

Parent Carer FAQ Sheet for the New Mobile Phone Policy - September 2024

Hinchingsbrooke School

Hard Work High Standards Kindness



Mobile Phones – extract from the Parent Carer Handbook

Students are not allowed to have access to their mobile phones at Hinchingsbrooke unless they have a medical pass for doing so (for example if they are diabetic or wear a hearing aid). Any other mobile phones (and headphones/earbuds) seen or heard after the student has entered the school site, and before the end of the school day, will be confiscated. Confiscated mobile phones and/or headphones/earbuds can be picked up at the end of the school day from the Pastoral Office, however repeated instances of these items needing to be confiscated will result in further measures being put in place.

Please encourage your child to switch their mobile device off during the school day. If you need to get an urgent message to your child during the school day, please contact their Student Support Officer or Main Reception.

Taking photographs or videos during the school day is not allowed and the posting of words or photographs about the school which are damaging to its reputation is unacceptable. If you or your child have concerns over any aspect of school life, we are happy to listen to these and try to put it right. If, however it becomes a topic for discussion on social media, we view this as inappropriate and unconstructive.

Why is Hinchingsbrooke prohibiting the use of mobile phones in school?

In March 2024, the Department for Education directed all schools to prohibit the use of mobile phones in school. The guidance can be found [here](#).

How do I get an urgent message to my child during the school day?

You can either contact our Main Reception (01480 375700) or your child's Student Support Officer, either of whom can pass a message on. In addition, students will be able to access their mobile phones once their period 5 teacher has dismissed them so can pick up messages straight after school.

How can my child contact me during the school day if there is an emergency?

Students can see their Student Support Officer during the day who can pass any urgent messages on to parents and carers. If they are unwell, you will receive a phone call either from the Student Support Officer or the Medical Room Manager to ask you to collect them as soon as possible.

Can my child use Teams during the school day to message staff, check homework or for information about clubs?

No, students will not be able to access Teams during the school day on their mobile phones. However, students will be able to access Teams when in a computer room and can also access the computers in the LRC (Learning Resource Centre) at break and lunchtimes. Students are able to go and see staff before school, after school and at break or lunchtime. Any messages about clubs will be passed to students by their Form Tutor. Students will only need to check homework details when they are at home.

My child needs to use their phone for a medical reason – will they still be able to do this?

Yes, any student needing to use their phone for a medical reason (for example to check their levels if they are diabetic or to adjust their hearing device) will be issued with a pass to allow them to continue doing so during the school day. There will also be a pinned note on Arbor in case the pass is lost. If these students use their mobile phone for any other purpose this will be followed-up with a lunchtime detention with their Head of Year in the first instance.

My child has a medical reason for using their phone during the school day but has not been issued with a pass – what should I do?

Please contact your child's Student Support Officer so that a pass can be created for them, and a note added on Arbor.

Will students be using their mobile phones in lessons at all?

No, students will not be using their mobile phones in lessons. Where alternative technology is required we are making sure this is in place ready for September 2024.

Will staff be using mobile phones during the school day?

Staff have been asked to limit the use of their mobile phones during the day and to ensure that where used this is for professional use only. For example, some staff may need to use their phone to take a register if not based in a classroom.

My child has had their phone confiscated at school. How do they get it back?

Students need to go to their pastoral office at the end of the day to retrieve any items confiscated during the day. If a student's mobile phone and/or earbuds/headphones are confiscated three times in a half term parents/carers will need to come into school to collect these items and to discuss the matter with a member of the Year team.

What if my child has their phone confiscated during period 5?

If a teacher confiscates a student's mobile phone during the final period of the day, they will keep hold of the phone and return it to the student at the end of the lesson.

What if my child refuses to hand over their mobile phone/earbuds/headphones?

If a student refuses to hand over any of these items a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be called to assist in the first instance. Continued refusal will be treated as defiance which could lead to the student being placed in the Blue Room or being suspended depending on the context.

Have smart watches been banned?

At this stage we are not prohibiting students from wearing a smart watch to school, although it is already school policy that these have to be removed for any examinations. If students use their smart watch to replicate their mobile phone in any way (ie they are not just checking the time) this will be recorded on Arbor. When we review the policy in the Autumn, we will consider whether smart watches need to be prohibited based on the number of incidents recorded of their misuse on Arbor.

How will my child know how much is on their meal account?

There are two options to ensure students know how much they have to spend on their account. The first is to check this before leaving for school. The second is to ask any member of staff (the Form Tutor is the best person as students see this person every morning) who can get this information from Arbor.

If my child is a Sixth Form student, how do they check their school emails/UCAS status/travel timetable?

Sixth Form students will not use their mobile phones in lessons, however, they will be able to use their mobile phones (and earbuds/headphones) when in Hinchingsbrooke House or on the Sixth Form lawn during their free time.