

Mobile Phone & Devices Policy – Whole School

11g(i)

Responsible for Initiating Review of Policy	Assistant Head Academic and DSL
Committee to Review	Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
Last Review Date	September 2025
Review Period	Annually
Approved by Board of Governors	Welfare and Boarding
Effective Date of Policy	September 2024
Next Review Date	July 2026
Related Policies	Acceptable User Policy AI Policy Anti-bullying policy Behaviour policy Safeguarding policy Relationships and sex education policy Rewards and Sanctions policy Student code of conduct Online safety policy Low Level Concerns policy Data protection policy Complaints procedure Searching Screening & confiscation policy

Rationale

The digital landscape is ever-changing, with technology advancing rapidly. Enhancing digital literacy is not a one-time task but a lifelong commitment to learning and adapting. This ongoing learning process empowers individuals to navigate new technologies with confidence and adaptability.

Building digital literacy is closely linked to fostering responsible digital citizenship. It is essential for individuals to grasp the ethical implications of their online actions, such as their behaviour, data privacy, and the impact of spreading misinformation. Responsible digital citizenship encourages accountability and helps create a positive online environment that honours diverse opinions and values.

The school wants to work with parents to help young people develop a responsible approach to technology use and develop digital literacy as a life-long skill. It is our intention that mobile phones being “away for the day” during the school day will support students developing good mental health and mindfulness, promote self-regulation and civility and support real, human interactions that are central to our school community.

This policy aims to:

- promote a safe and responsible environment where students learn to become responsible digital citizens.
- set clear guidelines to enable everyone to develop healthy habits, balance, positive digital choices and digital wellbeing.
- support the school’s other policies, especially those related to safeguarding and behaviour.

Safeguarding Responsibilities

The school has a duty of care to ensure everyone feels safe and supported. Certain types of online conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate. Such conduct includes but is not limited to:

- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos*
- upskirting
- threats of violence abusive calls, texts, emails, social media posts directed at someone based on ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation etc.

**Under the Protection of Children Act 1978 and the Criminal Justice Act 1988, taking, possessing, or sharing sexualised images of any person under the age of 18 is a criminal offence. This is true despite the age of consent for having sex being just 16, and unfortunately the fact that the young person either consented to the pictures being taken, or took the pictures themselves, is not a defense. Most young people sharing images of themselves or others are ignorant to the fact that they are breaking the law, and the implications this could have for them.*

It is our aspiration that the “*Away for the Day*”, Never Used, Seen or Heard, policy to mobile phones in school will also support students in making positive digital choices in all areas of their lives. However, should any young person be a victim of a digital incident or a victim of online bullying or harassment the school will ensure they are supported, in line with the safeguarding policy and duty of care.

Roles and Responsibility

- All staff (including teachers, peripatetic teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for implementing this policy.
- Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, are asked to alert a member of staff if they witness or are aware of a breach of this policy.

Use of Digital technology including mobile phones (and linked devices such as smart watches)

- Should a Senior School student bring a mobile phone to school, they must follow the “*Away for the Day*” policy. Mobile phones must be switched off before entering the school gate and should be placed in the student’s locker for the day, remain off until exiting the school gate.
- Senior School students are required to check their school email account before and after School.
- Students who require the use of their phones for medical reasons, i.e. diabetic blood level management, may switch their phones on to do so.
- Sixth form students are encouraged to follow the “*Away for the Day*” policy but may, if necessary, use their mobile phone in the Cedar Lodge only.
- Boarders. We recognise there may be a geographical time difference between school and home that means boarding students may need to contact home during the school day. Calls may only be taken or made in the boarding house with the prior agreement of the boarding team.
- Prep School students who use public transport or school minibuses may carry a mobile phone, but this must not be a smart phone. They must be switched off at the school gate and may only be switched on again at the end of the day when outside

of the school gate. Parents are asked to inform the Prep School that their daughter has a phone for travel purposes. Students must hand their mobile phone in to their form teacher on arrival in school.

- If a student chooses not to follow our “Away for the Day” policy, they should expect to receive a sanction which in the first instance will be the confiscation of their phone and an after-school detention.
- Under the direction of the Head, staff can also confiscate a student’s phone if they have reason to believe it contains pornographic images*, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury. All searches must be authorised by the Head or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as delegated power. Staff have the power to search a pupil’s phone as sent out in the Department of Education’s (DfE’s) guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

**If during an investigation, staff believe that an indecent image of a child or adult is on the phone or device they should not view the image. The DSL should be informed, and the phone or device confiscated and secured by the DSL, the police will then be contacted to continue the investigation. The return of the phone or device will only be sanctioned after the police investigation.*

Parental Responsibilities

It is our desire to collaborate with you to cultivate an aspirational school environment where students are fully present, where building relationships is held in high regard and where students actively choose to avoid social media distractions. We wish Burgess Hill Girls to be a place where students make positive digital choices that enhance their learning opportunities and outcomes.

We respectfully ask that you:

- adhere to guidance relating to age and the use of social media apps
- implement a no phones or internet enabled devices, in the bedroom overnight
- apply filters to any devices your child has access to
- apply clear boundaries relating to technology downtime.

Parents wishing to contact their child during the school day must do so via the school reception landline. 01444 241050.

Please use the additional information below to assist you in safeguarding and helping your child make positive digital choices outside of the school environment.

- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Government Guidance www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools
- CBBC: [Own it](#)