

Policy/Procedure Name:	School Mobile Phone & Smart Technology Device Policy: Guidance and Rationale		
Policy/Procedure Number:	SMT039		
Date of Approval:	22 nd July 2026		
Effective Date:	September 2026		
Revised Date:	Not applicable - New Policy		
Review by Date:	September 2028		
Policy/Procedure Author:	Head of School		
Policy/Procedure Owner:	CEO		
Management Committee Approved By:	TLT		
Governor /Trustee Committee Approved By (where appropriate):	Not applicable		
For Action By:	All staff, All School Students (see student version)		
For Information to:	All Parents and Visitors. All College Students		
Approval requested to upload on the Treloar Website:	Yes ☐ (tick if requested)		
Who is carrying out EIA? (see details of EIA in appendix)		Date of EIA?	

1. Policy/ Procedure Aim

- The aim is to support learning, improve behaviour, and protect student wellbeing.

2. What is the national guidance?

The Department for Education (DfE) has strengthened its expectations around mobile phones and smart technology devices in schools. The latest statutory guidance (updated 19 February 2026) [Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK](#) states that:

- Schools should be **“mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only.”**
- schools should prohibit the use of mobile phones and 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) **“throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.”**
- Schools must include mobile phone rules as part of their behaviour policy to help maintain a calm, safe, and focused environment.
- Boarding schools and residential schools **should prohibit the use of mobile phones and devices throughout the teaching day.** They should develop appropriate policies regarding the use of mobile phones during the rest of their students’ time at school, which safeguards and promotes the welfare of the children in their care in accordance with the [boarding schools: national minimum standards](#) and [residential special schools: national minimum standards](#). This includes facilitating arrangements so boarders can contact their parents and families in private, at a time that is suitable for both parties, considering relevant time zones for international students.

3. Why is this guidance in place?

Government guidance highlights several reasons:

- **To reduce distraction and improve learning:** Mobile phones and smart technology devices are known to distract students, disrupt lessons, and make it harder for students to focus.
- **To support wellbeing and reduce anxiety:** High levels of phone and social media use are linked to negative effects on wellbeing, including anxiety, peer pressure, and poor sleep. Removing phones during the school day can help provide a calmer, safer environment.
- **To reduce bullying and safeguard students:**
 - 1 in 5 students has experienced online bullying.
 - The government aims to protect students from harmful online interactions during the school day.

- **To improve behaviour** Removing phones and smart technology devices across the school day has been shown to help improve conduct and whole school culture.

For clarification in this document school areas refer to Yellow, Green, Orange and Grey wings and the main corridor from Jowett Centre to Heywood room.

There are designated areas for Sixth Form, College and staff to use their mobile phone.

School age students access education and therapy rooms across the site and there will be an expectation that visible mobile phones from staff and College students will be challenged between the hours of 9am to 4pm if being used in a non-designated area.

As a safety precaution staff throughout the site are encouraged not to use their phones when moving around the building to support their own safety and focus.

Staff, Sixth Form and College students who are using their mobile phone device in more communal areas (e.g. Piazza) will ask to be mindful if a school age student is around to support this policy's focus of mobile phones not **seen / heard**.

4. What does this mean for Treloar school?

We currently allow school age students access to devices during breaktimes and transition times. The updated government guidance now recommends that mobile phones should not be **used, seen, or heard** at any point during the school day, including breaktimes. This means we need to change our rules and guidance to:

Mobile phones are allowed on site but not **used, seen, or heard** during the school day. They should be away in bags or stored and not retrieved till the end of the day.

Our priority is to ensure expectations are clear, consistently applied, and communicated to all (families, students and staff).

5. Reasonable adjustments

The government guidance allows reasonable adjustments and recognises that schools like ours will need to implement exceptions for students if they need their phone as their communication device, medical reasons (e.g. diabetes monitoring), safeguarding or family circumstances. Any such arrangements will be handled **case by case**, with safety and student welfare as priorities. There will be an expectation that those students only use their device for this purpose only. The use of smart technology is embedded into some routines to support extension of learning tasks for example education apps for revision, homework.

For school aged students with AAC devices which have online access they will be supported to ensure that they are not accessing online / social media / mobile phone content during the school day. They will of course be able to continue to use their device to research and support extension of learning tasks.

6. What does this mean for school aged students? (Primary up to and including Key Stage 4)

Students should:

- Follow the school's mobile phone expectations at all times.
- Understand that phones cannot be used during breaks or lunch under national guidance.
- Focus on face-to-face socialising, activities, and wellbeing during the school day.
- Speak to a trusted adult or Safeguarding if they need help with an online issue or wellbeing concern.

7. What does this mean on Gloucester House?

- School aged day and residential student's mobile phones will be away, not used, seen or heard from 9am till 4pm. However, some school residential students do call home and will still have the opportunity to maintain contact.
- Sixth form day and residential student's mobile phones should not be used in front or near school aged students. This could be used in personal bedrooms or an agreed designated area that will be shared with students at the beginning of each year.

