



MACMILLAN ACADEMY POST 16

MOBILE PHONE & SMART DEVICE POLICY 2026/2027

CORE EXPECTATION

Lesson time and LIFE sessions are PHONE-FREE. Phones must be switched off or on silent, stored out of sight in a bag or pocket, and must not be used for research or learning activities.

Rationale

Post 16 students are young adults and are expected to develop the independence, judgement and self-discipline needed for university, employment and adult life. This includes using mobile phones and smart technology responsibly. However, personal devices must never interfere with teaching, learning, attendance, participation or the learning of others.

The Department for Education's statutory guidance on mobile phones in schools expects schools to be mobile-phone-free by default, while specifically recognising that sixth-form students may be permitted access at certain limited times and locations to reflect their increased independence and responsibility. This Post 16 policy adopts that principle: greater freedom outside taught sessions is matched by a clear and non-negotiable expectation during learning.

Scope

For this policy, 'mobile phone' includes smartphones and other personal communication or smart technology with similar functionality, including devices capable of messaging, receiving notifications, recording audio/video or accessing social media. Smart watches and personal headphones/earbuds are also covered where their use creates distraction or enables communication during learning.

Non-Negotiable Rule During Lessons and LIFE sessions

- Mobile phones are strictly prohibited during all timetabled lessons and LIFE sessions.
- Phones must be switched off or placed on silent and stored completely out of sight in a bag or pocket before the lesson/LIFE session begins.
- A phone placed face-down on a desk, held in a student's hand, kept on a lap or otherwise visible is not considered to be stored away.
- Phones must not be checked for messages, notifications, social media or any other personal purpose during learning time.
- Mobile phones must not be used for research, calculators, photographs, accessing Teams, taking notes, checking the time or any other educational purpose. Academy-approved devices and resources must be used instead.

- Headphones/earbuds must be removed and stored away unless a member of staff has explicitly authorised their use through an approved Academy device/activity.
- Students must not photograph, film or record staff or students without explicit permission.

The principle is simple: if learning is taking place, the phone is away.

Responsible Use Outside Taught Sessions

Post 16 students may use mobile phones responsibly during non-timetabled periods, break and lunchtime in designated Post 16 only areas, subject to Academy expectations. They must not use phones in a way that disrupts independent study, creates a safeguarding concern, involves inappropriate content, photography/recording, bullying or harassment, or undermines the wider Academy mobile-phone policy.

Independent Study

Independent study is still learning time. Students are expected to manage their phone use so that it does not prevent productive study. Where a member of staff directs a student to put a phone away during supervised study, intervention, catch-up, Ready to Learn or another academic activity, the instruction must be followed immediately.

Sanctions for Misuse

Post 16 students are expected to respond to a reminder or instruction immediately. Repeated misuse will be treated as a failure to meet Post 16 expectations rather than as a non compliance about the device itself. Sanctions will be in accordance with the Post 16 Disciplinary Code.

Exceptions and Reasonable Adjustments

Exceptions will only be made where there is a genuine medical, safeguarding, disability or other exceptional need. Any agreed adjustment should normally be authorised in advance by the Head of Post 16/SEND or safeguarding team and communicated to relevant staff.

A teacher giving general permission to use a personal phone for classroom research is not an exception under this policy. Personal mobile phones are not a teaching and learning device in lessons or LIFE.

Communication with Parents/Carers

Parents/carers should not expect students to read or respond to messages during lessons or LIFE. Urgent messages during taught time should be directed through the Academy/Post 16 team. Students can respond to non-urgent communication at an appropriate permitted time.

POST 16 STANDARD

**Greater independence does not mean unrestricted phone use.
During lessons and LIFE sessions: OUT OF SIGHT. OUT OF USE. NO EXCEPTIONS**