SCHS Mobile Phone and Devices Policy (Pupils)

September 2026

Person(s) responsible for this policy		**Assistant Head (Pastoral)**	
Last review by	**M Furborough**	**Review date**	**September 2026**
Date of next review		**September 2027**	

1. Aims

This policy is for the protection and educational welfare of all children in the Senior school.

Streatham & Clapham High School remains committed to staff and students embracing the use of technology to support teaching and learning across the school. It is important to ensure that appropriate use supports the core values of the school and does not undermine the importance of developing strong interpersonal communication. These guidelines, along with the ICT Acceptable Use Agreement and the GDST Online Safety Policy, aim to promote **safe, respectful** and **responsible** use of mobile devices to the benefit of the whole SCHS community. These guidelines are in line with the DfE 'Mobile Phones in Schools' guidance (published 19 January 2026).

2. Definitions

Devices - Laptops and tablets provided to staff and students for their work and learning, and laptops brought to school under our Bring Your Own Device programme (BYOD).

Phones - mobile phones of any kind, but particularly smartphones or tablet devices used for recreation and out of school activities.

3. BYOD Devices

For students in Year 7 (September 2026 start) we have made the decision to move away from a "bring your own device" model. From September 2026, all pupils in Year 7 will be issued with a school-owned device, which will be lent to families for five years. All devices will have an in-class monitoring tool installed which allows teachers to view pupils' screens in real time. Internet filtering will apply both on-site, and off-site via Lightspeed Web Filtering. The software is installed directly on the device. Year 7 parents will receive a Lightspeed report showing their child's device use during the school day. FAQs can be found here.

Students in Years 8-13 are required to bring a device into school that will be able to access the cloud computing platforms used in the GDST as a minimum. Pupils must be aware that their devices will be

treated like any other learning resource, and teachers will have the right to view work and websites being accessed. The GDST has instigated the Guest Access protocol which allows any internet enabled device with WiFi capability to use the enterprise wireless points in school; hence a BYOD (bring your own device) is in place. This allows for monitored access to the internet via individual login and provides the same, or enhanced, level of filtering as is provided on the network. The GDST Filtering and Monitoring Policy can be referred to for more detailed information.

Years 7-9 have a restriction on using their devices at break and lunch times, to encourage them to be social and join clubs. If a pupil requires their device to do homework, then they can do this in the library or the academic supervision room.

The school has restricted the use of social media platforms, including Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat and Instagram, during school hours through our GDST network.

Access to the internet in school must be in line with online safety and GDST Acceptable Use Agreements. If students use sites which break these policies, devices may be removed during school hours and/or examined for evidence. Teachers will monitor pupils' use of devices in lessons and at break and lunch times and breaches of the rules on messaging will be followed up with the appropriate sanctions processes, including possible confiscation of phones, in line with the Behaviour Policy. In accordance with statutory guidance for dealing with electronic devices, the school reserves the right to confiscate or examine a device where there is a good reason to suspect the data or file on the device in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break the school rules.

The privacy and dignity of all members of the school community must be respected at all times. Students must not take photographs, videos, or audio recordings of other students or staff without their explicit permission. Circulating images without permission, including through social media, may lead to confiscation of the device and sanctions, in line with the Behaviour Policy.

We encourage all pupils not to use devices during break and lunchtime and to instead enjoy social time and co-curricular activities.

4. Headphones

Students should not generally use headphones or earbuds for listening to music during lessons, unless this is required by the teacher as an integral part of the lesson. Nor should pupils wear headphones when moving around the school building or in the dining room, unless they have special permission to do so. There is no evidence that listening to music improves concentration levels; in fact, the opposite is more likely to be true. A study by Cardiff Metropolitan University found that students who revised in quiet environments outperformed their peers who revised whilst listening to music with lyrics by more than 60%. Students who revised in silence rated their environment as less distracting and accurately predicted that this would lead to better performances in subsequent tests.

5. Use of personal mobile phones by pupils

The Department for Education is clear that all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default. We support this approach wholeheartedly; as a school we have a duty to create an environment that is calm, safe and free from distraction, disruption and diversion so that all pupils can learn and thrive.

We must be aware of the negative impact that excessive mobile phone usage can have on the learning and social interactions of young people. There have been many reports in the media of research which have proven that these detrimental effects exist, and of schools where restrictions on mobile phone use have seen an improvement in academic achievement.

Schools should be a haven for pupils where the environment is focused on learning and development. Excessive exposure to social media sites has been shown to have negative effects on young people's wellbeing, and phone use is inextricably linked to this. In addition, excessive use of mobile phones can inhibit opportunities to socialise face to face and generate stress for young people.

We wish to strike a balance between the convenience of having a mobile phone and patterns of use which may impede the academic progress of a pupil or reduce the opportunities they choose to take advantage of.

6. Mobile phone policy for pupils in Years 7 to 11:

- Pupils must not use their mobile device whilst they are on the school site, unless in exceptional medical circumstances and only with the explicit permission of the Assistant Head Pastoral.
- Wearable smart devices - including smart watches and smart rings - are not permitted in school, unless in exceptional medical circumstances and only with the explicit permission of the Assistant Head Pastoral.
- Phones must be locked in a mobile phone locker whilst students are on the school site, unless in exceptional medical circumstances and only with the explicit permission of the Assistant Head Pastoral. For the avoidance of doubt, this means mobile phones must be locked in their mobile phone lockers as soon as students arrive on site and must not be removed until the end of their school business on that day (this includes after-school activities, performances and competitions).
- Parents should not text or call their children on their mobiles during the school day. If they need to relay a message to their children, they should contact the school reception and that message will be passed on.
- Phones are not allowed to be removed from lockers at break time for contactless payment. If a student wants to purchase an item from tuck, they should use a debit card. The school takes no responsibility for the loss or damage of any debit cards.

