Mobile Phone Policy

Brooke House College

2026/27 version

1.Introduction

For some time, schools and colleges have had to deal with both the benefits and distractions of pupils having mobile phone devices at school. The benefits for use as a learning tool are considerable. However, the opportunities for damage to pupils' wellbeing and the ability of phones to enable access to many undesirable sites as well as the use of mobile phones for such activities as "sexting", "deepfake imagery" and cyber-bullying has meant that a serious review of the acceptable use of mobile phones within the College. This policy is the outcome of the review and should enable a safe and sensible approach to the use of mobile phones within our community.

1.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with

- Acceptable use of ICT Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy; and
- DfE Guidance "Mobile Phones in Schools" Feb. 2026

The DfE guidance has a starting position that:-

"All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only"

Key amongst the exceptions for the College is the fact that the College is an international Boarding school with pupils from a great many countries and time-zones, and it is largely a sixth-form college. As such, we have adopted the following structure.

The College will prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the teaching day. The College does so in a way which safeguards and promotes the welfare of the children in our care in accordance with the boarding schools: national minimum standards and residential special schools: national minimum standards. This includes facilitating arrangements so boarders can contact their parents and families in private, at a time that is suitable for both parties, considering relevant time zones for international pupils.

2. Roles & Responsibilities

2.1 The College will undertake to implement this policy by making it available to all parents, training staff in its implementation, instructing all pupils in its application using pupil induction, assemblies, PSHE and RSHE.

2.2 All staff should consistently enforce the school's policy on the use of mobile phones.

Staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. This will empower staff to better challenge pupils to meet the school

expectations and effectively enforce the prohibition of mobile phones throughout the school day. There may be occasions where it is appropriate for a teacher to use a mobile phone or similar device, for instance to issue homework, issue rewards and sanctions or use multi-factor authentication. The College Leadership Team will be clear with staff on their expectations around use of mobile phones during the day.

2.3 All pupils will be made clear on the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and will be reminded of the policy, and the consequences and sanctions for not following it, at the start of each school year and again, where appropriate, at regular intervals.

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure they understand the decision being taken by their school to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying.

DfE's guidance on relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education provides further information on how to ensure that pupils are safe online, including how their information and data can be shared and how to consider the effects of their online actions.

Pupils will also be taught the benefits of having a mobile phone-free environment and be encouraged to see such an environment as desirable and valuable. This will help to create intrinsic motivation to support the school culture.

2.4 Parents have an important role in supporting the College's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones. The policy is made available to parents, including the reasons behind the policy and the school's expectations. Parents are also be encouraged to reinforce and discuss the policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment. Parents can request a copy of the policy from the Chief Operating Officer using the link:- COO@brookehouse.com

Where parents have questions or concerns, the College will address these in a timely manner and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

3. Acceptable Use

The College has chosen to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the teaching day to reduce distraction and disruption. However, the College must comply with its other legal duties such as the duty to make reasonable adjustments where necessary. There may be other exceptional circumstances where the College considers making adaptations to their policy for specific pupils. The College will assess each case on its own merits.

Exceptional cases would involve examples such as adhering to

- the Equality Act 2010;
- taking into account contact with home allowing for the many time-zones our pupils come from;

- making use of the College App;
- when pupils are away from College on trips, activities or residential courses;
- use of messaging via the College Management Information System (iSAMS); and
- directed research within a lesson using the internet.

4. Unacceptable use

Unacceptable use, which will be explained to pupils through assemblies, induction, PSHE and RSHE may come from the following, non-exhaustive, list:-

- Cyber-bullying;
- Creating and distributing deepfake sexualised images;
- Sexting, including 'upskirting' 'downblousing', requesting the transmission of nude and semi-nude images and video;
- Any child-on-child abuse or harassment;
- Radicalisation or terrorism acts;
- Involvement in any 'County Lines' activity; and
- Any other criminal activities.

5. Sanctions

The DfE provides guidance on how the College can use sanctions lawfully in the behaviour in schools guidance. The College will use a range of sanctions for breaching the mobile phone policy appropriate to their context, including confiscation and detentions.

The College has the right to use its power to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty where their policy is clearly breached, for instance where a mobile phone is used by a pupil or is heard ringing in a pupil's bag. The law protects staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to items they have confiscated as a sanction, providing they have acted lawfully. Staff will be trained to consider whether the confiscation is proportionate and consider any special circumstances relevant to the case.

The College, backed by the DfE can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices, if they consider it proportionate, for whatever length of time they deem proportionate. In considering whether a confiscation is a proportionate penalty, the College will consider what disciplinary outcome the confiscation is intended to achieve and whether there are other ways to achieve the same outcome, as well as the pupil's individual circumstances such as age and SEND.

6. Searching

The Principal and staff he authorises, have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item as set out in legislation or any item identified in the school rules as an item that may be searched for. The Principal will identify mobile phones and similar devices as something

that may be searched for in their school behaviour policy. Staff should refer to the searching, screening and confiscation in schools guidance regarding searching a pupil.

7. Use of mobile phones outside of the school day

The College will determine how it wishes to manage the use of mobile phones by pupils on residential trips or trips outside of the normal school day. The College will ensure that pupils' educational experience on a school trip is not disrupted by the presence of mobile phones and should consider prohibiting or restricting their use.

Given the nature of the boarding environment of the College, the use of mobile phones and other devices in the evenings and weekends will be permitted under managed circumstances such as no use during 'Prep' time, except for research, no use after 'lights out' to enable a good night's sleep. The College's monitoring and filtering of the internet by both content and website, allows the College to ensure pupils follow this guidance. Should pupils use access to the internet via non-college routes, they risk confiscation of their mobile phone.

8. Monitoring and Review

- **Frequency of Review**: College policies are formally reviewed every one to two years by the Principal or Senior Leadership Team. The College will review and update this policy to keep pace with technology changes and legislative changes;
- **Stakeholder Consultation**: A robust review will include gathering feedback via surveys or focus groups;
- **Staff**: Talk to staff to assess if the policy is manageable and consistently enforced;
- **Pupils**: Talk to pupils to understand their experiences and encourage "intrinsic motivation" for a phone-free culture;
- **Parents/Carers**: To ensure they understand how to contact their children without disrupting lesson time and allowing for sensible adjustment with time-zones;
- **Data Analysis**: The College will monitor the policy's impact by reviewing internal records internet usage;
- **Behaviour and safeguarding incidents**: Keeping a record mobile phone incidents (e.g., cyberbullying, classroom distraction); and
- **Sanction log:** Monitor the frequency of confiscations and sanctions;

8.1 How will we know?
Performance Indicators

- **Reduces distractions** during lessons and break times;
- **Improves wellbeing** by fostering face-to-face socialising;
- **Ensures safety** by limiting opportunities for online bullying during the school day; and
- **Maintains compliance** with DfE guidance and legal duties like the Equality Act 2010 regarding reasonable adjustments.

Authorised by	Resolution of the Board of Directors
Signed **Joan Williams** On behalf of the Board of Directors	
Date	August 2026

Schedule of Updates

Date document updated	**Document updated by**	**Summary update/comments**	**Location of saved file**
June 2026	MCO	Advisory board review	MS Teams – Policies – Master files

Schedule of Review

Date of document review	**Reviewed by**	**Scheduled date of next review**
June 2026	MCO	August 2027
August 2026	JW	August 2027