



THE KING'S SCHOOL

GRANTHAM

Mobile Phone Policy

1 Aims

- 1.1 This is the mobile phone policy for pupils of The King's School (Academy). It sets out how the Academy meets the expectation that schools are mobile phone-free environments by default and how the Academy uses Blackout to support that expectation.
- 1.2 The aims of this policy are as follows:
 - 1.2.1 to create a calm, safe and supportive environment, free from the distraction of personal devices, in which pupils can learn and thrive;
 - 1.2.2 to protect teaching time and to remove the disruption caused by notifications, messaging and social media during the school day;
 - 1.2.3 to reduce the risks to pupil welfare that arise from unfiltered internet access on the Academy site, including bullying, sexual harassment, the sharing of indecent images and access to harmful content;
 - 1.2.4 to encourage face to face interaction at break and lunch times and to support pupils in developing healthy habits around technology;
 - 1.2.5 to set clear and consistent expectations that pupils, staff and Parents can all apply; and
 - 1.2.6 to ensure that appropriate arrangements remain available where a pupil has a medical, accessibility or safeguarding need.
- 1.3 This policy forms part of the Academy's whole school approach to behaviour and to promoting child safeguarding and wellbeing.

2 Scope and application

- 2.1 This policy applies to all pupils in Years 7 to 13.
- 2.2 This policy applies from the moment a pupil enters the Academy site through any gate until the moment they leave the site at the end of the school day. This is referred to in this policy as Gate to Gate. Walking to or from the School Field or at the School Field are included in this policy.
- 2.3 This policy also applies when a pupil is off the Academy premises while representing the Academy, on an Academy organised trip or otherwise in the care of the Academy, subject to any different arrangement notified in writing by the member of staff in charge of the activity.
- 2.4 This policy should be read alongside the Academy's Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures, and Data Protection Policy.

3 Regulatory framework

- 3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the Academy's responsibilities under:
 - 3.1.1 Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, in particular section 36, which came into force on 29 June 2026 and requires state-funded schools in England to have regard to published guidance on mobile phones;
 - 3.1.2 Education and Skills Act 2008;
 - 3.1.3 Equality Act 2010, in particular the duty to make reasonable adjustments and the Public Sector Equality Duty at section 149; and
 - 3.1.4 Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation, as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.
- 3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance:
 - 3.2.1 Mobile phones in schools (DfE, January 2026), which has effect as statutory guidance by virtue of section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026;
 - 3.2.2 Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);
 - 3.2.3 Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (DfE, July 2022, page updated July 2023); and
 - 3.2.4 Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2026).

4 Publication and availability

- 4.1.1 This policy is published on the Academy website as a policy in its own right.
- 4.1.2 This policy is available in hard copy on request and can be made available in large print or another accessible format if required.

5 Definitions

- 5.1 Mobile electronic device includes but is not limited to mobile phones, smartphones or other smart technology, tablets, laptops and MP3 players, wearable technology including smart watches, headphones and earbuds, and any device that has the ability to send or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks, or the ability to record audio or video. This is the same definition as is used in the Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils.
- 5.2 Phone is used in this policy as a convenient shorthand for any mobile electronic device brought to the Academy by a pupil for personal use. An analogue wristwatch is not a mobile electronic device and may be worn as normal.
- 5.3 Blackout means the device management application supplied by Blackout Technologies which restricts access to specified applications and device functions during a defined schedule and while a device is within a defined area.
- 5.4 The school day means the period from a pupil's arrival on the Academy site until their departure from it, including lessons, the time between lessons, break times and lunch times.

6 Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

- 6.1 The Governing Body has overall responsibility for this policy and will review its operation annually.
- 6.2 The Head Master is responsible for the implementation of this policy and may vary its operational arrangements where necessary.
- 6.3 Day to day responsibility for the application of this policy rests with the Deputy Head, supported by Heads of Year and tutors.

- 6.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for any matter arising under this policy which gives rise to a safeguarding concern.
- 6.5 The School Business Leader is responsible for the Academy's contractual and data protection arrangements with the supplier of Blackout.

