

Glenlola Collegiate School

“EXCELLENCE THROUGH COMMITMENT, CONTRIBUTION and CARING”

Mobile Phone Policy 2025-26



Introduction

The pilot scheme will begin in September 2025 to examine the benefits of restricting the use of mobile phones during the school day through the use of lockable mobile phone pouches. As a school we aim to identify and participate in initiatives that will benefit pupils and contribute to achieving high standards while being in school. Evidence indicates that restricting personal use of mobile phones during the school day can have a positive impact on the engagement, achievement, social interactions with pupils, their classmates and the school staff and their overall wellbeing. The use of tablet devices and smart phones is now an integral part of the lives of children and young people. While this is a positive development, concerns have been identified including some risks associated with the misuse, abuse, and possible overuse of these devices and the various associated technologies.

Rationale

Digital technology (including but not limited to mobile devices such as smart phones, smart watches, tablets, and video recording devices) has become a normal part of everyday life. While the educational, safety, and communication benefits of pupils having access to this technology is recognized it is equally clear that children and young people need to be guided and supported to become good digital citizens. The use of digital technologies mediated by teachers with the skills to exploit its potential to support teaching and learning can be invaluable in equipping pupils with the skills to navigate the online world safely and securely. This is a fantastic opportunity that involves all pupils. Pupils will have the opportunity to contribute their views and thoughts at specific times during the pilot via surveys to the Department of Education about using the mobile phone pouches in school. It is hoped that all pupils will engage with this pilot and share their thoughts and views on the benefits and challenges of this approach.

Implementation

Every pupil in school, will be given a lockable pouch which they will use to store their mobile phone, and/or other related devices such as a smart watch, for the duration of the school day. The pupils will keep the pouch with them all day and it will be their responsibility to lock their mobile devices inside at the start of the day and to unlock it at the end of the day. Pupils will be responsible for their pouch and for making sure it is not lost or damaged. The pouches will be in school from the beginning of September 2025. Surveys will be taken throughout the year to obtain feedback from pupils, parents and teachers regarding this pilot scheme.

Code of Behaviour

It is extremely important that pupils learn to use digital technology safely and effectively. The current School Mobile Phone Policy states that the use of mobile devices to make aggressive or threatening calls, to send offensive, embarrassing, or abusive text messages, e-mails, photographs, or video clips either directly or via the Internet to a pupil, member of staff, or anyone associated with the school community will result in disciplinary action being taken against the perpetrator. Any use of mobile devices to intimidate, harass, or embarrass a pupil, member of staff, or anyone associated with the school community represents a breach of School Rules and will be dealt with under the existing disciplinary policies of the school.

The use of a mobile device during school or mock examinations is not permitted under any circumstances. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) requires all examination centers to reinforce the rules and regulations about unauthorised items during external examinations.

Responsible Use

The following rules and regulations will now apply:

- All access to mobile phones, smartwatches, and ear pods is prohibited during the school day (including off site school activities) between 8.45am and 3.15pm.
- All pupils are required to power off and place mobile phones in the designated pouch on entry to the school building.
- The Form Teacher shall require all pupils to place a locked pouch on the desk for their inspection following registration.
- A series of additional inspections will be conducted on a random basis by Year Heads and members of SLT.
- If a mobile phone has not been placed in a locked pouch or if another mobile phone has been substituted for the original item or if the pouch has been intentionally damaged the member of staff will send a message containing the name and form class of the pupil to Reception.
- The pupil concerned will bring the mobile phone(s) and pouch(es) to Reception and hand over for safekeeping before immediately returning to class. The office staff will record their details.
- The appropriate sanction will be imposed and recorded on SIMS. An appropriate charge may be applied for the loss or damage of a phone pouch.
- If a smartwatch and/or ear pods have not been disconnected the Subject Teacher shall send a message containing the name and form class of the pupil to Reception.
- The pupil concerned will bring the smartwatch and/or ear pods to Reception and hand over for safekeeping before immediately returning to class. The office staff will record their details.
- An appropriate sanction will be imposed and recorded on SIMS.
- All pupils shall proceed to the unlock stations at the end of the school day; pouches will be unlocked. Alternatively, a member of staff may unlock pouches on conclusion of an activity which has been scheduled during school hours either on or off site using a portable unlocking device.
- The use of the audio, camera, or video recording functions of mobile devices is not permitted at any time while in the school building, on the school grounds, or when pupils are travelling to and from School. This restriction may apply to school excursions and extra- curricular activities.
- Pupils who need to contact a parent/guardian are welcome to use the phone in the Office.
- Parents/guardians should not call or text their children during the school day as normal contact can be made through Reception. If parents/guardians need to contact their children in cases of emergency, all communication should be directed through the General Office (tel. no 028 91475340)

Exceptions

Individual departments may permit some pupils to use their mobile phones to support Controlled Assessment work in school but permission must be granted by the relevant member of staff. In such circumstances the teacher will unlock the pupils' pouches using a mobile unlocking device. Pupils should only use their mobile phone as directed by that teacher. If they use the mobile phone in any other way, it will be confiscated. At the end of the lesson all pupil pouches will be locked again by that teacher.

Where a pupil asks to leave a lesson and permission is granted, the pupil's mobile phone pouch should be left with the member of staff until their return to class. Staff should record the time when a pupil leaves and returns to class.

An exception will be made in cases where a pupil has been given special permission to keep their phone with them for a particular reason as specified and agreed by School Staff.

Sanctions

The appropriate and responsible use of digital technology is always required from pupils. The inappropriate use of digital technology and associated equipment (including but not limited to mobile devices such as smart phones, smart watches, tablets, and video recording devices) will result in the imposition of a sanction which may include confiscation and retention of devices until the end of the school day. If inappropriate use or misuse of associated equipment occurs the following sanctions will be applied under the terms of this policy:

1st infringement: The pupil concerned will bring the mobile phone(s) and pouch(es) to Reception and hand over for safekeeping before immediately returning to class. The mobile phone(s) and pouch(es) will be held in secure storage until the end of the school day. A conduct point will be recorded on SIMS. The pupil will return to reception at 3.15pm and collect their items.

2nd infringement: The pupil concerned will bring the mobile phone(s) and pouch(es) to Reception and hand over for safekeeping before immediately returning to class. The mobile phone(s) and pouch(es) will be held in secure storage until the end of the school day. Two conduct points will be recorded on SIMS. The pupil will return to reception at 3.15pm and collect their items.

3rd infringement: The pupil concerned will bring the mobile phone(s) and pouch(es) to Reception and hand over for safekeeping before immediately returning to class. The mobile phone(s) and pouch(es) will be held in secure storage until the end of the school day. Office staff will inform the Head of Year that the pupil should be placed in detention. The pupil will return to reception at 3.15pm and collect their items.

4th infringement: The pupil concerned will bring the mobile phone(s) and pouch(es) to Reception and hand over for safekeeping before immediately returning to class. The mobile phone(s) and pouch(es) will be held in secure storage until the end of the school day. Office staff will inform the Head of Year that the pupil should be placed in detention. The items held in reception may only be collected by a parent/guardian by prior appointment with Reception.

A series of infringements may result in further sanctions being applied in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.