8. What does this mean for Sixth Form?

The national DfE guidance explicitly allows schools to make limited, location-specific exceptions for Sixth Form students, reflecting their increased independence. However, all devices should not be **used, seen, or heard** in school rooms, corridors and social spaces.

Sixth form can have limited access to devices in Sixth Form designated spaces but this should be away from school age students. In all other areas of the school, including corridors, social spaces, breaktime and lunchtime, Sixth Form students should follow the whole-school mobile-free expectations ("**not used, seen or heard**"). 6th Form designated spaces will be agreed and shared with students at the beginning of each year.

As a school we cannot allow:

- Phone use in corridors
- Phone use at break / lunch in shared spaces
- Phone use where it undermines a whole-school mobile phone-free culture

For students who want to use the Jowett Centre shop may need to use their device to purchase items after 3:30pm.

The use of devices in Sixth Form is permitted within clear guidelines and expectations. Healthy use of device will continue to be encouraged. If devices inhibit individual learning or the learning of others then sanctions may need to be reviewed.

9. What does this mean for staff?

Staff are expected to model the behaviours they want students to follow this includes not using personal phones in student-facing areas.

- Do not use your personal mobile phone in school corridors, playgrounds, or shared school spaces.
- Keep your phone out of sight when moving around the building, unless using it for an emergency or operational school purpose.

Visible staff use weakens the message we give to students about focus, wellbeing and boundaries, and makes it harder for them to understand and trust the expectations we are asking them to follow.

Handsets are used to capture students care, therapeutic input and medication. These are attached to Treloar branded lanyards to ensure there is no confusion with their use.

Trust leaders who take responsibility for the safeguarding phone number have work phones this is to support the safeguarding and smooth running of the school, college and wider organisation. Students and staff are encouraged to challenge staff to confirm the device.

Staff may be asked to support students on a school trip. A staff member may be asked to take their personal phone to ensure they are contactable. However, there is a high level of expectation that this is only to be out and visible / being used to make emergency / logistical calls that will further support the students they are supervising.

Some staff may need to use their mobile device briefly to complete two factor authentication to get onto education and academic sites e.g., accessing the AQA websites

The Jowett Centre is an agreed mobile use space for visitors and staff.

If using the Piazza for staff break times, please be mindful of who is around you. If school students are sharing the space, please relocate to a different area if you want to use your mobile phone.

10. What does this mean for College?

The use of devices in College is permitted within clear guidelines and expectations around the wider environment. Even though College students are not part of the school's roll, the DfE guidance still applies to the school environment. The DfE requires schools to operate "mobile phone-free environments by default..."

throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.” Ofsted will also check whether everyone present on site understands and follows the expectations consistently.

Therefore, all College students using shared corridors, shared buildings, or passing through school-supervised areas should follow the same expectations as school students and staff:

- Mobile phones should **not be used, seen, or heard** anywhere in school designated zones / shared school college spaces during the school day. This includes corridors, communal areas, outdoor spaces, and all school-designated zones.
- Phones may be used only in College and sixth Form only areas that are *not* accessible to school age students.
- College students should switch phones off/ store them when moving across the shared site.
- The Jowett Centre is an agreed mobile use space for visitors and staff.

Why?

- Consistency is required to maintain a single, calm, safe culture.
- Mixed messaging undermines the school’s policy and creates enforcement issues for staff.
- It ensures that younger students are not exposed to visible phone use that contradicts the school’s rules.

11. What does this mean for families?

Families can support the school by:

- Reminding their child / young person that phones should not be used during the school day.
- Ensuring your child devices remain stored according to school rules (e.g., in bags, switched off, or handed in).
- Encouraging healthy, balanced use of technology outside school.
- When on site ensuring that your device is away
- When on site recognise the school areas where no mobile use is permitted

When joining school for events, e.g., Sports Day we recognise family members may use their devices as a camera. We ask that when not being used to take photographs that the device is away.

12. External care teams, case workers, therapists, social workers

External care teams, case workers, therapists, social workers may need to make calls during the school day to support the welfare of the student they are working with. This must be made away from students and not visible / heard by students who they are not contracted to work with.

13. What does this mean for visitors (including, Governors, Parents, contractors, funders)?

Visitors should also follow the DfE expectation that mobile phones are not used in the school environment, as the guidance applies to everyone on site during the school day, not only students. This supports the requirement that schools operate a clear, consistently implemented mobile-free environment. Any contractors needing to take phones of equipment e.g., wheelchair services will be asked to do this away from students.

Visitors should:

- Keep mobile phones out of sight while on school premises during the school day.
- Not use mobile phones in corridors, classrooms, playgrounds, dining areas, or any shared spaces where school students are present.
- Use phones only if a member of staff directs them to a private, non-student area
- Follow staff instructions regarding safeguarding and digital expectations.
- The Jowett Centre is an agreed mobile use space.

