

GLENLOLA COLLEGIATE SCHOOL

Excellence through commitment, contribution and caring

Mobile Phone Policy 2026-27



Introduction

Following the Mobile Phone Pouch Pilot (2025-2026), the Department of Education has agreed to continue to support pilot schools to operate a 'never seen, never heard' approach to mobile phone use throughout the school day.

Mobile phones and other digital devices are now an integral part of young people's lives. While these technologies offer significant benefits, there is increasing evidence of risks associated with misuse, overuse, and distraction.

Research indicates that restricting personal use of mobile phones for an extended period each day is a beneficial experience for all ages. Our experience supports this evidence. Limiting access to mobile devices during school hours can have a positive impact on pupils' engagement, achievement, social interactions with classmates, relationships with school staff as well as their overall wellbeing. Research from UNESCO and the OECD suggests that strict enforcement is crucial to unlocking these benefits.

Rationale

Digital technology (including but not limited to smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, and recording devices) has become a normal part of everyday life. While access to such technology can support communication, safety, and learning, it is essential that pupils are guided to become responsible and respectful digital citizens.

The school recognises the value of technology when used appropriately under the direction of trained staff to enhance teaching and learning. At the same time, we must ensure that the school environment remains focused, safe, and free from unnecessary distractions.

Implementation

- Pupils will be given a lockable pouch which they will use to store their mobile phone for the duration of the school day.
- Pupils will keep their pouch with them all day and it will be their responsibility to lock their mobile phones inside during Registration at the start of the day.
- Pouches may be unlocked at the end of the school day using designated unlocking stations.
- Pupils are responsible for the care and condition of their pouch. Lost or deliberately damaged pouches may incur a replacement cost.

Expectations and Code of Behaviour

We expect all pupils to use digital technology responsibly, respectfully, and safely.

The following behaviours are strictly prohibited:

- Using mobile devices to make aggressive or threatening communications
- Sending or sharing offensive, abusive, or inappropriate messages, images, or videos
- Recording or photographing others without consent
- Any form of cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation
- Taking a photo or video in School and posting it on social media

Such actions constitute a serious breach of school rules and will result in disciplinary action in line with the School's behaviour policy.

Examinations

Mobile devices are **strictly prohibited** during all school and mock examinations.

In line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations:

- Pupils must not have mobile phones or any unauthorised electronic devices in their possession during exams.
- Any breach of these rules may result in disqualification from the examination.

Responsible Use

The following rules apply:

- Glenlola Collegiate operates a “never seen, never heard” approach to mobile phones throughout the school day.
- Pupils must power off their mobile phone and secure it in their locked pouch during morning Registration. Form teachers will oversee this process.
- If:
 - a mobile phone is not secured in a locked pouch,
 - a different device has been substituted, or
 - a pouch has been tampered with or deliberately damaged,the member of staff will notify Reception with the pupil’s name and form class.
- The pupil must report immediately to Reception, hand in the mobile phone(s) and pouch for safekeeping and then return to class without delay.
- Office staff will record the incident, and an appropriate sanction will be applied and logged on SIMS by the teacher dealing with the infringement. A charge may be issued for a lost or deliberately damaged pouch.
- Pouches may be unlocked at the end of the school day using designated unlocking stations.
- In exceptional circumstances, a member of staff may use a portable unlocking device during authorised activities (on or off site).
- The use of audio, camera, or video functions on mobile devices is strictly prohibited:
 - within the school building
 - on school grounds
 - while travelling to and from school
 - during school visits or extracurricular activities (unless explicitly authorised)
- Pupils who need to contact a parent or guardian **in an emergency** should do so via Reception.
- Parents and guardians are asked not to contact pupils directly during the school day. In urgent situations, all communication must be directed through Reception (Tel: 028 91475340).

Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy may be granted in specific circumstances where there is a clear and valid reason.

- Any exception must be formally approved in advance by school staff.
- The conditions of the exception (e.g. when and where the phone may be used) will be clearly communicated to the pupil.
- Pupils must adhere strictly to the agreed conditions; failure to do so will result in the withdrawal of the exception and the application of sanctions.

Sanctions

Pupils are expected to use digital technology responsibly at all times. Inappropriate use of digital devices (including, but not limited to, mobile phones, smartwatches, tablets, and recording devices) will result in sanctions in line with this policy.

Where misuse occurs, devices will be **confiscated and retained until the end of the school day**. Repeated or serious breaches will result in escalating consequences as outlined below:

First Infringement

- The pupil must take their phone and pouch to Reception for secure storage and then return promptly to class.
- The device(s) will be stored until the end of the school day.
- **One conduct point** will be recorded on SIMS.
- Items may be collected from Reception at 3:15pm.

Second Infringement

- As above, with secure storage until the end of the school day.
- **Two conduct points** will be recorded on SIMS.
- Items collected at 3:15pm.

Third Infringement

- As above, with secure storage until the end of the school day.
- The Head of Year will be informed, and the pupil will be issued with a **detention**.
- Items collected at 3:15pm.

Fourth Infringement

- As above, with secure storage until the end of the school day.
- The Head of Year will be informed, and the pupil will be issued with a **detention**.
- The mobile phone and pouch must be **collected by a parent/guardian**, by prior arrangement with Reception.

Additional Provisions

- A pupil who deliberately brings a second mobile phone to school or intentionally avoids using their pouch will automatically be treated as a second infringement and receive two conduct points.
- If a pupil genuinely forgets her pouch, she must report to Reception at the start of the day and hand in their phone for safekeeping. In this circumstance, no sanction will be applied, provided this is not a repeated occurrence.
- Persistent breaches of this policy may result in further disciplinary action in line with the School's Code of Behaviour.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective, proportionate, and aligned with national guidance and school priorities.