

Smartphone free school policy

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Purpose

- 1 To establish clarity around expectations for a Smartphone Free Alderbrook and to ensure a safe, focused and conducive learning environment for all students.

Scope

- 2 This policy applies to all students (Years 7-13) attending Alderbrook School and Sixth Form.

Aim of the policy

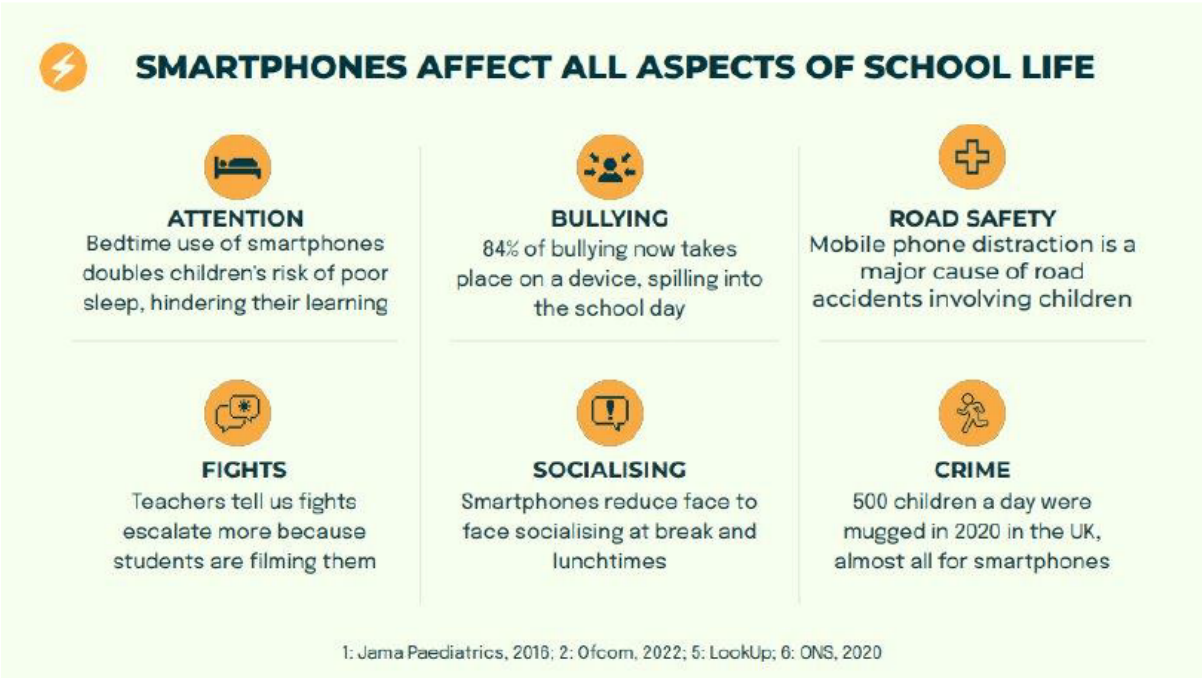
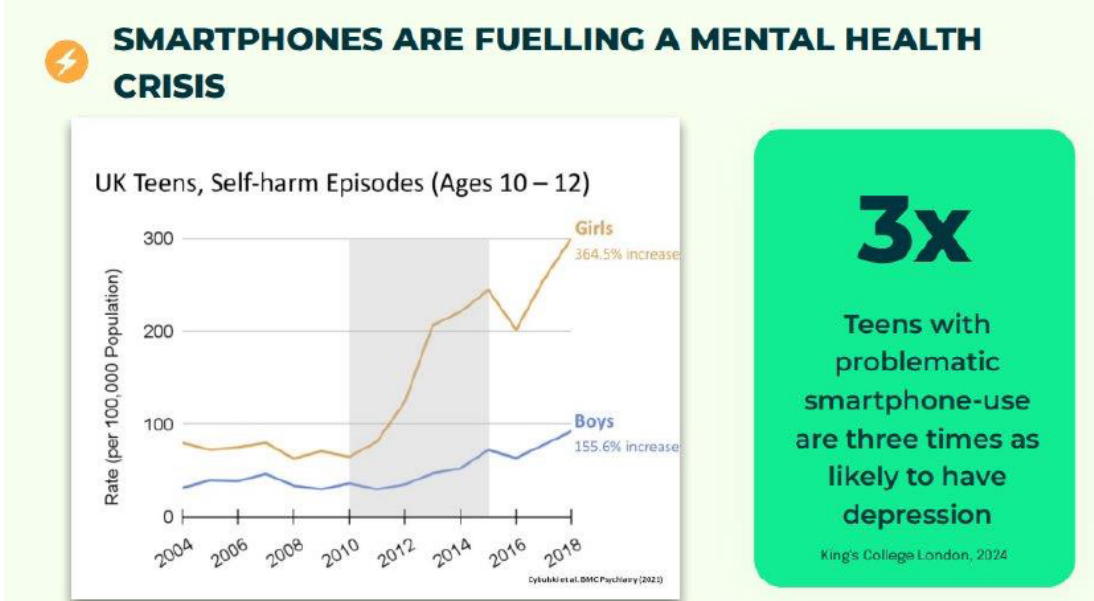
- 3 Maintain the highest standards of education through a distraction and disruption free school environment.
- 4 Ensure the maximum level of safeguarding of students on the Alderbrook site.
- 5 Ensure maximum levels of safeguarding, health and wellbeing of young people in our community.

