

Mobile Phone Policy

Staff member responsible:	H. McCalvey
Role:	Deputy Head
Revised On:	Sept 2026
Ratified by governing board:	
Review Due:	Sept 2027

Statutory Basis

This policy is informed by and should be read alongside:

- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, which requires schools to have regard to Department for Education guidance on mobile phones in schools.
 - Department for Education: *Mobile Phones in Schools* (January 2026).
 - Independent School Standards Guidance (April 2026), paragraphs 3.21-3.23 under Standard 9.
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.
 - Department for Education: *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* guidance.
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1. Purpose and Rationale

Frewen College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, supporting student wellbeing, and creating a calm, purposeful and focused learning environment. The school operates a **mobile phone-free school day** model to reduce distraction, minimise online harms, support healthy social interaction and protect vulnerable learners.

Frewen College operates a **default mobile phone-free environment**. Students do not have access to personal mobile phones or smart devices during lessons, between lessons, tutor time, breaktimes, lunchtime, assemblies or other activities taking place during the school day unless a formally authorised exception applies under Section 11.

This policy supports the school's safeguarding duties and reflects the requirements of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, Department for Education guidance on mobile phones in schools, Independent School Standards Guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

The school recognises that KCSIE identifies mobile phone-free environments as an important measure in reducing online harms, cyberbullying, harmful contact, inappropriate recording, child-on-child abuse and wider safeguarding risks.

This policy is designed to ensure our approach is:

- Safeguarding-led and aligned with current statutory and non-statutory guidance.
 - Clear, consistently applied and understood by students, staff and parents.
 - Proportionate, with reasonable adjustments where appropriate.
 - Integrated into the school's behaviour and safeguarding systems, including boarding practice.
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2. Scope and Definitions

This policy applies to all students (day and boarding) and covers all personal smart devices capable of communication, recording or internet access, including:

- Mobile phones and smartphones.
- Smartwatches and wearable devices with messaging, calls or internet access.
- Tablets and personal internet-enabled devices.
- Earphones or earbuds used in conjunction with a personal device.
- Any device used for photographing, filming or audio recording.

For the purposes of this policy, the term **device** refers to any of the above.

3. Definition of the School Day

For the purposes of this policy, the school day is defined as:

08:30 to 16:00

This includes:

- All lessons;
- Movement between lessons;
- Tutor periods;
- Breaktime;
- Lunchtime;
- Assemblies;
- Supervised study periods;
- Any other educational, pastoral or enrichment activity taking place during the school day.

Students do not have access to personal mobile phones or smart devices throughout this period unless an authorised exception applies under Section 11.

During this period, mobile phones and personal smart devices must not be carried on a student's person, in bags, coats, lockers or any other location accessible to the student.

Boarding arrangements outside this period are set out in Section 6 and the Boarding Handbook.

4. Expectations

Students must:

- Hand in devices on arrival in accordance with Section 5 (day students) or Section 6 (boarding students).
- Keep devices switched off while handed in unless required as part of an authorised adjustment.
- Not use or access devices during the school day.
- Respect the privacy, dignity and safety of others and not film, photograph or record without permission.

Staff must:

- Apply the policy consistently and calmly, using the escalation pathway in Section 8.
 - Model appropriate use of personal devices and avoid unnecessary personal phone use in front of students.
 - Record breaches and refer concerns promptly, including to the DSL where safeguarding thresholds are met.
 - Comply with the requirements of the Staff Code of Conduct regarding the professional use of personal mobile phones and smart devices.
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5. Procedures - Day Students

5.1 Arrival and Hand-In

- Devices must be handed to Form Tutors at morning registration.
- Late arrivals must hand devices to Reception immediately on arrival.
- Devices are stored securely in locked storage facilities.

5.2 During the School Day

- Devices are not permitted on a student's person, including pockets, bags, coats or lockers.
- Smartwatches must be handed in or placed in airplane mode with communication and camera functions disabled where appropriate.
- Earphones and earbuds are not permitted unless explicitly authorised by staff for a planned educational activity using school equipment.

5.3 End of Day

- Devices are returned at the end of the school day via Form Tutors or Reception.
- Where a sanction requires parent collection, this will be communicated clearly and recorded.

5.4 Contacting Home and Emergencies

- Students who need to contact parents or carers during the school day must do so via Reception.
 - Parents or carers should contact the school office for urgent messages during the school day.
 - In emergencies, staff will follow the school's emergency and safeguarding procedures.
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6. Procedures - Boarding Students

6.1 School Day Arrangements

- Devices are handed to House Staff before morning school.
- Devices are stored securely and are not accessible during the school day (08:30 to 16:00).

6.2 Access Outside the School Day

- Permitted access times and curfews are detailed within the Boarding Handbook.
 - House Staff supervise and support safe and respectful use.
 - Any restrictions on overnight use are applied consistently and explained to students and parents.
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7. Secure Storage, Loss, Damage and Data Protection

The school takes reasonable steps to store devices securely during hand-in periods. Devices are stored in locked locations accessible only to authorised staff.

