

Mobile Phone and Digital Technology Policy

Approving Body	Trust
Date of Last Review	June 2026
Statutory (Y/N)	Y
Responsible Officer	BMAT CEO for and on behalf of the Trust

I. Policy statement – ‘Never Used, Seen or Heard’

Beacon Academy Trust schools recognise that mobile phones are an important part of students’ lives and acknowledges their value for communication and safety outside of school hours. However, we believe that the school day should be a time when students can focus fully on their learning, social interactions, and personal development without the distraction of mobile devices.

“During the school day, we focus on learning together, connecting face-to-face, and developing the skills our students need to thrive. Mobile phones have their place, but that place is not during school hours.”

This policy allows students to bring mobile phones to school but prohibits their use during the school day to create an environment that prioritises face-to-face communication, concentration, and wellbeing.

II. Statutory basis

This policy is made with regard to the Department for Education guidance ‘Mobile phones in schools’ (updated January 2026), which requires schools to be mobile phone free environments throughout the school day by default, and to the relevant provisions of the **Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Act**, which place this expectation on a statutory footing from 29 June 2026. This ban includes other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video) in accordance with the DfE definition of smart technology.

It should be read alongside the schools’ behaviour, information technology security and E-Safety policies, the home school agreement and the sixth form code of conduct where applicable.

III. Our approach

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This policy is built on clear boundaries, consistency, and care for our students' educational and social development.

Core Principles

- a. **Focus on Learning:** The school day is dedicated to education, free from digital distractions
- b. **The Power of Presence and Face-to-Face Connection:** We prioritise real world social interaction and relationship building
- c. **Clarity and Consistency:** All members of our community understand and follow the same clear rules
- d. **Safeguarding Wellbeing:** We protect students from the pressures and risks associated with constant connectivity during school hours
- e. **Digital Literacy:** We teach responsible technology use through our curriculum, not through unrestricted access

IV. Policy rules

Bringing Phones to School

- a. Students **may bring mobile phones to school** for use before they arrive on site and after they leave the school site, but they must **never be used, seen or heard** once they enter the school site.
- b. This applies from the moment a student enters the school site until they leave at the end of the day, including breakfast and after school activities
- c. Phones must be switched off completely (not just on silent) and kept out of sight in bags throughout the school day. The standard that applies throughout the school day is simple: phones and similar devices must be **never used, seen or heard.**
- d. The school accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged phones

During the School Day

Mobile phones or other similar devices must not be **used, seen or heard** at any time during the school day, including:

- e. All lessons
- f. Break times
- g. Lunch periods
- h. Moving between lessons
- i. Before morning registration
- j. Assemblies
- k. Any other time on school premises including before and after school activities

'Seen' includes:

- l. Being held in hands
- m. Being on desks, tables, or other surfaces
- n. Being in pockets but seen
- o. Any seen earbuds, headphones, smart glasses or smartwatches being used for communication or media

V. What happens if a phone is used, seen or heard

Used, Seen or Heard once (four week confiscation, excluding school holidays):

- a. Phone (and all other linked devices) will be confiscated immediately by staff
- b. Phone will be stored securely in the school office
- c. Phone will be retained by the school for four school weeks from the date it is seen. It will be returned to the parent/carer at the end of that period

Used, Seen or Heard twice (eight school weeks confiscation, excluding school holidays):

- d. Phone will be confiscated
- e. Phone will be retained by the school for eight school weeks from the date it is seen, and will only be returned to the parent/carer at the end of that period
- f. Meeting with form tutor or head of year to discuss compliance

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Persistent breaches:

- g. Student will be required to hand in phone at the start of each school day for a fixed period
- h. Further sanctions in line with the School's behaviour policy
- i. Loss of privilege to bring phone to school

Refusal to hand over phone:

- j. This will be treated as defiance and dealt with according to the school's behaviour policy

VI. Exemptions

The following exemptions may apply with prior approval:

Sixth Form Students

- a. Sixth Form students may use phones in the Gold Study Centre and Platinum lounge only for educational purposes, this is a privilege that may be withdrawn if abused. Phones must remain off and out of sight in all lessons, corridors, and communal areas shared with younger students
- b. Students must adhere to the Beal Sixth Form (BSF) Code of Conduct

Medical or SEND Requirements

- c. Students with specific medical needs (e.g. diabetes monitoring apps) may be granted exemption
- d. Must be agreed in writing with the Principal/Headteacher
- e. Documented in student's care plan or SEND support plan
- f. Use must be limited strictly to the approved medical/SEND purpose
- g. Supporting students with medical needs policy

Approved School Activities

- h. School trips or educational visits where staff have explicitly permitted phone use
- i. Must be clearly communicated to students in advance
- j. Educational visits policy

Emergency Situations

- k. In genuine emergency situations, students should speak to a member of staff who will facilitate necessary contact
- l. Students should not use their own phones but should request to use school phones or staff assistance

VII. Smart watches and other devices

- a. Smart watches may be worn but must not be used for communication, internet access, or media during the school day
- b. Passive fitness tracking is permitted only where the watch or device is silenced and delivers no notifications, alerts, messages or calls during the school day. If a smartwatch is seen or heard delivering any notification, it will be treated as a breach in the same way as a phone and confiscated
- c. If a smart watch or fitness tracker is used for prohibited purposes, it will be treated as a mobile phone breach and confiscated
- d. Other electronic devices (laptop, tablets, gaming devices, smart glasses, fitness trackers, ear pods and any other wearable smart technology) are subject to the same rules.

VIII. Educational programme

We will support students' digital literacy through:

- a. Dedicated curriculum time for online safety, digital citizenship, and healthy technology use
- b. Assembly themes addressing social media, screen time, and digital wellbeing

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- c. Personal Development lessons covering critical evaluation of online content, privacy, and digital footprints
- d. Parent workshops to support families in managing technology at home
- e. Regular discussions about online safety, digital citizenship, and healthy technology use
- f. Student-led workshops where young people can share experiences and strategies with peers
- g. Involving students in policy reviews to ensure our approach remains relevant and effective
- h. Open dialogue about emerging platforms, trends, and concerns
- i. Critical thinking skills to evaluate online content and understand digital manipulation
- j. Regular updates reflecting the rapidly changing digital landscape

IX. Parental partnership

We ask parents/carers to:

- a. Support this policy by discussing it with their children and why it is in their best interests
- b. Understand that this policy exists to support their child's learning and wellbeing
- c. Avoid contacting students directly during the school day (contact the school office in emergencies)
- d. Use the school office or year teams as the main points of contact during school hours
- e. Home school agreement

X. Safeguarding

Students who have concerns related to online behaviour, bullying, or any safeguarding matter should report this to a trusted adult immediately. Staff will respond appropriately and in line with safeguarding procedures.

In accordance with KCSIE, all staff are trained to recognise online safeguarding concerns including:

- a. Cyberbullying and online harassment
- b. Sexual violence and harassment, including sharing of indecent images
- c. Online radicalisation
- d. Child sexual exploitation and grooming
- e. Exposure to harmful content

While we currently have no significant safeguarding concerns related to mobile phones or social media, we remain vigilant. Students should report any concerns to a trusted adult (staff member, Designated Safeguarding Lead, or via our reporting systems), and all reports will be taken seriously and handled in accordance with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Online incidents will be treated with the same seriousness as offline incidents.

- [BHS Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [BBIH Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [TFA Safeguarding Policy](#)