



Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School

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Success with Care

Headteacher: Mr M. J. Cooper

Ref: TDA/SDU

8th July 2026

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Mobile Phone Policy (from September 2026)

As we enter the final few weeks of term, we want to thank you for your continued partnership in making our school a focussed, positive environment.

We are writing to share an update regarding mobile devices. As you are aware we have had a strict mobile phone policy for over 10 years and because our students are well practised, very little will change in their day-to-day routine.

We took the decision to not allow students to use their mobile phones to facilitate:

- Improved **focus and academic engagement**
- Stronger **face-to-face social interaction**
- Reduced exposure to **online harm and misuse**
- Better **mental health and wellbeing**

At a national level, the government has updated its education framework, placing mobile phone-free environments on a statutory footing across England.

[Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/mobile-phones-in-schools)

All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only. This includes any smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones e.g. smartwatches.

What are the options?

The DfE have suggested a few options including schools paying for lockable magnetic phone pouches, which students present and have checked as they enter site and then have unlocked by staff as they leave site. This approach would be at a cost of approximately £45,000 to the school and would not be funded by the DfE. It would also involve 1800+ students all entering and leaving school through one gate, which itself would cause challenges.

Other options suggested included banning mobile phones from being on school site at all, which would then impact on journeys to and from school and we know that would cause concerns of a safeguarding nature.

What have we decided to do?

With your support we can manage the new expectations by simply tightening up the existing policy and thereby avoiding the issues above.

From September, students may still bring a mobile phone to school at their own risk. However, if they do:

- It must be **switched off before entering the school site**
- It must be kept **out of sight at all times**
- It must be stored **securely in their school bag** (not in blazer pockets or on their person)

Other devices such as Smartwatches that can connect to the internet or communicate are included in the restrictions, as they mimic the functionality of mobile phones, so must also not be accessible in school.

A student found to be carrying their mobile phone on their person rather than in their bag, or having their device switched on will be in breach of the policy.

During Transition Week we will expect students to follow the expectations, and give reminders rather than sanctions, so that students can adopt the good habits needed for success in September. We will communicate home when this has happened to enable parents/carers to discuss the issue with their child.

From September the sanctions for breaching the policy will be enforced, as laid out in the table below.

What happens if the policy is not followed?

From September, where students do not meet expectations, devices will be confiscated and serious misuse (such as filming others, sharing content, or cyberbullying) will be treated as a safeguarding matter and may involve external agencies and the withdrawal of the right to bring a mobile phone to school.

Offence	Response
First contravention	Confiscation until end of day; parent/carer collection
Second contravention	Confiscation for 24 hours in school safe; parent/carer collection
Third contravention	Confiscation for 1 week; parent/carer collection
Repeated contraventions	Confiscation for prolonged period; parent/carer meeting
Serious misuse	Confiscation, behaviour sanction, and safeguarding action; parent/carer meeting

Safeguarding and Support

In accordance with the Equality Act and national guidance we recognise that in some cases students may require access to a device. Exemptions will be made where appropriate e.g. for medical issues such as continuous blood glucose monitoring for diabetes.

In these cases:

- Use must be agreed in advance
- A risk assessment will be put in place
- Use will be proportionate, supervised, and clearly defined

If you believe your child requires an exemption, please contact the Headteacher at

headteacher@dhfs.uk

Sixth Form

Sixth Form students may use mobile phones within the Sixth Form Hub for educational purposes, provided their use is responsible and does not impact the wider school environment. When Sixth Form students are anywhere else on school site their phones must be switched off and in their school bag.

How can parents/carers support this policy?

Your support is vital in making this policy successful. We ask that you:

- Reinforce these expectations with your child and explain why this is a positive step and the benefits to them of being away from mobile phones
- Avoid contacting them directly during the school day
- Contact the school via reception if you need to get a message to your child
- Do not use your own mobile phone whilst on school site e.g. in reception

Further information

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to maintain a safe, focused and positive environment for all students. Please do not hesitate to make contact if you have further questions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Davies'.

Mrs T Davies

Deputy Headteacher

Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What if the policy change is not successful enough and students still try to have access to their mobile phones?** We will have to choose another solution e.g. pay £45,000 for magnetic lockable pouches that would be checked by staff as students enter school, then unlocked by staff as they leave school. This would mean all students using one gate to get in and out of school, which would take a considerable amount of time and would take funds from school e.g. less money for computers and sports equipment.
- 2. What if an exemption is needed from the mobile phone policy e.g. for medical needs such as diabetes monitoring?** Please email the Headteacher (headteacher@dhfs.uk) who will consider all reasonable requests.
- 3. Can students wear a smartwatch?** No, smartwatches are not allowed in school. They mimic functionality of mobile phones which undermines the aim of the mobile free environment. They are also banned by examination bodies.
- 4. What if the confiscation occurs on a Friday and it is the second time the policy has been contravened?** The mobile phone will be placed in the safe until the next working day which will be the Monday.
- 5. If a mobile phone has been confiscated, and a parent/carer comes and collects it straight away, can the student get it back straight away?** Parents/Carers are welcome to come and collect devices at a time convenient to them, but the student cannot have the phone for the rest of the school day.
- 6. What right does the school have to search for and/or confiscate a mobile phone that does not belong to them?** The DfE give schools the right to search for and confiscate any item that is prohibited in the school rules. [Searching, screening and confiscation in schools - GOV.UK](#)
- 7. How can students contact home during the school day?** Students can go to Student Services or their House Support Manager and ask them to ring their parent/carer.
- 8. How do students get a message from parents/carers during the school day?** Parents/Carers can ring reception, and a member of reception staff will get the message to the student.
- 9. If a phone accidentally rings in a bag – what happens?** The phone should be turned off in the student's bag, so if a phone is heard it will be confiscated.
- 10. Why are Sixth Form students allowed to use mobile phones in the Hub?** The government have said Sixth Form students should be permitted access to their mobile phone at certain limited times and locations, reflecting this period of education as one of increased independence and responsibility, without compromising the school's policy on the use of mobile phones for other students.
- 11. What if a student (Y7-11) needs to use a device for educational purposes such as filming for coursework etc.?** Staff will not ask students to use mobile phones whilst on site and will provide digital devices if the course requires them.
- 12. What does the phrase 'educational purposes' include with respect to Sixth Form students?** Sixth Form students may use their mobile phone in the Hub for educational purposes such as university/apprenticeship applications, listening to podcasts, checking emails and Class Charts but **not** for social media, gaming, watching films or videos.