

# Mobile Phone and Devices Protocol

## Rationale

At The Heights Academy, safeguarding comes first. While mobile phones and devices may help some pupils regulate during their journey to school, on-site they often raise anxiety, cause sensory overload, distract from relationships and pose safeguarding risks.

Our aims:

- Keep pupils, staff and visitors safe
- Ensure a calm, predictable start to the day
- Promote trusted-adult relationships
- Encourage alternative regulation tools
- Protect privacy and reduce digital misuse

## Summary of Expectations

From April 2026, 'All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only.

The guidance states:

'Whilst schools are expected to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day to reduce distraction and disruption, they must comply with their other legal duties such as the duty to make reasonable adjustments where necessary. There may be other exceptional circumstances where schools should consider making adaptations to their policy for specific pupils.'

Schools are expected to enact the policy from April 2026 and Ofsted are expected to inspect for it from this time.

## Daily Procedure

- On arrival, pupils switch off phones
- Pupils will put their own device in an individual labelled pouch
- Pupils will place their pouch into a lockable storage box – each form will have their own box
- Lockable storage boxes will then be kept in a secure location throughout the day
- Phones will be returned at the end of the day or scheduled departure, as pupils leave the school building.

Pupils will:

- Be taught why this is important
- Practice the routine
- Be supported with prompts and reassurance

## Reasonable Adjustments

Some students might find this expectation challenging, particularly as this is a new expectation. In those circumstances, an individual meeting will be held with the pupil (if they wish) and their parents to agree to an individual plan. The plan will be a bespoke approach for that pupil and might include the provision of additional resources. It could also include the agreement that a pupil may occasionally need access to mobile devices in a private area of school.

This information will be set out in a contract document between the school and the pupil. Deviance from the plan will result in a reference to the behaviour policy and could result in a 2-day suspension. The contract will be reviewed regularly or as required by school leadership and parents and reviewed regularly.

If any pupil is anxious or dysregulated and is requesting to speak with family we will always facilitate this using the school landline system. For anyone who needs to text using their mobile this will be included in their personal mobile contract.

## Family Partnership

We value parent and carer input as they are the experts on their child. We also value their support in reinforcing the importance of safeguarding messages at home with their child regarding mobile devices. Use of age-appropriate online resources and respectful use of social media are messages that need to be consistently given. In school safe online behaviours are taught as part of the ICT and PSRE curriculums.

## Medical Needs

In some rare circumstances students need their mobile phone to support their health. For example where the phone is monitoring blood sugars for a diabetic and communicating readings to family and or medical professionals. In such cases a mobile phone contract will be issued outlining the expectation that phones are kept out of sight and not used for any other functions.

## Responsibility

The Academy is not liable for lost, damaged or stolen devices.

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## Agreement

*I have read and agree to follow the Mobile Devices Protocol.*

Pupil's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_