- Spot checks of lockers, bags and equipment will be undertaken by staff to ensure phones are kept in their designated lockers.
- Mobile phones must not be used on school trips unless permission has been given by a member of staff for a student to contact parents and carers, or for another specific purpose.

6.1 Pupils in Year 7, 8 and 9 only:

- Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 must not have a smartphone (a phone with internet capabilities) in school.
- Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 are permitted to bring in a 'brick' phone (a phone without internet capabilities) for use to and on the way home from school only.
- The school strongly advises that pupils of this age are not given smart phones in order to support a collective commitment to a smartphone-free childhood. Exceptional medical circumstances must be agreed in writing with the Assistant Head Pastoral.

6.2 Mobile Phone policy for Years 10 and 11 only:

- Pupils in Year 10 and 11 are permitted to bring in a mobile phone (either 'brick' or smartphone) for use to and on the way home from school only.

6.3 Mobile Phone policy for Year 12 and 13 only:

For Sixth Form pupils, we expect them to understand that the permitted use of mobile phones, including headphones, is a privilege accompanied by the expectation of responsible use within a mobile phone-free school environment.

- Pupils are allowed to keep their mobile phone on their person, but they must be kept on silent in order to minimise disruption.
- **Mobile phones** must not be used, seen or heard except when students are in the designated sixth-form area: the Sixth Form Café. This includes when students are moving around the school site; in lessons; or working in the Sixth Form Study Centre or Sixth Form classrooms.
- Pupils are expected to use mobile phones within the Sixth Form Café respectfully and without creating a distraction or disturbance to others.
- Pupils may only use their mobile phones in lessons with the specific direction of a member of staff.
- Pupils must not wear **headphones** except for the purpose of work and only in the designated sixth-form areas: the Sixth Form Café and the Sixth Form Study Centre. This includes when students are moving around the school site; in lessons; or working in Sixth Form classrooms. Headphones must be used in conjunction with a device such as a laptop, not a mobile phone.

7. Searches

Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item, including a mobile phone, authorised senior members of staff have a statutory power to search a pupil and/or their possessions. Searches for and of mobile phone or personal devices will only be carried out in accordance with the relevant government guidance.

8. Sanctions

Any pupil in Year 7 to 13 who is found to have breached the rules around phone use will be subject to escalating sanctions:

First breach of policy:

- The phone will be confiscated, and the pupil will be issued a 60-minute detention after school.
- The phone will be returned to the pupil at the end of the detention.

Second breach of policy:

- The phone will be confiscated and the pupil will be issued a 60-minute detention after school.
- The confiscated phone must be collected by the pupil's parent or carer.
- The pupil will be required to hand in their phone directly to their Head of Year for the next 5 school days. Each day, the phone must be handed in to the Head of Year when the student arrives on site, and it will be returned to the pupil at the end of their school business on that day.

Third breach of policy:

- The phone will be confiscated and the pupil will be issued with a half-day internal suspension.
- The confiscated phone must be collected by the pupil's parent or carer.
- The pupil will be required to hand in their phone directly to their Head of Year for the next five school days. Each day, the phone must be handed in to the Head of Year when the student arrives on site, and it will be returned to the pupil at the end of their school business on that day.

Persistent infringements of this policy may also result in a pupil being banned from bringing a phone to school entirely. This decision will be made by the Assistant Head Pastoral, in consultation with the Head of Year.

9. Bullying and Online Safety Issues

Devices can immediately be confiscated if there is evidence or good reason to suspect that pornographic images are held on them. In this case, police advice must also be sought.

Similarly, devices can immediately be confiscated if there is evidence or good reason to suspect that online bullying has taken place.

10. Online Education

Pupils are taught about appropriate use of mobile devices and social networks in PSHE lessons and through our wider pastoral programme. We take cyber-bullying and misuse of devices very seriously and pupils can expect a sanction under our Anti-Bullying and Rewards and Sanctions Policies for sending inappropriate or unkind messages, misusing or sharing without permission other people's data (including photographs/videos). Pupils also receive information from the local Police force about the legal consequences of online bullying and harassment.

11. Social Media App Reminder

Parents should be aware of the age restrictions attached to social media applications:

- Facebook: 13 years
- Instagram: 13 years
- TikTok: 13 years
- Snapchat: 13 years
- X (formerly, Twitter): 13 years
- Discord: 13 years
- WhatsApp: 13 years
- Tumblr: 16 years
- Gizmo: 13 years

Whilst we cannot prevent students from using social media apps, we would encourage parents to:

- Talk to your daughter about online safety and online privacy.
- Limit your daughter's access to online material in an age-appropriate way, including by not allowing her a smart phone, using home WiFi restrictions and parental controls, and restricting social media access.
- Encourage your daughter to make accounts private, and to turn off message or friend requests from strangers.

- Remind your daughter not to accept message or friend requests from people she does not personally know.
- Monitor your daughter's use of social media, including messaging apps such as WhatsApp.
- Keep privacy settings up to date – most platforms have a 'check-up' option.
- Keep communication open and encourage your daughter to tell you if someone online makes them feel uneasy or uncomfortable.

As a school we recommend that no student under 13 has a smartphone. We have also published our recommendations around screentime, which include:

- No phone or device use later than 8:30pm, Sunday-Thursday, for Years 7-8.
- No phone or device use longer than 2 hours each day from Friday-Sunday for Years 7-8.
- No phones/devices in bedrooms overnight for Years 7-10.
- As adults, we also need to be careful of the online behaviour that we model to students, being boundaried in our own screen time, and narrating the steps we take to protect our privacy and stay healthy on and offline.