



THINKING SCHOOLS
ACADEMY TRUST

Mobile Phone Policy

2026-2028



Plymouth High School for Girls



PHSG Mobile phone and mobile device policy

Established. Sept 2026

Due for review. Sept 2028

Person responsible for the policy. Headteacher

The following mobile phone and device principles are set out in the document below. These principles are common to all Thinking School Academy Trust schools from September 2026

Mobile Phones

This document sets out the Thinking Schools Academy Trust's overarching expectations and principles for the use of mobile phones in schools. These principles establish the non-negotiable foundations that all schools must adhere to thereby ensuring consistency, safety and a focused learning environment across the Trust.

Rationale

Mobile phones and similar devices (including smartwatches, earbuds and devices capable of communication or recording) represent both opportunities and challenges for young people. However, their presence in school can lead to distraction, disruption to learning, safeguarding concerns and increased pastoral issues.

TSAT schools prioritise calm, purposeful environments where pupils can focus, engage and interact positively with others. Limiting access to mobile phones during the school day supports this aim.

In line with Department for Education guidance, TSAT schools operate as mobile phone-free environments by default from September 2026. This means that while students may bring a mobile phone for the journey to and from school, it must not be used, seen, heard or accessible at any point during the school day. The reference to mobile phones also applies to smartwatches, earbuds and devices capable of communication or recording.

Core Principles

Mobile phones are not required for learning and should not form part of routine classroom practice.

All schools will ensure that mobile phones and similar devices are not used at any point during the school day, including social times.

All schools will maintain an environment where mobile devices are not seen, heard or used on the school site unless with explicit consent from a member of staff.

Expectations will apply consistently across the entire school day and all areas of the school site. This includes all timetabled and social times, and any period where students are on site during the normal school day, unless directed otherwise by staff.

There is a small exception for sixth form students whilst they are in the study centre.

The approach to mobile phones will support high expectations of behaviour, focus and engagement.

Student Expectations

Students do not need to bring mobile phones to school.

Where phones are brought for safety on the journey to and from school, they must be switched off on arrival, secured in line with the school's agreed system, and kept inaccessible until the end of the school day. Mobile phones are brought onto site at the student's own risk. The school will not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to a mobile device that has been brought onto the school site, this includes whilst a device has been confiscated by the school.

Students must not use, display or access mobile phones or similar devices at any point on site. (There is a small exception for sixth form students whilst they are in the sixth form study centre)

Leadership and Implementation

Each Thinking School Academy Trust school will establish a clear and consistent system for managing mobile phones (for example, pouches, lockers or storage).

Leaders will ensure that expectations are clearly communicated to staff, pupils and parents, consistently applied by all staff, and supported through training and guidance where necessary.

Leaders will ensure that systems are robust, practical and minimise disruption to learning time.

Schools will ensure their approach reflects their context, site and phase, while remaining aligned with these principles.

Staff expectations

Staff play a critical role in establishing and maintaining a mobile phone-free environment.

Leaders will ensure that clear guidance is in place for staff regarding the use of personal mobile phones.

The expectation is that staff do not use mobile phones for personal purposes in front of students and do not have them on display during the school day.

Staff will model the expectations set for pupils and will consistently apply school systems, including challenging and addressing any breaches in line with the behaviour policy.

Staff understand that consistency in adult behaviour is essential in maintaining high standards, clarity and fairness.

Leaders will ensure that expectations for staff are clear, understood and applied consistently across the school.

Behaviour and Culture

The approach to mobile phones will be embedded within the school's behaviour culture and expectations. This policy should be read in conjunction with our [Positive behaviour Policy](#) and our [ICT acceptable use policy](#) and our safeguarding policy.

Schools will apply clear, consistent consequences where expectations are not met, in line with their policy.

Any use, visibility or misuse of a mobile phone will be addressed in line with the school's behaviour system.

Any mobile phone that is seen, heard or used without explicit permission from a member of staff will be confiscated. Schools will implement an escalating approach to sanctions, where repeated breaches result in increasingly significant consequences.

Leaders will ensure that expectations are applied fairly and consistently across all groups of pupils.

Safeguarding and Communication

Schools will ensure there are clear systems for communication between home and school during the day.

Parents and carers will be expected to contact the school office, rather than pupils directly.

Schools will ensure that pupils can access support to contact home where necessary.

The approach will support the reduction of online bullying, peer conflict and risks associated with recording or sharing digital content during the school day.