7 Expectations during the school day

- 7.1 The Academy is a mobile phone-free environment by default. A pupil may bring a phone to the Academy so that it is available for the journey to and from school, but must not use it on the Academy site.
- 7.2 Pupils are encouraged not to bring a phone to the Academy at all, which remains the simplest way to comply with this policy.
- 7.3 Where a pupil does bring a phone to the Academy, from Gate to Gate the phone must be:
 - 7.3.1 stored in the pupil's bag, or in a pocket and out of sight at all times;
 - 7.3.2 silent, with all audible and vibrating alerts turned off; and
 - 7.3.3 with Blackout active and the required permissions enabled, so that the applications restricted by this policy cannot be accessed.
- 7.4 Phone must not be used, seen or heard at any point during the school day, including during lessons, break times, lunch times and the time between lessons.
- 7.5 No permission will be given to a pupil in Years 7 to 11 to use a phone during the school day, including for academic purposes. The only exceptions are those agreed under paragraph 11.
- 7.6 Smart watches, headphones and earbuds are subject to the same requirements as a phone and must be stored in the same way and from Gate to Gate.
- 7.7 Phones are not included in any Bring Your Own Device arrangement. Where the Academy permits a laptop or tablet to be used for learning, that device is used under the Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils and is not covered by the permission in this paragraph.
- 7.8 A pupil must not bring a mobile electronic device into an examination room under any circumstances, except where special arrangements for the use of a tablet or laptop have been agreed with the Head Master in writing.
- 7.9 The use of Blackout does not replace the requirements of this paragraph. A device managed by Blackout must still be stored, silent and out of sight.

8 Sixth Form

- 8.1 Students in Years 12 and 13 may use a phone in the Sixth Form Centre and the Sixth Form Study Centre.
Students in Years 12 and 13 may use a phone during their Private Study period for research and PSHE. A phone must not be used anywhere else on the Academy site and must not be used in front of younger pupils.
- 8.2 This is a privilege granted in recognition of the responsibilities carried by senior students. It may be withdrawn from an individual student or from the whole cohort where this policy is not observed.
- 8.3 The Blackout schedule applies to students in Years 12 and 13 and is coordinated with 8.1 and 8.2.

9 Use of Blackout

- 9.1 The Academy uses Blackout to restrict access to distracting applications on pupils' phones during the school day. Blackout supports this policy; it does not replace it.
- 9.2 The Blackout schedule is from 08:45 until 15:45, on Week Days, during term time.

9.3 Pupils and Parents are responsible for ensuring that:

- 9.3.1 Blackout is correctly installed and set up on the pupil's device;
- 9.3.2 the permissions required for Blackout to operate remain enabled;
- 9.3.3 the application is not deleted, disabled, uninstalled or bypassed during the Blackout schedule; and
- 9.3.4 any technical problem is reported to the Academy rather than resolved by removing or circumventing the restrictions.

9.4 Blackout does not give the Academy access to a pupil's personal content. It does not allow staff to view messages, photographs, files or browsing history, and it does not track a pupil's location by GPS.

9.5 Authorised staff can see, through the Academy's Blackout dashboard, whether a device is correctly set up and whether it is following the agreed schedule. That information is used only to administer this policy.

9.6 The Academy does not accept responsibility for the theft, loss of, or damage to any device brought onto Academy premises, whether or not it is running Blackout, and including a device that has been confiscated or handed in to staff.

10 Contact during the school day

10.1 A pupil who needs to contact a Parent during the school day must speak to a member of staff or go to the school office, from which a call can be made.

10.2 A Parent who needs to contact their child urgently during the school day must telephone the school office. A message will be relayed to the pupil promptly.

10.3 Parents must not contact a pupil directly on a personal device during the school day. Doing so places the pupil in the position of having to choose between answering and following this policy.

