Mobile Phone Strategy

2026-27

Present, respectful, engaged

PURPOSE	This strategy sets out how mobile phones will be managed to protect learning time, support wellbeing and face-to-face interaction, and promote positive relationships across Whitburn Academy.

Expectation	What this means
In lessons	Phones are switched to silent or turned off, placed in a bag or designated classroom phone holder, and kept out of pockets.
During break and lunch	Phone use is permitted, subject to the expectations around safety, privacy, respectful behaviour and the orderly running of the school.
During movement	Phones are not used between classes or while queuing for the toilets so that everyone can move quickly and safely.
Urgent contact	Parents and carers should contact the school office. If a pupil needs to contact home, this should ordinarily be facilitated through Pupil Support or the school office.

Rationale

Our Mobile Phone Strategy aims to:

- support wellbeing and face-to-face interaction;
- ensure a consistent approach across the school;
- maximise learning time;
- reduce distractions within classrooms;
- promote positive relationships; and
- take account of relevant national guidance.

Expectations

On arrival in class

At the beginning of every lesson, all pupils will:

1. ensure their mobile phone is switched to silent mode or turned off;
2. put their phone in their bag or place it in the designated classroom phone holder;
3. not keep their phone in their pocket; and
4. retrieve their phone only when instructed by the class teacher at the end of the lesson.

This routine will form part of the standard classroom expectations within every learning environment.

Staff responsibilities

All staff will:

- not use their mobile phone during the lesson;
- greet pupils at the classroom door;
- direct pupils to place phones into the classroom holder as part of the entry routine if required;
- reinforce expectations positively and consistently;
- record any instances of non-compliance using agreed school procedures; and
- return phones to pupils at the end of the lesson.

Staff should avoid negotiating expectations with individual pupils unless there is an agreed exception in place through Heads of House or the Senior Leadership Team.

Exceptional circumstances

The school recognises that some pupils may require access to a mobile device due to:

- medical reasons;
- additional support needs;
- agreed safeguarding arrangements.

These exceptions must be authorised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and communicated clearly to relevant staff.

Escalating consequences

Failure to comply with the Mobile Phone Strategy will result in the following graduated response:

Incidence	Response
1st occasion	Reminder of expectation and opportunity to comply.
2nd occasion	Logged by the class teacher. The phone will be collected by the Duty Officer and stored until the end of the school day. Parent or carer informed.
3rd occasion	Parental meeting with the House Team. An individual support plan will be established.

Refusal to hand over a phone

A refusal to place a phone in a bag or in the classroom holder when directed by a member of staff constitutes a refusal to follow a reasonable instruction.

In such circumstances:

1. the pupil should be given a final instruction and warned that the Duty Officer will be called;
2. if refusal continues, the pupil should be referred immediately to the Duty Officer; and
3. the incident should be recorded in line with school procedures.

RESTORATIVE FOCUS	The focus should remain on restoring expectations and supporting positive choices rather than confrontation.

Social times

Mobile phone use during break and lunchtime will be permitted unless:

- it contributes to unsafe behaviour;
- it is used to record others without consent;
- it is linked to bullying or harassment; or
- it disrupts the orderly running of the school.

In these circumstances, staff may direct pupils to put their phones away and apply appropriate sanctions.

Movement between classes and to toilets

Mobile phones are not to be used between classes or while queuing for the toilet. This is to ensure everyone moves quickly to the next class.

Communication with home

Parents and carers who need to contact their child during the school day should do so through the school office.

Similarly, if a pupil needs to contact home, this should ordinarily be facilitated through the Pupil Support Team or school office.

Phone-access times

These are the times when pupils will have access to devices.

Access window	Details
Monday-Thursday	Break 10:20–10:35 Lunch 13:05–13:45
Friday	Break 10:20–10:35 School finishes 12:15
When classes are on	Pupils will not be checking their phones.

Implementation

November 2026

- information shared with staff during Faculty Collaboration Meeting time;
- assemblies delivered to all year groups;
- letter issued to parents and carers; and
- classroom phone holders installed.

January 2027

- full implementation of the policy and sanctions;
- monitoring by Principal Teachers and the Senior Leadership Team; and
- regular review of consistency across departments.

Monitoring and evaluation

The impact of the strategy will be reviewed through:

- pupil voice;
- staff feedback;
- parental feedback;
- analysis of behaviour referrals
- learning walks and classroom observations.

Success indicators will include:

- reduced low-level disruption;
- improved engagement in learning;
- increased consistency of classroom routines
- positive perceptions from staff and pupils regarding the learning environment.