



The Cowplain School

Work Hard. Enjoy Learning. Achieve Highly.

Mobile Phone Policy.

Approved: Spring 2026

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1. Introduction and Rationale

The Cowplain School is committed to ensuring disruption-free learning for every student, every minute of every lesson. We believe that calm, focused learning environments are essential for high standards of behaviour, safeguarding, wellbeing, and academic achievement. Students are supported to understand the rationale for a mobile phone-free environment through assemblies, Personal Development lessons and behaviour education.

This policy has been developed with reference to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance Mobile phones in schools (January 2026), which states that schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default, with any exceptions applied only where necessary and appropriate. The guidance recognises that unrestricted access to mobile phones during the school day can negatively impact concentration, behaviour, social interaction, and pupil safety.

It is not a right for any person to bring an electronic device on to the school premises and to do so is at the discretion of the school. Therefore, the Principal or Head of School may remove the privilege for a student or adult to bring such a device to school temporarily or permanently. Failure to comply with the withdrawal of this privilege is likely to result in the imposition of a serious sanction.

This Mobile Phone Policy supports and operates alongside the school's Behaviour Policy. It sets out clear expectations, rules, and procedures regarding the possession and use of mobile phones and other personal electronic devices on the school site. The policy reflects our shared values of respect, responsibility, and kindness, and our belief that students learn best in an environment that is safe, calm, and free from unnecessary distraction.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all students on roll at The Cowplain School and sets out clear rules governing student possession and use of mobile phones. It also outlines expectations for staff, visitors and contractors in relation to modelling appropriate use and safeguarding.

The policy applies:

- During the school day (08:25–15:00 (15:40 for year 11))
- At break and lunchtime
- In all buildings and outdoor areas on the school site
- During school-organised activities where students are under the supervision of school staff

3. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance
- Online Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality Act 2010 obligations

4. General Principles

- The Cowplain School operates as a mobile phone-free environment by default, in line with Department for Education guidance. Mobile phones are not essential for learning during the school day and are not required to support high-quality teaching and learning.
- All students are entitled to a calm, safe and focused learning environment, free from unnecessary distraction. The presence and use of mobile phones during the school day can undermine concentration, behaviour, social interaction and learning.
- The school places a high priority on safeguarding, privacy and wellbeing. The inappropriate use of mobile phones can increase the risk of online harm, bullying, harassment, and the misuse or sharing of images, audio or video.
- To support safeguarding and minimise disruption, parents and carers should not contact students directly during the school day. Where communication is necessary, parents should contact the school office, which will ensure messages are passed on appropriately.
- Bringing a mobile phone or personal electronic device onto the school site is entirely at the student's and parent's own risk. The school accepts no responsibility for loss, damage or theft of devices brought into school.

5. Rules on Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices

We allow students to bring phones into school. They must be switched off and kept out of sight.

The school operates a clear rule: **“We see it, we hear it, we take it.”**

Furthermore, the Principal or Head of School may remove the right for a student to bring a phone to school temporarily or permanently. Failure to comply is likely to result in serious sanctions.

Smart watches and similar devices with communication, recording or notification functionality must not be worn.

6. Procedures for Confiscation

Phones will be confiscated when:

- A phone is seen or heard
- A phone is used to contact parents during the school day
- Or any other incident where we have been made aware a phone has been used during the school day.

Confiscated phones:

- Are held securely by the school
- Are returned according to the escalation procedures below

The school accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to phones brought onto site.

7. Sanctions for Misuse

Sanctions will be applied consistently and proportionately, and apply on a year by year basis (at the end of each year, incidents reset to 0):

First incident: The phone will be confiscated until the end of the school day. The student will serve a same-day 15-minute detention, after which the phone will be returned. Year 11 students attending Period 6 may collect their phone at the end of that lesson.

Second incident: The phone will be confiscated until the end of the school day. The student will serve a same-day 30-minute detention, after which the phone will be returned. Year 11 students attending Period 6 may collect their phone at the end of that lesson. Following this incident, parents/carers will be informed that any further confiscation will require a parent/carer to attend school to collect the phone.

Third incident: The phone will be confiscated and retained by the school until it is collected by a parent/carer.

Fourth incident: The phone will be confiscated and retained by the school until it is collected by a parent/carer. In addition, the student will be required to hand in their phone at the start of each school day for the remainder of the term, with the phone returned at the end of each day. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in suspension or a direction to attend another school for a fixed period of time.

Serious misuse (including filming, photographing, or posting content):

- Immediate confiscation
- Parents required to collect the device
- Further sanctions may apply, including Learning Room placement or suspension

It is not a right for any person to bring an electronic device on to the school premises and to do so is at the discretion of the school. Therefore, the Principal or Head of School may remove the privilege for a student or adult to bring such a device to school temporarily or permanently. Failure to comply with the withdrawal of this privilege is likely to result in the imposition of a serious sanction.

8. Searching and Screening

- Students may be searched where a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that a mobile phone has been used or is in a student's possession, in line with statutory guidance.
- Students will be required to hand over phones when entering the Learning Room, Resilience Centre, or Rose Centre.
- If a student denies possession of a phone, the school may conduct a search in line with statutory guidance.
- Searches are carried out respectfully, proportionately, and recorded on CPOMS.
- Should a child refuse to be searched, the sanctions within our behaviour policy will apply.
- Staff will not access the contents of a device. Any safeguarding concerns are escalated to senior leaders.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Students

- Follow all rules regarding mobile phones
- Hand over devices when instructed
- Accept sanctions as part of school expectations

Staff

- Enforce the policy consistently
- Staff may carry and use mobile phones for professional purposes. Personal use should be kept to a minimum when in the presence of students and must not undermine the expectations placed on students.
- Ensure visitors and contractors comply with safeguarding expectations regarding mobile phone use.
- Report incidents using school systems

Parents and Carers

- Support the school's mobile phone policy
- Do not contact students directly during the school day
- Collect devices when required

10. Exceptions and Reasonable Adjustments

- Reasonable adjustments may be made for students with SEND, medical needs, or safeguarding concerns. This may include, for example, the use of a mobile phone to support a medical condition where it is necessary for effective management.
- Any exceptions must be agreed in advance by the Principal or Head of School.
- Adjustments will be time-limited and regularly reviewed.

11. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- Behaviour and confiscation data
- Safeguarding records
- Student and staff feedback
- Parent feedback

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required to ensure it remains effective and compliant with statutory guidance.

The policy is monitored by Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team. The effectiveness of the policy (against the Objectives) will be reviewed by Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team every year.

Date Reviewed:	Spring 2026	Reviewed by:	JCK	Next Review:	Spring 2027
Summary of changes made:	New policy				
Approved by Academy Trustees on:	13 th February 2026				