11 Individual adjustments for medical, accessibility and safeguarding needs

11.1 The Academy recognises that a small number of pupils need access to a phone or to a particular application during the school day for a medical, accessibility or safeguarding reason. Examples include continuous glucose monitoring, an application specified in an Education, Health and Care Plan, and an assistive application used as a reasonable adjustment for a disability.

11.2 In considering a request for using a phone the Academy will have regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments, and will not refuse a request simply because it departs from the general rule.

11.3 Where a pupil's need can be met by an adjustment to the Blackout configuration rather than by an exemption from this policy, the Academy will make that adjustment.

12 Alternative arrangements

12.1 The Academy recognises that one approach will not be technically possible for every pupil. A device may be too old to run Blackout, a pupil may not own a smartphone, or a family may prefer a different arrangement.

12.2 Where a pupil's device cannot run Blackout, or where the family would prefer an alternative, the Academy will agree an arrangement which may include:

- 12.2.1 not bringing a phone to the Academy at all;
- 12.2.2 bringing a basic phone with limited functionality;
- 12.2.3 handing the phone in at the school office at the start of the day and collecting it at the end;

- 12.3 An alternative arrangement must be agreed with the Academy. A pupil or family cannot opt out of this policy unilaterally.
- 12.4 No pupil will be disadvantaged, and no sanction will be applied, because a family cannot meet the cost of a device or of data. Any family in difficulty should contact the Deputy Head in confidence.

13 Breaches of this policy

- 13.1 The following are examples of a breach of this policy:
 - 13.1.1 using a phone at any point during the school day when this is not permitted;
 - 13.1.2 a phone being seen or heard when it should be stored;
 - 13.1.3 using headphones or earbuds during the school day;
 - 13.1.4 deleting, disabling or uninstalling Blackout during the agreed schedule;
 - 13.1.5 changing device permissions so that Blackout cannot operate;
 - 13.1.6 any other attempt to bypass the restrictions applied under this policy; and
 - 13.1.7 repeatedly failing to follow an alternative arrangement agreed under paragraph 12.
- 13.2 Breaches will be dealt with under the Academy's Behaviour Policy.
- 13.3 The Academy will distinguish between a genuine technical problem and a deliberate attempt to avoid this policy. A pupil who reports a problem promptly and cooperates in resolving it will not be sanctioned for it.
- 13.4 A refusal to hand over a phone when asked to do so by a member of staff is a separate and more serious breach of discipline and will be dealt with under the Behaviour Policy. Staff will not remove a device from a pupil by force.
- 13.5 Where breaches persist, the Head Master may require that a pupil does not bring a phone to the Academy, temporarily or permanently.

14 Confiscation, search and safeguarding

- 14.1 A phone may be confiscated and, in appropriate circumstances, searched. The Academy's procedures on searching, screening and confiscation are set out in the Behaviour Policy and follow the Department for Education's advice.
- 14.2 A confiscated phone will be held securely at the school office and returned in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- 14.3 Where the use of a phone gives rise to a safeguarding concern, the matter will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and the Academy's safeguarding procedures will be followed.
- 14.4 The rules on photographs and images, on the sharing of nude and semi-nude images, and on upskirting are set out in the Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils and apply in full to any device brought onto the Academy site.

15 Record keeping and monitoring

- 15.1 Breaches of this policy are recorded on the Academy's behaviour management system.
- 15.2 The Deputy Head will report to the Senior Leadership Team each term on the number and pattern of breaches, the number of individual adjustments in place, and any technical or equalities issues arising.
- 15.3 Records are retained in accordance with the Academy's retention schedule.

16 Review

16.1 This policy will be reviewed annually, and sooner in response to:

- 16.1.1 feedback from pupils, Parents and staff;
- 16.1.2 a change in safeguarding or educational guidance, or in the law;
- 16.1.3 developments in device technology or in the Blackout product;
- 16.1.4 evidence from the Academy's own monitoring; and
- 16.1.5 a change to the Academy's wider behaviour or digital strategy.

17 Version control

Date of adoption of this policy	September 2026
Date of last review of this policy	September 2026
Date for next review of this policy	September 2027
Policy owner (SMT)	Deputy Head