Policy Statement

- 6 We are a Smartphone Free School.
- 7 We make a clear distinction between a simple phone (without the potential for internet access) and a smartphone or any smart device (with internet or potential internet access).
- 8 Students are prohibited from bringing any smartphone or smart devices into school.
- 9 The policy mitigates the safeguarding, health and safety risks related to early access to smart devices and supports the school site being a safe environment for all students.
- 10 The policy supports families to make their own decision about when it is appropriate for their child to have access to smart technology.
- 11 The policy is enforced with significant consequences for students who bring smartphones into school.
- 12 Smartphones and other pocket smart devices that access the internet are prohibited from September 2026. This policy has been introduced to minimise disruption to the school environment and to help tackle cyber bullying, sexting, sharing of indecent images, online grooming and device addiction. The impact of smartphones on children's mental health and development is well documented. Excessive exposure to social media platforms can increase anxiety, depression and even lead to suicidal ideation.
- 13 Please note that throughout this policy, 'smartphone' refers to any electronic device with potential access to the internet. This includes kindles, tablets and smart watches.

Rationale

- 14 Over the past two years a significant number of studies have been completed providing undisputable evidence of the harm of smartphones on the learning, behaviour, wellbeing and safety of children when provided with access at an early age.



- 15 The school is responsible for safeguarding students during the school day; this job has become increasingly difficult due to students coming into school with smart devices that potentially have harmful or inappropriate content on them and functions that enable inappropriate behaviour or cyberbullying e.g. access to social media, photo and video capability. Social media is a huge distraction and students increasingly display behaviours indicative of addiction.

Phones Years 7 - 9 Students

- 16 Parents and carers who wish their child to carry a mobile phone to school must adhere to the following policy.
- 17 The phone must be one of the following types: Nokia 105 (approx. £20-25), Samsung E1200 (approx. £64-70) or Alcatel 10.16G (approx. £16-20) or other phones that must have:
- No potential to access the internet
 - No photo or recording capability
 - No access to any apps.
- 18 Any non-approved phone will be classified as a 'prohibited phone' and confiscated (see section 10).

- Approved phones:



Nokia 105



Samsung E1200



Alcatel 10.16G

- 19 The phone must be clearly marked with the student's name.
- 20 The phone must be switched off before the student enters the school site and placed in their school bag.
- 21 The phone must not be brought out of their bag at any point during the school day and should only be used after school when the student is out of sight of the school entrances.
- 22 The phone remains the responsibility of the student at all times and the school will not take action if it is lost or stolen.
- 23 In addition to smartphones, all smart watches and any other pocket-sized devices that can enable a student to access the internet are prohibited. If such devices are discovered or seen, then the same consequence will be given as for a prohibited phone on the school site.
- 24 Any phone that is seen outside of a school bag or heard during the school day (school approved or otherwise) will automatically be confiscated (see section 10 for information on confiscation periods).

- 25 Simple GPS trackers such as airtags or the equivalent are permitted if parents and carers want to track their child's location.