Inclusion and Adaptation

Schools may make reasonable adaptations in exceptional circumstances, for example for medical needs, where this is clearly justified.

Any adaptations must be explicit, monitored, and must not undermine the core expectation that mobile phones are not routinely accessed during the school day.

Our Sixth Form

Expectations apply to all pupils, including those in sixth form. PHSG has made specific arrangements for post-16 students; however, these must not undermine the core principle that mobile phones are not used, seen or accessed during the school day. Post 16 students are permitted to use their mobile device in the sixth form study centre only.

Monitoring and Review

Leaders will monitor the implementation and impact of their approach.

This will include consistency of application, behaviour and engagement, and feedback from staff and pupils.

Schools will review systems as needed to ensure they remain effective, proportionate and aligned with Trust principles.

Summary

TSAT schools operate as mobile phone-free environments. While students may carry a device for their journey, it must not be seen, heard or used on the school site.

These principles ensure a consistent approach that prioritises learning, wellbeing and safety across all schools.

What this means for us at PHSG

Plymouth High School for Girls, in common with all Thinking School Academy Trust schools, follows the advice set out by the Department for Education that smartwatches, earbuds, and similar devices that allow communication or recording should not be permitted in school.

In line with DfE guidance (January 2026), which states that schools should be mobile phone-free by default, all schools within Thinking Schools Academy Trust will operate as mobile phone-free environments during the school day, with no use of mobile phones permitted (although there is a small amendment for Sixth Form students detailed below).

The full guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools>

The restriction on using such devices applies to the entire school day, including before school, break and lunchtime, movement between lessons, clubs, trips and visits unless directed otherwise by a member of staff. It also includes smartwatches, earbuds and similar devices that allow communication or recording.

Smartwatches, earbuds and similar devices that allow communication or recording are not permitted to be worn in school. This expectation applies to all students, including those in Sixth Form apart from when in the Sixth Form Study Centre.

There will be exceptions where young people need a smart device for medical reasons, and this will be agreed with the SENDco.

What this means in practice

- Students do not need a mobile phone in school (unless for agreed medical reasons).
- We recognise that some parents and carers wish their child to have a phone for safety on the journey to and from school and/or to pay for bus/train travel. This is fully understood. However, mobile phones must not be seen, heard, or used anywhere on the school site (there is a small amendment for Sixth Form students detailed below).
- If a phone is brought into school, it must be switched off and securely stored in the school bag on arrival and must remain inaccessible until the end of the school day. Year 7 hand their phones in at the start of the day and the devices are stored safely until the end of the day.
- Smartwatches, earbuds and similar devices that allow communication or recording are not permitted (this includes Sixth Form students unless in the Sixth Form Study Centre). This is also consistent with public examination regulations.
- Sixth Form students are only permitted to use their phones in the Sixth Form Study Centre (pending any further DfE updates).
- Sixth Form students only are permitted to use their own tablet for making notes in class if they wish, but only after permission from the Sixth Form team and the 'bring your own device' BYOD agreement has been signed by the student and their parent(s) carer(s). Sixth Form students wishing to use their own device for lessons must first speak with the Sixth Form team.
- Our policy states that an after-school detention (C3) will be issued for not adhering to the rules outlined here for phones, smart devices, including watches, earbuds etc.

Daily routine:

- Students arrive at the school gate and switch their devices off and put them in their bag before entering the school grounds.
- Sixth Form students are permitted to use their phones in the Sixth Form Study Centre only
- Sixth Form students will be permitted to use their own tablet for note taking provided they have had this agreed by the Sixth Form team.
- Year 7 will hand their phones in at the start of the day and collect them at the end of the day.
- Phones and similar devices must be switched off and secured at all times while on site. Any device that is seen, heard, or used will be confiscated (unless a Sixth Former is using their own device having had that agreed by the Sixth Form)
- In the unlikely event there are repeated breaches, parents and carers will be invited into school to discuss and plan a way forward. As a mobile phone-free school, students bring mobile phones (and any devices under the Sixth Form agreement agreement) onto site at their own risk.

- The school cannot, and will not, accept responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of mobile phones at any time, including while they are held following confiscation.
- There are some concessions for Sixth Form students, and these have been outlined above.

Communication and Safeguarding

If you need to contact your child during the day, please do so via the main school Reception. Messages will be passed on promptly. Students will have access to all necessary resources and support; mobile phones are not required for learning. We appreciate your support in reinforcing this approach, which will help maintain a calm, safe and focused learning environments across our school.