



# GUISELEY SCHOOL

## MOBILE PHONE POLICY

<b>Approved:</b>	Spring Term 2024
<b>Reviewed:</b>	Autumn Term 2026
<b>Governors' Committee:</b>	Curriculum, Standards & Effectiveness
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Deputy Head - Pastoral

## Introduction

Mobile phones now include many additional functions such as an integrated camera, video recording capability, instant messaging, mobile office applications and mobile access to the internet.

These allow immediate access to email, searching for information on the internet and other functions such as access to social networking sites e.g. Facebook, twitter, snapchat and WhatsApp.

These functions can pose a risk to the maintenance of good discipline, the focus on learning and, crucially, the effective safeguarding of students in schools. This includes the risk of sophisticated bullying via social media platforms. In some cases, mobile phone use within secondary school environments has created serious child protection concerns. Bullying, intimidation and harassment are not new in society; however bullying using a mobile phone represents a significant challenge for schools to manage.

This policy has been developed in consideration of:

- DFE 'Mobile phones in schools' - Guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day (February 2024)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- DFE guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation - Advice for Headteachers, School Staff and Governing Bodies (July 2022)
- Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights
- Education Act 1996

## KS3 and KS4

Mobile phones and electronic devices are banned from use on the school site. Any that have been brought to school must be switched off and out of sight when students are on the school grounds from 8.30am until 3pm or the end of detention / isolation. It is not acceptable for phones merely to be put on silent; they must be switched off. Phones must also not be visible at any point. Any student who fails to turn their mobile phone off while on the school site will have their phone confiscated.

Students should not need to use a mobile phone whilst on school premises. In exceptional circumstances if a student should need to make a phone call within the school grounds they can either:

- ask a member of staff if they can use the school phone network
- report to their pastoral office and ask if they can switch their mobile phone on to make the call.

DFE Guidance is clear that schools should have a 'never used, seen or heard' approach to mobile phones and that the consequence for breaking this expectation is at the discretion of the school but that it should be "sufficient to act as an effective deterrent". For this reason, all confiscations will run until the end of the week as this is reasonable, proportionate and provides an effective deterrent.

## Sixth Form

Sixth form students should only use their mobile phone in the common room area. Sixth Form students may be allowed to use mobile phones or electronic devices in lessons if individual teachers

confirm this. They should not place them on show or remove them from their bag until they have been directed by the member of staff.

Headphones and electronic devices must not be used or be visible around school. Any student walking around school with earphones in will be challenged and the earphones and attached electronic device will be confiscated.

If any element of this policy is not adhered to staff are expected to confiscate the phone. All other phone rules are in line with the general policy.

## Compliance with the Policy

It is required that all students are compliant with the expectations always outlined in this policy. To support this, School Leaders and Pastoral members of staff will conduct occasional spot checks on classes throughout school. All students will be asked to put their phone on the desk in order to confirm it is switched off. Where a phone is not turned off for any reason, then the phone will be confiscated until the end of the week.

There are no exceptions to this policy. If we find out that a student has used their phone in school for any reason, they will be asked to hand their phone over for confiscation until the end of the week.

The DFE issued '**searching, screening and confiscation**' guidance in 2022. This advice underpins the Guiseley School Mobile Phone Policy and supports our behaviour policy. Page 17 of the behaviour policy outlines that there are times we will undertake a search for 'prohibited items' and Appendix 7 states that a mobile phone that is turned on between 0830 and 1500 is considered a prohibited item.

Paragraph 57, Page 17 of the Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance makes it clear that staff can search and confiscate any prohibited item. The behaviour policy makes it clear that a mobile phone is prohibited.

Page 20 of the Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance makes it clear that, consistent with Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, schools have the power to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary measure where it is reasonable to do so. The fact that Guiseley School have identified a switched-on mobile phone to be a prohibited item means that the confiscation is both reasonable and lawful. As such, a member of staff is protected from any liability for loss or, or damage to, any item they have confiscated as long as they have acted lawfully.

## The role of parents

Parents have an important role in supporting the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and should be encouraged to reinforce and discuss the policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment. Where parents need to contact their child during the school day, they should be directed to the school office, where staff should be aware of the school's policy on relaying messages and facilitating contact. Where parents have questions or concerns, staff should address these in a timely manner and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

(extract from DFE 'Mobile phones in schools' - Guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day - February 2024)

Parents / Carers must not arrive directly to school in order to request that a confiscated phone is returned.

## Sanctions

- Any student mobile phone, electronic device, earphones or headphones that are visible inside the school grounds between 8.30am and 3pm will be confiscated, placed in an envelope and securely locked away. If the mobile phone is not seen but it is evident that a student, however discretely, has used a mobile phone, or has not turned the phone off, we will confiscate the phone.
- **Once a phone is confiscated, it will not be returned under any circumstances.** If a child is reliant on their phone for communication with home, or for accessing their train ticket, or online learning, this will only serve to reinforce why they must ensure they are compliant with school expectations.
- If a student has their phone confiscated for the **first time** in the half term, they will be able to collect their mobile phone/electronic device on Friday at 3pm from main school reception.
- 'Headteachers are backed by the DfE to confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate' (extract from DfE 'Mobile phones in schools' - Guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day - February 2024). Confiscation until the end of the week is considered proportionate as the alternative of returning the phone on the same day would be no different to the student having followed the school rules in the first place.
- In the event of a **second incident** in a half term, or in the case of serious misuse, an appointment must be made by a parent/carer to visit a member of the Pastoral Team in order to collect the phone. The phone will not be returned to the student in these cases.
- If there is a **third incident** in a half term, or in the case of serious misuse, the Headteacher may impose either a fixed term or permanent ban on bringing a mobile phone into school.
- **All mobile phones that have been confiscated will be clearly identified and stored in the school safe. A text will be sent home to inform parents/carers that the phone has been confiscated.**
- If a student refuses to comply with any staff request for confiscation, they will be removed from lessons and placed in Isolation for defiance. If they continue to refuse to hand over their phone for any reason, **the circumstances will be reviewed, and the student may be removed from mainstream learning until the period of confiscation is complete. Under these circumstances the student will also be banned from bringing their phone on to the school site.**
- Any student banned from bringing a mobile phone on site will be subjected to occasional or regular searches in line with the Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance (2018). If a banned item is found, it will be confiscated.
- Any student failing to comply with the search may receive a suspension for persistent violation of school rules.
- As with the Guiseley School Behaviour Policy, and other supporting policies, to support the school aim of self-regulation amongst student there will be a 'clean slate' issued each half term, unless a student has been 'banned' from bringing the phone on site, in which case it will be reviewed by the Headteacher in due course.

## Sixth Form Sanctions

If a sixth form student is found to be using a mobile phone / electronic device inappropriately then the phone / electronic device, along with the SIM card, will be confiscated. The phone / electronic device will be returned from reception at 3pm that day.

