

Bedford High School

A Specialist Business and Enterprise College

Work Hard – Be Respectful – Take Responsibility



Mobile Phone Policy

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Document control

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Hard copies of this plan are available from:	School Business Manager

INTRODUCTION

At Bedford High School was the first school in the Local Authority to introduce a 'no phones for students' policy in 2025 and we are very committed to being phone-free. We are also committed to keeping up to date with technology to support learning but only when used in a way that enhances learning and keeps all members of our community safe. Homework will be completed online in some situations where it promotes enhanced achievement.

We will provide opportunities for students and staff to engage with and develop new technologies where relevant.

We encourage and support the respectful use of any technology to enhance learning as long as it follows school protocols and keeps everyone safe.

While the use of mobile phones may be reasonable for homework, they do not have a place in the daily routines of a high school and will not be used in the classroom except in very specific circumstances or by students while on school site.

RATIONALE

Mobile phones are now a feature of modern society and most of our students own one. Increasing sophistication of mobile phone technology presents a number of issues for schools:

- The high value of many phones.
- The integration of cameras into phones leading to potential child protection and data protection issues.
- The potential to use the phone e.g. texting whilst on silent mode.

In his book, *The Anxious Generation*, Jonathan Haight identifies the four foundational harms linked to overuse of devices: social deprivation, sleep deprivation, attention fragmentation and addiction. Studies show that:

- On average we interact with our phones on 85 times a day
- 91% of us could not leave home without our phone
- 46 % could not live without our phone
- Experts recommend no more than 2 hours per day to limit anxiety and depression

SCHOOL POLICY - STUDENTS

Bedford High School recognises that parent/guardians may wish their children to have mobile phones for use in cases of emergency. However, mobiles Bedford is a phone-free school for students, and all students who attend Bedford will be given a Yondr mobile phone pouch.

The pouch is made of tough flexible fabric which will protect the phone in the case of a light drop or knock. It locks using a strong magnet.

Students follow this procedure:

1. On entry to school, students switch off their phones and smart watches.
2. They unlock their pouch at one of the stations near the entry area.
3. They lock their phone in its pouch in front of a supervising member of staff.
4. Phones/smart watches are switched off and locked away in pouches all day. Pouches ensure students do not access their phones or smart watches at any point from arrival on site to departure off site.
5. Students unlock their pouch on exit at the end of their school day.

Students who lose, damage or forget their pouch will hand in their phone each morning and will be permitted to collect it from Attendance each afternoon.

Any phone seen, heard or use suspected will be confiscated and only handed back to a parent or guardian. A sanction will always follow a breach of our phone-free policy.

No phone confiscated will ever be handed back to a student, it will always be handed back to a parent or guardian.

Unlocking stations are placed at the school entrances, exits and in Attendance in case of a student leaving site early. These are only accessible to students if they leave site.

In the case of trips, visits and other off-site activities, their use is not allowed unless specifically permitted by the teacher in charge. The teacher in charge will carry an unlocking station with them while on the trip and unlock phone pouches if and when students need to contact home. Arrangements for what will be acceptable will be clarified by the lead teacher through their correspondence with parent/guardians, eg. on a theatre trip phones will be kept locked away, while on a photography trip phones might be useable.

Any incident involving recording, photographing or videoing will be treated very seriously and will be dealt with promptly. This will usually involve confiscation of the phone/equipment, a period of time in Internal Exclusion for the student or possibly a fixed-term exclusion. It could also result in police involvement.

If parents need to contact their child urgently they should phone the school office and a message will be relayed as quickly as possible. It is inappropriate to be contacting students when they are in lessons and if it happens, parents will be asked to refrain from attempting contact in this way again.

SANCTIONS IN RELATION TO THIS POLICY

Incident	Outcome
Claim no phone, one found on student later on	Day placement in IE, phone confiscated and returned to parent
Refusing to use the pouch	Day 1: Day placement in IE, phone confiscated and returned to parent, Day 2: As above but also 4pm finish. Day 3: As above but also 5pm finish. Possible escalation to suspension
Bringing in a 'burner' phone	Confiscated, returned to parent or guardian, day in IE
Collecting friends' phones	Confiscated, returned to parents or guardians, OSD
Deliberate damage to the case	£20 charge for new pouch, handing in daily until payment received
Deliberate damage to a lock box	Charge for replacement, OSD
Using unauthorised unlocking hardware	Hardware will be destroyed. Day placement in IE
Bring a smartwatch into school	Confiscated, returned to parent
Any other dishonest act with mobile phone or device or breach of this policy	Escalates from IE to possible permanent exclusion. Phone always removed and given back to parents only

The school takes no responsibility for Bluetooth devices, eg AirTags, or any other device with a built-in tracking device and will not take responsibility for these items lost on or off site.

For guidance around searching for a banned (ie subject to contract) mobile phone in a student's possession, see the school's behaviour policy.

We ask that parents support us in this policy so that students are aware that this is a shared responsibility.

School accepts no responsibility for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones or devices brought into school. It is the responsibility of parents and students to ensure mobile phones are properly insured.

SCHOOL POLICY - EMPLOYEES

The school accepts that employees will bring their mobile phones to work. The Governing Body has, therefore, adopted the following policy:

It is the responsibility of all staff, to follow the guidance set out in the Staff Handbook which states that:

- Staff must not take photographs of children on their mobile phone or use the recording equipment on their mobile phones to take photographs or videos of children at any time.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to inform reception of any changes to their mobile telephone contact details.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure personal property is secured or locked away whilst at work. Staff are advised to keep their own mobile phone secured out of site if it must be held in the classroom.
- Staff are requested to use mobile phones in an emergency only. Mobile phones should not be used for personal use or seen to be used during contact time, in a classroom environment or when working with students within formal school time. Phones with a photo/recording facility must not be used in the presence of students. Staff must not use their personal devices for work related calls, 3CX must be installed and used if using a personal device for training and safeguarding purposes and to protect staff.
- Staff are reminded that it is not acceptable to be excessively using electronic devices (for example mobile phones).

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- Staff are reminded that it is not acceptable to be excessively using electronic devices (for example mobile phones) during work time.