



Mobile and Smartphone Policy

Contents

.....	1
Mobile and Smartphone Policy.....	1
Summary of changes	1
Introduction	1
Procedures for mobile and smart phone use on school site and in lessons	2
Consequences for mobile and smartphone use on school site and in lessons	2

Summary of changes

1. Reference to new guidance from the DfE
2. Information about adjustments to the protocol of storing mobile phones into students' bags
3. Updated consequences for mobile phone infractions

Introduction

Fitzharrys has a simple rule with regards to mobile phones: 'See it, hear it, lose it'.

This is well understood and followed. The school aims to create culture where students are interacting directly with their peers and not focussed on their screens. We are aware of the impact of mobile phones on mental health and wellbeing, and our policy supports this reduction of the impact of mobile devices. We are also aware that not all students own a mobile or smart phone, so expecting students to use these as a learning tool is not reasonable. We also continue to educate our students about the benefits and risks of mobile devices through our PSHE schemes of learning.

In January 2026, the DfE gave new guidance to schools stipulating that "all schools should be mobile phone-free environments" and schools should "implement a policy whereby pupils do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the school day including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime".

In May 2026, the DfE updated this new guidance to legislate the banning of mobile phones during the school day for students and staff (for personal use). There are exceptions to this legislation i.e. using a smart phone to monitor a medical device. The legislation came into action on 29th June 2026, with schools legally having to implement the ban from 1st September 2026 [Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK](#).

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Date Approved/Reviewed	September 2026	Review Cycle	Annually
Version	1	Page	Page 1 of 3

Procedures for students bringing mobile and smart phones to school

Follow the new legislation from the DfE, we have adapted our morning routines to ensure that mobile phones are not accessible during the school day. When students arrive at school, their mobile phone must be powered off and placed in their bag. This is the same process for smartwatches and pods. In morning tutor time, the following routine then happens:

- Form tutors ask students to place their bags on the desk
- Students are requested to remove their mobile phone and show their form tutor that it is powered off
- Students are then instructed to place their mobile phone back into their bag where it is to remain until 15:15

Consequences for mobile and smartphone use on school site and in lessons

The main consequence for using any devices outlined in this policy is confiscation. Any staff member has the right to request a mobile device (phone, pods or other i.e. games console) and the student is expected to hand this in without complaint or argument. Staff members can also request for devices if they are seen in pockets as this is against our policy of it being in their bag, or if pods are being worn, the students phone will also be confiscated. In light of the new legislation, Fitzharrys has enacted a new tiered confiscation policy, leading to escalated consequences for repeated refusal to comply with our mobile phone policy:

1. Confiscation 1 – the mobile phone is kept at Reception until the end of the school day for the student to collect, and an SLT detention is set by the students HoY, pastoral team or member of SLT. Parents/carers are then sent the Confiscation 1 letter.
2. Confiscation 2 – a phone call is made to the parent/carer to let them know their child's mobile phone has been confiscated and that they will need to collect the mobile phone from Reception. The student is set an internal suspension (isolation) from Periods 3 – 5 and a B3 after school detention for the following day. Parents/carers are then sent the Confiscation 2 letter.
3. Confiscation 3 – a phone call is made to the parent/carer to let them know their child's mobile phone has been confiscated and that they will need to collect the mobile phone from Reception. The student is set an internal suspension (isolation) from Periods 1 – 5 and a B3 after school detention for the following day. Parents/carers are then sent the Confiscation 3 letter.
4. Confiscation 4 – a phone call is made to the parent/carer to let them know their child's mobile phone has been confiscated and that they will need to collect the mobile phone from Reception. The student is then externally suspended from school for the following day. Parents/carers are then sent the Confiscation 4 letter. The student will need to hand their mobile phone for the rest of their time at Fitzharrys School.

Students remain at their level of confiscation for the duration of their time at Fitzharrys, and it does not restart at the end of term or beginning of a new school year.

Other consequences related to mobile and smartphone use in school:

- If a student refuses to hand over their phone, then a senior member of staff (normally on call) will be contacted to remove the phone.
- If a student refuses to hand over their phone to the senior member of staff, the student is then at risk of escalated consequences i.e. internal suspension, as they are not following staff instructions and/or causing wider disruption to learning. In this instance, parents or carers will be contacted to let them know about the incident and consequence.
 - In both of the above instances, it will be recorded as a confiscation, even if the student refuses to hand their mobile phone in to any member of staff.
- If a student is misusing their phone, then the school may consider escalated consequences such as internal or external suspension from school. Examples of misusing a phone can include, but is not limited to:

Author	JDC	Approved by	FZ LGB
Date Approved/Reviewed	September 2026	Review Cycle	Annually
Version	1	Page	Page 2 of 3

- recording members of the school community
- sharing images or videos of the school community
- using social media to bully (cyber bullying) other students
- the use of generative AI
- bringing the school into disrepute.
- As part of the Behaviour Policy, staff can search a student and/or their bag for a mobile phone, should staff suspect that the student has been misusing their mobile phone, claim not to have one despite it being seen by staff or their being concerns about students having more than one mobile phone on them after already having one confiscated, or handing a mobile phone in as part of a support plan.

Further support for mobile and smartphone use amongst children and young people

The school will endeavour to support young people who struggle to stay off their screens or who experience poor behaviour from others through their phone. Regular communication home about the impact of extended screentime comes from the school, as well as the dangers of social media, and age – appropriate material being viewed by school aged children. The government introduced the Online Safety Act in 2023, which details the laws that protect children online - [Online Safety Act: explainer - GOV.UK](#).

If students are the victim of poor behaviour through their mobile phone, then the school encourages students, parents and/or carers to let members of the pastoral team know and we can offer advice on potential consequences which the school can employ, advice on the support that can be provided, or whether contacting external agencies is appropriate. We will also support students who may need to use their phone for specific circumstances, such as medical checks, on an individual basis in agreement with the Assistant Head (Behaviour and Attendance).

Author	JDC	Approved by	FZ LGB
Date Approved/Reviewed	September 2026	Review Cycle	Annually
Version	I	Page	Page 3 of 3