



Mobile phones and smart devices

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.