Consequences (Years 7-9)

- 26 Any phone that is seen outside of a school bag or heard during the school day (school approved or otherwise) will automatically be confiscated. This includes phones that have been heard from within a student's uniform or bag.
- 27 Any prohibited phone which is seen before or after school, within sight of the school entrances will automatically be confiscated.
- 28 When a phone is confiscated, it will be handed in at reception and locked away.
- 29 When an approved, simple phone is confiscated, it will be securely locked away until collection by the student at the end of the day.
- 30 Prohibited phones will be securely locked away and returned after 4 weeks (of term time).
- If the 4 weeks ends during a school holiday, students receive their phone back on return to school, and not before.
 - There will be no option for the SIM card to be removed – it will be confiscated and kept along with the phone.
 - If needed, the student will be allowed to use a school phone to contact their parents and carers before they leave the school.
- 31 A student refusing to hand over their phone will be immediately taken to the reflection room; parent/carers will be asked to come into school to support the confiscation of the phone.
- 32 A student that continues to refuse to hand over their phone by the end of the day could be given a 1-day suspension and will have to hand over their smartphone for confiscation on return from the suspension. Failure to do so will result in a further consequence.

Phones Year 10-11 Students

- 33 Smart Phones are banned items at Alderbrook School at all times of the school day for Year 10-11 students, which includes immediately before and after school.
- 34 If a parent allows their child to bring a Smart Phone on site, because, for example, they need to be contactable for meeting / travel home at the end of the school day, this is entirely at the student's own risk and the device must be switched off and kept out of sight in the student's bag or locker where appropriate.
- 35 If for any reason, a student is unable to store their phone safely out of sight, it is to be handed in immediately at the start of the school day at the KS4 Pastoral Offices. If students need to contact parents in an emergency, this will be facilitated where appropriate by the Pastoral Team.
- 36 If a student is seen or heard on the school site at any time of day with a mobile phone, whether actively using or not, it will be confiscated immediately, with no argument.

- 37 The following sanctions will be applied consistently:
- 1st Offence – Phone confiscated. Student will have a 30-minute detention after school, parents notified.
 - 2nd Offence – Phone confiscated. Student will have a 60-minute detention after school. Parents will have to collect the phone from Pupil Reception at the end of the school day.
 - 3rd Offence - Phone confiscated. Student will have a day in our Reflection Room. Parents will have to collect the phone from Pupil Reception after having a meeting with a member of the Pastoral Team.
- 38 Any student who refuses to hand over their mobile phone to a member of staff upon request, or initially refuses on more than one occasion, is at risk of suspension. They will also be directed to hand their phone in to the Pastoral Team for the remainder of the school year.

Phones Sixth Form Students

- 39 Students in the Sixth Form are able to use their smartphones in the Sixth form area only at BREAK AND LUNCHTIMES ONLY. Sixth Form students will not be permitted to use their phones outside of the Sixth Form Centre, when moving around the site; this includes headphones. Phones cannot be used during independent study. If phones are visible outside of the Sixth Form Centre or in Sixth Form lessons, then the phone will be confiscated. The 6th Form Team will monitor confiscations, speak to students and get parents to collect the mobile on the third and subsequent occasions.
- 1st Offence – Phone confiscated.
 - 2nd Offence – Phone confiscated. Student will have a 30-minute detention after school, parents notified.
 - 3rd Offence – Phone confiscated. Student will have a 60-minute detention after school.
 - 4th Offence - Phone confiscated. Parents will have to collect the phone from Pupil Reception after having a meeting with a member of the 6th Form Team

Reasonable adjustments

- 40 Reasonable adjustments and flexibility will be made for certain disabilities or medical conditions. In each instance this needs to be prearranged with the school and the school will work with parents and carers to determine the specific needs of each student on an individual basis. Only the Headteacher, or delegated staff, may exempt a student from this policy.

Searching for devices

- 41 There may be occasions when a member of staff is required to search a student's personal belongings to look for a mobile phone or other banned item, if this is deemed necessary in order to maintain high standards of behaviour and a safe environment. Any such search will be conducted in accordance with the DfE guidance on searching and screening.
- 42 If during a search an 'approved phone' is found it will not be confiscated provided it does not contain any evidence relating to an investigation AND when it is found it is switched off.
- 43 All prohibited phones and approved phones that are not switched off AND in a school bag will automatically be confiscated as part of a search. This confiscation will follow the consequence process below.

- 44 Students that have previously brought banned items into school may be subject to periodic bag searches

Trips and Residential

- 45 The school's smartphone policy remains the same on all trips: smartphones are not permitted. Trip leaders will have contact details of all parents in an emergency and likewise can be contacted by school during the trip.
- 46 Residential Trips. Whilst Residential Trip leaders will have contact details of all parents in an emergency and will be contactable, the rules around smartphones may be adapted, for example when a location or activity make it appropriate to do so. In this instance, these rules will be clearly communicated in advance to parents and students.