Signage: “The school is a mobile phone-free environment. Visitors must keep mobile phones out of sight while in school areas.”

14. Supporting a mobile phone free environment

To maintain a consistent mobile phone free environment, staff presence and consistent language in corridors is essential. Staff should act on any visible device and use simple, consistent phrases:

- “Phones away, thank you.”
- “Remember phone free school during the day.”
- “Pop that away please, you can keep it out of sight.”

Tone guidance: Short, neutral, consistent, not confrontational, not punitive.

Staff responsibility in corridors:

- If you see a phone being used - issue the standard reminder.
- If a student does not comply – report ideally to student’s teacher if not Safeguarding (the next steps of our behaviour policy will be implemented. The DfE explicitly supports the use of sanctions, including confiscation, where rules are breached.
- If a staff member or visitor does not comply, please inform Safeguarding

15. Implications of Policy/Procedure

15.1 Training Requirements

- Not applicable

15.2 Communication Requirement

- This policy will be communicated to staff via SharePoint, in staff meetings and in the half termly staff briefing
- It will be communicated to school students, using a student version of the policy in Form Time and in School Assembly
- It will be communicated to college students in Tutorial
- It will be communicated to parents/carers via our parents/carers newsletter and formally in writing via a letter from our Head of School
- It will be available on our website and will be referred to in our visitors' guide, and Treloar signing in procedures

15.3 Inclusive communications

If you require this document in an alternative format, such as large print, audio description or a colour background, please contact quality@treloar.org.uk

16. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed every two years, as a minimum.

17. Links to other related policies, procedures or documents (internal)

- Treloar's Visitor Guide
- SMT012 Treloar's Behaviour and Emotional Support Policy
- SMT020 Safeguarding Policy
- SMT056 - Safer Working Practice Guidelines – Staff code of conduct
- SMT076 Visitors and Guest Speakers policy
- SMT077 Care Providers (external Contracts)
- SMT091 Professional Visitors to School and College Learning Environments Policy and Procedures
- ICT004 E Safety Policy

18. References

- **DfE Official Guidance (Feb 2026)** “Mobile Phones in Schools – Guidance for Schools”
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools>
- **Ofsted Blog Explaining How Inspectors Will Apply the Guidance (Jan 2026)**
“What the government’s updated guidance on mobile phones means for school inspections”
<https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk/2026/01/23/what-the-governments-updated-guidance-on-mobile-phones-means-for-school-inspections/>
- **House of Commons Library Briefing (Jan 2026)**
“Mobile phones in schools (England) – Research Briefing”
<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10241/>
- **Wrigleys Solicitors Summary of Updated DfE Guidance (Feb 2026)**
A legal commentary explaining implications and policy options
<https://www.wrigleys.co.uk/news/education/updated-dfe-guidance-on-mobile-phones-in-schools>

19. Revision History

Listed below is a brief audit trail, detailing amendments made to this policy procedure in last 4 years

Date	Page/para No.	Brief description of the change(s)	Change made by
		NA new policy – will remove the need for SMT057 - Treloar School Student Responsible Mobile Device User Rules, which will be deleted once this policy becomes live	

IMPORTANT NOTES:

It is essential for those with designated responsibilities to familiarise themselves with the sources of information, referred to above.

Policy documents describe mandatory minimum standards and will be subject to audit and review. Line managers are required to ensure suitable and sufficient arrangements are in place to meet policy requirements, including the provision of information and instruction to staff.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) - Stage 1

Name of Policy / Function/Decision	School Mobile Phone & Smart Technology Device Policy				
Name of Assessor / Author /Lead	Jo Cox				
Start Date	September 2026				
This EIA is being undertaken because it is:	A result of new policy				
Screening					
Does the policy affect employees, students or other stakeholder groups? Could the impact be significant to that group of people?					Y
Is it a major policy with a significant effect on how our core business is delivered?					N
Does it involve a significant commitment of resources?					N
Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities (e.g., gender pay gap, hate crime, accessibility of IT)					N
If the answer to any of these questions is 'YES' then continue to complete Equality impact assessment. If you are unsure about the answer to any of these questions, please contact EDI Co-ordinator or Head of Quality for further support.					
Has the screening identified the policy as having relevance to the any of the following groups?					
Age	N	Disability	N	Sexual Orientation	N
Race	N	Sex/Gender	N	Religion or Belief	N
Gender Reassignment	N	Pregnancy or Maternity	N	Marriage or civil partnership	N
Have we shown due regard for the 9 protected characteristics within the policy/procedure/decision?				Yes	
Are all opportunities to promote equality taken within the policy/procedure/decision?				Yes	
Have we stated how we will monitor the implementation and impact of this policy/decision?				Yes	
Date of Screening				22 nd July 2026	
Approval by EDI				Jo Cox	
Refer Policy/Procedure to EDI Co-ordinator for further Stage 2 Assessment (if required)				No	