils should only bring a phone into school if they need it to and from their journey to school;
- All pupils will be issued with a signal-blocking pouch;
- Pupils must label their pouch clearly with their first and last name;
- All pupils must switch off and lock their phone in their pouch as they **enter the school site;**
- If a pupil forgets their pouch, they must hand in their phone to the Headmaster's Reception (HM Reception) at the start of the day and collect it from there at the end of the day. If they forget their pouch when on site for weekend activities or offsite activities, they must hand in their phone to the member of staff supervising their group;
- Pupils may only unlock the phone pouch when they are leaving the school site, and not returning that day (unless for an authorised reason such as a medical or dental appointment), using one of the school devices at the exits to the site;
- At morning registration, the form tutor will check that phones brought into school are locked in a signal blocking pouch;
- Phones must remain locked in pouches during activities on site before and after school;

- If a pupil needs to contact home or a parent contact their child, this should be done at the HM's Reception;
- Pupils must take responsibility for looking after their phone, locked securely in the pouch, when on site;
- Pupils may request a locker in which to store their phone within the locked pouch from their form tutor. The tutor will record the number and location of the locker. For lockers requiring a key, the Year Team will keep the second key. For those lockers which need a padlock, the pupil will provide this and be responsible for the key(s);
- Pupils in Year 11 will be allowed to bring their phones to scan a personal QR code in school to access the government's Education Record app. to receive their GCSE results..

Sixth Form on the school site (including weekend activities)

- Sixth Formers must switch off and put their phones away when they enter the school site. They are only permitted to use their phones in designated areas (Otway Study Area and Benugo's) for work-related purposes;
- Sixth Formers may use a phone to pay for items purchased in Benugo's;
- Sixth Formers must not use their phone in lessons, form times or around the site (other than in the designated areas).

Appendix Two: Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones for day and residential trips and off-site fixtures

Prep School

- Any devices taken on off-site trips and matches, including on transport to and from events, will remain in a staff member's possession (in a named folder) from departure to dismissal.

Senior School

General Rules for all day and residential trips (all year groups)

- Pupils may not take photos or record pupils/staff without the permission of a member of staff;.
- If phones are allowed on a trip, they are brought at the pupil's own risk; the school is not responsible for loss or damage;
- Parents may contact HM Reception if they need to make contact with trip leaders, should they need to make contact concerning their child. Alternatively, on residential trips an emergency contact number will be provided to parents to avoid direct calls to pupils;
- Phones while travelling: On longer journeys over 2 hours, at the discretion of the Trip Leader, mobile phones may be allowed to be used. Trip leaders will take into account the age of the pupils and length of the journey in deciding whether appropriate phone use is permitted.

Day trips

- When pupils are directly supervised by staff throughout the day trip, phones should remain locked in pouches throughout the day;
- Where there is any element of remote supervision, for example if pupils are permitted to look round a venue in small groups with staff roaming, phones should be accessible to pupils to use in an emergency to contact the Trip Leader's school mobile phone;
- Pouches can be unlocked on the return to school at the exit points, assuming pupils are going straight home after the trip and not returning to lessons or activities in school;
- A member of staff on the trip will take a portable magnet in case pupils need access to their phone in an emergency.

Residential trips

As above.

In addition:

- Staff may permit pupils to have access to their phones for a specified time, usually in the evening;

- For years 11 and below, phones will be removed at bedtime and kept safe until an appropriate time to return;
- For trips involving a flight, a member of staff on the trip will take a portable magnet in their checked-in luggage. If there are times when there is remote supervision in place at the airport, the trip leader will allow the pupils on the trip to have access to their phones.

Off-site fixtures

- Mobile phones must be locked in a pouch on arrival in school for any fixture (both home and away);
- Staff will take a magnet(s) to fixtures in case pupils need access to their phones in an emergency;
- Staff will send a text message via the school system to parents in case of significant delays/changes to the return time;
- Staff supervising the pupils on the way to and from the fixture will check that all phones are locked in pouches;
- Phones, or other devices which can be used to take photos, must not be used in changing rooms (including for playing music), either in school or at an away fixture;
- If team captains are given permission to use a School/Sports department phones for school sanctioned social media marketing, this will be with clear directives from staff.