

Mobile Phone Policy – Year 7 FAQ for Parents

Is my child allowed to bring a smartphone to school in Year 7?

No. Year 7 students are not permitted to bring smartphones or smartwatches to school. If a smartphone is brought in, it will be confiscated until the next half term, when a parent or carer must collect it. A 60-minute Friday detention will also be issued.

What about children in other year groups?

Students in other year groups will still be able to have a smartphone in their possession although we recommend that parents put tight controls and monitoring in place to ensure they are being used appropriately. We remind parents that the minimum age for Whatsapp is 16 and Instagram is 13.

Why has the school introduced this policy?

This policy reflects our commitment to supporting students' wellbeing, learning, and personal development. Limiting smartphone use helps to:

- Reduce distractions
 - Encourage positive social interaction
 - Minimise online safety risks
 - Reduce incidents of bullying that originate outside school but impact relationships within it
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Can my child bring a traditional (non-smart) mobile phone to school?

Yes. A basic phone (calls and texts only) is permitted if needed for travel or safety. It must be switched off and kept in a locker or bag throughout the school day.

Will my child be allowed to bring a smartphone in Year 8?

This policy will be reviewed in the spring term. We will consider:

- The impact on behaviour, wellbeing, and learning
- Feedback from parents and staff
- Students' readiness to use technology responsibly

Any future changes will be communicated well in advance.

What should I do if I have already bought my child a smartphone?

We understand this may be frustrating. For now, we ask that smartphones are kept at home. Supervised use at home can still support communication and digital literacy. Our pastoral team is happy to offer guidance on managing technology use.

How will I contact my child in an emergency?

In urgent situations, please contact the school office. We will ensure messages are passed on promptly. Students can also request staff support to contact home if needed. This is the same system used for all year groups.

What happens if a student brings or uses a smartphone in school?

The phone will be confiscated and stored securely in line with the behaviour policy. A parent or carer will be required to collect it at the end of the half term.

What happens if a student misuses a smartphone outside school in a way that affects others?

Incidents that impact students or the school community will be addressed in line with the behaviour policy. Sanctions will depend on the nature and seriousness of the incident (e.g. bullying or inappropriate communication).

How will this policy support my child's development?

Removing smartphones helps students to:

- Focus more effectively on learning and homework
 - Build positive relationships with peers
 - Reduce exposure to harmful or inappropriate content
 - Develop healthier long-term digital habits
 - Experience lower levels of anxiety
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What about students with medical needs requiring phone-based apps?

We will consider individual exemptions for students with specific medical needs, supported by an Individual Support Plan (ISP). Please contact the Head of Year to discuss.

How can I keep track of my child travelling to and from school?

Most students live locally and travel short distances. For reassurance, alternatives such as GPS trackers or GPS watches (not full Smart watches) can be used.

While tracking can feel reassuring, it is important to balance this with helping children develop independence and confidence. Basic phones or agreed check-in times can provide a practical and balanced approach.

Isn't it better to teach responsible phone use rather than restrict it?

We agree that digital literacy is essential and this is taught through our curriculum. However, we believe that most Year 7 students are not yet ready to manage the demands of social media and app-based communication independently.

How will my child access apps used for learning?

All school-recommended apps have web-based versions that can be accessed via a computer or laptop. We encourage students to complete homework on these devices rather than a smart-phone to support higher-quality learning.

If access to a device is a concern, the school can provide a Chromebook on loan. Please contact us for support with this.

What are other schools doing?

Many local schools are introducing similar approaches. For example, Ruislip High School implemented a comparable policy last year and St Helens is introducing the same policy for next year. Ruislip have reported the following based on this year:

- A significant reduction in social media-related incidents (40% fewer incidents)
 - Improved student engagement and attendance
 - Positive impacts on wellbeing and behaviour
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Would phone pouches or lockers be an alternative?

Students are already required to keep phones out of use during the school day. The main concern is unsupervised use outside school, where many issues originate. This policy is designed to address that wider impact.

Thank you for your support in helping us create a safe, focused, and positive learning environment for all students.

