# Mobile Phone & Electronics Policy

The Sittingbourne School

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Approved by:** | Lynn Lawrence | **Date:** October 2026 |
| **Last reviewed on:** | October 2026 | |
| **Next review due by:** | October 2027 | |

1. In line with the advice and guidance issued by the Department for Education, the Department of Health and the United Nations, the school strongly discourages students from bringing mobile phones and electronic devices to school.

   https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools

2. To prevent any disruption to learning and to reduce instances of unkind behaviour via electronic communication, if a student brings a mobile phone or other electronic devices to school, it must be switched off and kept out of sight in their school bag once the student is on the school premises. It cannot be used at any point during the school day including break time and lunchtime. It cannot be used anywhere on the school site including the canteen, playgrounds, fields and toilets. It cannot be used for any reasons, including (but not limited to) contacting home, checking the time or taking photos of learning materials.

3. **Years 7-11:** If a mobile phone or electronic device is seen, heard, used or found to have been used during the school day, staff will respond consistently, promptly and assertively by confiscating it. Once confiscated by a member of staff the phone will be handed to the relevant Head of Year or Pastoral Support Manager. The student will also be issued with an after school detention.

4. **Sixth Form:** Sixth form students only are allowed to bring personal electronic devices into school in order to use them as part of their independent study. They can only be seen and used in the Sixth Form area in C block. This is a privilege and can be revoked for individual students if not used appropriately. If a mobile phone is seen or used outside of the Sixth Form area, it will be confiscated and handed to a member of the Sixth Form Leadership Team. The student will also be issued with an after school detention.

5. Headphones (including earpods and AirPods) and speakers are not permitted in school, including Sixth Formers. If they are seen or heard on the school site, including at break and lunchtime and in social spaces, they will be confiscated by staff and handed to the Head of Year.

6. Searches for and confiscation of mobile phones and electronic devices is done so in accordance with the Department for Education advice on Searching, Screening and Confiscation: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62d1643e8fa8f50bfbefa55c/Searching__Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf

7. As with any item confiscated in school, the mobile phones and electronic devices (including headphones) are only returned at the Headteacher's discretion as stated in Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act (2006). **The school will not accept any responsibility for any loss or damage to mobile phones, headphones or any other electronic devices, even if they have been confiscated.**

8. If this is an isolated incident, the phone or electronic device can only be collected by the student after they have completed their detention at the end of the day. However, if this is a repeated incident, the phone can only be collected by the parent or carer. If they are unable to collect the phone, it will be returned to the student only at the end of term.

9. Parents/carers are politely asked to not call or message their child during the school day. Parents/carers who want to contact their child should call the school. We also ask that parents/carers discourage their child from calling or messaging them during the school day.

**Please note, if a mobile phone is used or is found to have been used during the school day, it will be confiscated by a member of staff and handed to the Head of Year or Pastoral Support Manager. Therefore, accepting a call or reading a message from a parent/carer during the school day may result in the child's phone being confiscated.**

10. Privacy, Filming and Recording

    **Students:** The school strictly prohibits the filming, photographing or audio recording of staff, students or visitors without explicit permission from a member of The Sittingbourne School's Senior Leadership Team. **Sharing, broadcasting or uploading such material to social media or online platforms will result in disciplinary action in line with the school's Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies.**

    **Parents, Carers, and Visitors:** To protect the privacy, confidentiality, and data protection rights of our staff and students, parents, carers, and visitors must not record audio, film, or take photographs anywhere on school premises or during school meetings (including progress evenings, disciplinary hearings, and support reviews).

    **Requests and Reasonable Adjustments**

    - **General Requests:** Recording is only permitted with explicit, advance written approval from the Headteacher.
    - **Reasonable Adjustments (Equality Act 2010):** If you require an audio recording or alternative arrangement as a reasonable adjustment for a disability, please notify the Headteacher in writing via email at tss-headteacher@swale.at before the meeting so we can accommodate your needs promptly.

11. Exam board regulations stipulate that no mobile phones may be taken into an exam hall under any circumstance. Any breaches of this will lead to disqualification from that exam and possibly other exams.

12. Breaches of this policy will be treated as any other breach of school rules. Incidents of cyber bullying or the possession of phones with illegal content will be treated in accordance with the relevant school policies.

13. Serious or repeated breaches of this policy and/or failure to engage with it (including refusing to hand over a phone when asked to by a member of staff) will result in the student losing the privilege of being allowed a phone on the school site.

14. Trips & visits: to ensure that pupils' educational experience on a school trip is not disrupted by the presence of mobile phones the Sittingbourne School will consider prohibiting or restricting their use on a trip by trip basis. Pupils and parents/carers will be informed in advance of all trips whether mobile phones are permitted to be seen or heard on the trip/visit.

15. Whilst the Sittingbourne prohibits the use of mobile phones throughout the school day to reduce distraction and disruption, we comply with our duty to make reasonable adjustments where necessary. There may be exceptional circumstances where we will consider making adaptations to this policy for specific pupils. For example, pupils with diabetes might use continuous glucose monitoring with a sensor linked to their mobile phone to monitor blood sugar levels.

Allowing flexibility for individual pupils does not mean that these pupils are exempt from all restrictions on the use of their mobile phone. Pupils who are allowed to use their mobile phone for a specific purpose at specific times and locations may still face sanctions if found to be using their phone outside of the agreed times and locations or for other reasons.

The only person who may authorise the reasonable adjustments to this policy is the Headteacher following a formal request from a parent/carer.

**Linked policies:**

Anti-bullying Policy

Behaviour Policy

Equality Policy, Statement and Objectives

Medical policy

Online Safety Policy

These can be found at
https://www.thesittingbourneschool.org.uk/page/?title=Policies+and+Guidance&pid=28