Grace Academy Coventry

Mobile Phone and Personal Device Policy

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Applicable to	All students
Checked by	Principals and LGB
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Contents

1. Core principle 2
2. Devices covered 2
3. Procedure 2
4. Confiscation and Sanctions 3
5. Exceptions 3
6. Visits and Fixtures 3
7. Storage and responsibility 4
8. Responsibilities 4

1. Core principle

Grace Academy Coventry is a phone-free learning environment during the school day.

The expectation is clear: All phones must be locked away during the school day. This policy supports learning, concentration, safeguarding, privacy, wellbeing, and positive relationships. We would strongly advise students not to bring a mobile phone to school, however, if students or parents/guardians feel that one is necessary for safety reasons on the journey to and from school, students will hand in phones at the start of the day to be locked away securely.

2. Devices covered

This policy applies to mobile phones, smartphones, smartwatches, all wearables (e.g. Ray-Ban Meta glasses, AI pins, earbuds, AirPods, headphones) tablets, cameras, gaming devices and any personal device capable of communication, internet access, notifications, photography, audio recording or video recording. These are referred to as personal devices.

3. Procedure

Our School day begins at 8:40am, when pupils attend line-ups. Pupils will switch off their personal devices, place them into their named plastic envelope and hand it to their tutor. The devices will then be locked away, with the key stored securely in Main Reception until the end of the day, when tutors will return devices to students.

If a student arrives late to school, their phone will be locked in Student Reception, and returned to students at the end of their late detention.

If a student arrives at school for Family Breakfast at 8:00am, their phone must not be seen or heard.

Pupils must disclose and hand in all phones and personal devices in their possession when required to do so. Keeping a second, spare or undisclosed phone or device in order to avoid the Academy policies is a serious breach of trust. Where a pupil is found to have retained an undisclosed device:

- All personal devices will be confiscated immediately
- Parents or guardians will be informed

If any phones are seen or heard in the Academy, they will be confiscated. If there are continued breaches of the Mobile Phone and Personal Device Policy then additional sanctions will be put into place. If a pupil is suspected of having a phone in the Academy, they will be searched. Searching and screening pupils is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. We will search students if we suspect they have a prohibited item but they are refusing to hand it over.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1091132/Searching__Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf

Sixth Form pupils are expected to model excellent conduct for younger pupils. Years 12–13 may retain phones during the school day, but phones must remain silent and out of sight except in designated Sixth Form areas as set out by the Head of Sixth Form. Sixth Form pupils must not use phones in classrooms, corridors, dining areas, queues, assemblies, the Library, reception areas, offices, public areas of the Academy or any area shared with younger pupils. Sixth Form phone use is a privilege, not a right. Misuse will result in that privilege being withdrawn.

4. Confiscation and Sanctions

All staff are required to enforce this policy consistently. If a pupil breaches this policy, the device will be confiscated immediately, and the incident recorded on Bromcom. The pupil must hand over the device without argument. Refusal to do so is a serious breach of school expectations and will be escalated immediately.

The normal consequences are:

First breach: device confiscated, breach recorded, parent or guardian informed, device returned after 24 hours.
Further breaches: device confiscated, breach recorded, parent or guardian informed, device returned after 24 hours and pupil issued with an internal sanction.

Serious breaches include refusal to hand over a device, recording without permission, use in the Academy, bullying or harassment, sharing inappropriate material, bypassing filtering, use in an examination or any use creating a safeguarding concern. Serious breaches may be escalated to the DSL or a member of the Academy Leadership Team.

5. Exceptions

Where a pupil has a clinical need to wear or access a smart or communication-enabled health device during the school day, the Academy will agree and record an appropriate exception in consultation with parents or guardians and relevant staff, and the pupil will be permitted to have this in the Academy in a Velcro pouch. This will ensure the pupil's medical needs are supported and that staff understand the agreed arrangements.

6. Visits and Fixtures

On school visits, fixtures, activities and school transport, pupils will be permitted to have their phone in their bag. However, the phone must not be seen or heard, unless the Visit Leader gives clear alternative instructions or the pupil is using the phone in an emergency. In some circumstances, Visit Leaders may require phones to be handed in, switched off, stored collectively or used only at specified times. Pupils must not photograph, film or record others on trips, fixtures or transport without staff permission.

7. Storage and responsibility

Pupils bring phones and personal devices to school at their own risk. All devices which are handed in at the start of the school day or which are confiscated during the school day will be stored securely. Any personal device found unattended must be handed immediately to a member of staff or at Main Reception.

8. Responsibilities

Staff are required to support and enforce this policy consistently. Parents and guardians are expected to support the Academy by reinforcing the policy at home. Pupils are responsible for ensuring that any device brought to school is switched off and handed in at the start of the school day.