- Students remain responsible for the condition of their device when handed in.
 - The school is not liable for loss or damage arising from failure to follow hand-in procedures or from pre-existing damage.
 - Any reported loss or damage will be investigated and recorded.
 - Staff must not access the contents of a device unless required under Section 10.
 - Personal data and images are handled in accordance with the school's data protection and safeguarding procedures.
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8. Breaches and Behaviour Escalation Pathway

Breaches of this policy will be managed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Level	Examples	Immediate Response	Escalation/Recording
Minor / First-Time Breach	Forgot to hand in device; device found in bag or pocket but not used	Confiscate device; remind student of expectations	Log on MIS; return at end of day; repeat offence moves to next level
Repeated or Deliberate Breach	Device used during school day; repeated offences; unauthorised earbud use	Confiscate device; apply behaviour sanction	Record incident; parent informed; possible parent collection
Serious Breach	Refusal to hand over device; filming another student; use in toilets or changing areas; online bullying	Remove device; involve senior staff	Possible suspension; parental meeting; DSL consideration
Safeguarding Concern	Sexual imagery; exploitative contact; extremist content; criminal activity	Secure device immediately; inform DSL	Safeguarding procedures; external agencies where required

Staff should not place themselves at risk. Where a student refuses to surrender a device, staff should seek support from a senior member of staff and follow the Behaviour Policy.

9. Educational Visits, Exams and Exceptional Circumstances

- Educational visits will be risk assessed and specific arrangements communicated in advance. The default expectation is that devices remain inaccessible unless authorised for a particular educational purpose.
 - Devices must be surrendered during examinations in accordance with examination regulations.
 - Any temporary variation to this policy must be authorised by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or DSL and recorded.
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10. Searching, Screening and Safeguarding

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's **Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy**.

Authorised staff may search a student and their possessions, including a mobile phone or other smart device, where lawful, reasonable and proportionate to do so and in accordance with statutory guidance and school procedures.

Staff may confiscate devices where permitted by law and where necessary to enforce this policy, maintain good order, protect welfare or investigate safeguarding concerns.

The school may screen, search and confiscate items where lawful and proportionate. If there is reasonable suspicion that a device contains evidence of harm, bullying, sexual harassment, child-on-child abuse, criminal activity or other safeguarding concerns, authorised staff may take further action in line with the school's procedures.

- Devices may be confiscated and secured to prevent deletion of evidence.
 - Any search of a device must be authorised and recorded in accordance with school procedures.
 - DSL oversight is required where safeguarding thresholds are met.
 - Where content indicates risk of significant harm or potential criminal offences, police advice may be sought.
 - Staff must not view or forward suspected illegal images.
 - Parents or carers will normally be informed unless doing so would increase risk to a child.
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11. Reasonable Adjustments and Exceptions

The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will consider reasonable adjustments where a device supports a medical need or forms part of an agreed support plan.

Any exception to the school's mobile phone-free environment must be individually assessed, clearly justified, proportionate, documented and subject to regular review. Exceptions will be kept to the minimum necessary to meet the identified need.

Examples may include:

- Medical monitoring, such as diabetes management.
- EHCP-linked needs where a device forms part of a documented strategy.
- Time-limited pastoral support arrangements authorised by the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

All authorised exceptions will be recorded and shared on a need-to-know basis.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

Students

- Comply with hand-in procedures.
- Do not access devices during the school day.
- Respect privacy, dignity and safety.

Form Tutors and House Staff

- Oversee hand-in and secure storage.
- Record breaches.
- Liaise with parents when required.

Teaching Staff

- Enforce the policy consistently.
- Confiscate where appropriate.
- Record and escalate concerns.

Key Stage Leads

- Lead responses to repeated and serious breaches.
- Ensure consistency of practice.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Oversee safeguarding responses.
- Advise on searches, evidence handling and referrals.

Deputy Head (Pastoral)

- Provide strategic oversight of the policy.
 - Monitor implementation.
 - Coordinate training.
 - Report to Governors and Proprietor.
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13. Communication, Training, Monitoring and Review

The school will:

- Communicate this policy to students and parents on entry and annually thereafter.
- Provide clear guidance for parents regarding contact arrangements during the school day.
- Provide staff guidance and training to ensure calm and consistent implementation.
- Use behaviour and safeguarding data to monitor impact.

- Undertake periodic monitoring, audits and reviews of implementation, including storage arrangements, behaviour records, student voice and safeguarding data, to ensure that the mobile phone-free environment is operating consistently in practice.
 - Review this policy annually, or sooner if statutory guidance changes, and report relevant findings to senior leaders and Governors/Proprietor.
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Appendix A - Compliance and Quality Assurance Checklist

- Students and parents receive the policy at induction and annually.
 - Daily hand-in and secure storage arrangements operate effectively.
 - Clear routes exist for parental contact during the school day.
 - Staff record breaches consistently.
 - Safeguarding concerns are recorded appropriately.
 - Escalation thresholds are understood by staff and students.
 - Searches and evidence handling follow school procedures.
 - Reasonable adjustments are documented and regularly reviewed.
 - Boarding arrangements are clearly set out in the Boarding Handbook.
 - Behaviour patterns and repeat breaches are reviewed regularly.
 - The policy is reviewed annually against national guidance.
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Appendix B - Key References (England)

1. Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026.
2. Department for Education, *Mobile Phones in Schools* (January 2026).
3. Independent School Standards Guidance (April 2026), paragraphs 3.21-3.23.
4. Department for Education, *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2026).
5. Department for Education, *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* guidance.
6. Ofsted, *What the Government's Updated Guidance on Mobile Phones Means for School Inspections* (January 2026).