



Winchmore
School

learning to realise potential

Mobile Phones Policy



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1. Policy Outline

From the moment students arrive on school grounds in the morning until the time they leave at the end of the day, mobile phones must not be seen, heard, or used, this includes break and lunchtimes.

We understand that many parents and carers wish for their child to carry a phone for safety before and after school, which we fully respect. However, if a phone is used, seen, or heard at any point during the school day, it will be immediately confiscated by a member of staff.

2. Rules for Year 7 Students

Year 7 Students are not allowed to bring a smartphone to school at all. This decision has been made at a borough wide level with the agreement of local primary and secondary schools, Enfield councillors, members of parliament and the local authority. The recommendation is that parents and carers delay allowing their child to have a smartphone until they are 14 or older and delay giving them access to social media until they are 16.

3. Mobile Phone Hand In

Students in Year 7 - 11 can hand their mobile phones into the school office at the beginning of the day and collect them at the end of the day. The phone will be kept safe and allows students to then contact parents/carers on their way to and from school.

Please note: Year 7 students can only hand in a phone which is not a smartphone.

4. Mobile Phone Confiscation

If a student has a phone confiscated ***it will not be returned*** until the following Tuesday after it has been confiscated. This means that a student will be without their mobile phone for at least one weekend.

Parents and carers may not be notified immediately if their child has had their phone confiscated. Once information around the circumstances of the confiscation have been reported and shared, the staff member who confiscated the phone, Head of Year or the Behaviour Team will endeavour to inform parents and carers.

Only the Headteacher can authorise the return of a mobile phone before this time.

Students are expected to hand over their mobile phone immediately without question. If a student refuses to follow the instruction to hand over their phone, the student will be sanctioned in line with our whole school behaviour policy.

If a student has a mobile phone confiscated on more than two occasions in an academic year, the school may impose more serious sanctions or hold the phone for a longer period of time which will be determined by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

5. Contacting Parents/Carers

To maintain a focused learning environment, students must not use mobile phones to contact parents/carers from the time students arrive in school in the morning, until they leave the school site at the end of the day, this includes the school playgrounds. In an emergency, the school will allow students to use the phone in the Year office or the school office phone to contact parents/carers.

To minimise disruption to student's learning, we request that parents/carers should not contact their child on their mobile phones during school hours (8.30am-3.00pm). Urgent messages can be relayed to students via the school office by calling 0208 360 7773 or by emailing office@winchmore.enfield.sch.uk.

6. Losses and Damages

The school accepts no liability for loss of, or damage to a mobile phone whilst on school premises or at any activity/trips organised by the school. The phone is, at all times, the responsibility of the student.

On residential visits and school trips, it is the discretion for the trip leader to allow students to take their phones. In most cases students will be told not to take a phone with them due to safeguarding reasons set out by the Department of Education. If phones are found on trips and students have been advised not to have them, they will be confiscated.

7. Inappropriate Use of a Mobile Phone

Whilst students are in school uniform (for example, on the way to and from school) mobile phones must not be used for taking photographs/videos without the permission of the subject. The school considers students to be in school uniform even if ties/blazers etc. are removed or if the uniform is covered with a coat, jumper or other clothing.

Students who bring the name of the school into disrepute by using their mobile phone inappropriately will again be sanctioned in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.

8. Online Abuse

Online abuse of any description is simply not tolerated and will always be treated seriously, investigated and sanctions applied when necessary in line with our behaviour policy.

Online abuse refers to using technology like the internet and mobile phones to monitor, harass, threaten, control, or exploit another person, encompassing behaviours such as cyberbullying, stalking, grooming and publishing private images without consent. It can occur on social media, messaging apps or within online games and can be a criminal offense, requiring police intervention.

When the police are notified of an incident of this nature, Winchmore School will be guided by the police which could mean the phone is taken to assist a police investigation.

9. 6th Form Students

When Sixth Form Students enter the school grounds in the morning, until the time they leave at the end of the day, mobile phones must not be seen, heard, or used, anywhere around school other than in the sixth form allocated areas.

These areas are the sixth form centre, sixth form cafe, sixth form study area or in a classroom as directed by their teacher.

Sixth form students who are seen with a phone, or use their phone, anywhere outside of the allocated areas will have their phone confiscated.

10. Smart Watches

Smart watches are subject to the same rules as mobile phones.

Whole-Borough Mobile Phone Ban in Enfield: Supporting Focus and Wellbeing

Our mobile phone policy supports the **mobile phone ban which is part of a whole-borough policy across Enfield schools**, introduced to support student focus, minimise distractions, and improve wellbeing. Research and local feedback have highlighted the positive impact of reducing phone use in school, including:

- Improved attention and engagement in lessons.
- Reduced incidents of online bullying and misuse of social media during the school day.
- Increased social interaction between students face-to-face.
- A calmer and more purposeful school environment.

Below are some links to research and further information about mobile phone use in young people and schools, should you wish to read more.

[Screen time: impacts on education and wellbeing – Report Summary](#)

[Mobile phones in schools - February 2024](#)

[To ban or not to ban? | UNESCO](#)