

URSULINE COLLEGE

Mobile Phone Policy

Full policy, procedures and appendices

This policy is not simply about mobile phones. It is about promoting the values that underpin life at Ursuline College: respecting each other, helping each other and bearing with each other, because getting better never stops. Through a mobile-free school day, we seek to create calm, focused and purposeful environments in which every student can flourish.

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Implementation date	September 2026
Responsible leaders	Danielle Lancefield, Headteacher; Dave Lee, Deputy Headteacher (Behaviour)
Approved by	Full Governing Body
Policy status	Stand-alone whole-school policy
Review cycle	September 2027
Applies to	All students, including Sixth Form, staff, visitors, volunteers and contractors as defined in this policy

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1. Introduction

Ursuline College is committed to creating a calm, safe, respectful and purposeful learning environment where every student can thrive. Mobile phones and personal devices can provide reassurance for families before and after school, but during the school day they can also distract from learning, interrupt social development, affect wellbeing and contribute to behaviour and safeguarding concerns.

This policy sets out the whole-school expectations, procedures and sanctions relating to mobile phones and other personal devices. It is designed to ensure that expectations are clear, consistently implemented and understood by students, parents, carers, staff, governors and visitors.

The policy should be read as a practical companion to the school Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy, SEND Policy and Medical Conditions Policy.

2. Legislative and DfE Context

This policy has been informed by Department for Education guidance on mobile phones in schools, which states that all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default and that mobile phone restrictions should apply throughout the school day, including lessons, movement between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime.

The DfE guidance also states that references to mobile phones should be read as including other communication and smart technology where the school decides these devices fall within the scope of its policy. The school has therefore defined the devices covered in Section 6.

The policy also aligns with the school's duties and expectations under:

- Behaviour in Schools guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Education Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Working Together to Safeguard Children where relevant to safeguarding practice

This policy is not intended to provide legal advice. Where necessary, the school will seek guidance from the local authority, legal advisers, insurers or relevant safeguarding agencies.

3. Purpose and Principles

The purpose of this policy is to establish a mobile-free school day for students, while allowing families to make reasonable arrangements for students to carry a phone to and from school. Ursuline College has chosen this approach before considering lockable pouches or a complete ban because it balances firm in-school expectations with practical family needs outside school hours.

The policy seeks to:

- remove unnecessary distractions from learning
- support calm corridors, classrooms and social spaces
- reduce opportunities for cyberbullying, filming, conflict escalation and social media misuse during the school day
- encourage students to interact face to face at break and lunchtime

- support attendance, punctuality, behaviour and wellbeing
- promote self-discipline and responsibility
- provide staff with a clear, consistent and workable procedure

4. School Values and Rationale

The policy is grounded in the Ursuline College values:

- respecting each other
- helping each other
- bearing with each other
- because getting better never stops

A mobile-free school day supports these values because it asks students to be present with one another, to respect the learning environment, to help create a calm community, and to develop habits that support continued personal growth. It also supports staff by making expectations clear and reducing ambiguity when mobile phones are seen, heard or used.

5. Scope

This policy applies to all students on the school site, during the school day, and during school activities where the school determines that mobile-free expectations apply. The policy also sets expectations for staff, Sixth Form students, visitors, volunteers and contractors.

For students in Years 7 to 11, the rule applies from the moment they enter the school gates until the moment they leave the school site at the end of the day. Devices must not be seen, heard or used at any point during this period.

Sixth Form students have separate limited arrangements as outlined in Section 9. Staff, visitors and volunteers are expected to model the school's standards by not using mobile phones in the presence of students, except where required for safeguarding, emergency or authorised school purposes. Contractors may use phones for work-related communication when necessary.

6. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, a mobile phone or personal device includes:

- mobile phones
- tablets
- iPads
- portable gaming devices
- any similar personal device capable of communication, internet access, image capture, video capture or digital entertainment

Smart watches and earbuds are not included in the first implementation phase. However, the school reserves the right to include these devices in a future policy revision if they create similar issues relating to communication, distraction, recording or safeguarding.

The phrase “seen, heard or used” means any instance where a device is visible, audible, actively used, accessed, checked, handled, or where there is clear evidence of use during the school day.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Full Governing Body	Approve the policy, review its effectiveness and ensure leaders have considered safeguarding, equality and behaviour implications.
Headteacher	Hold overall responsibility for the policy, communication with parents and strategic oversight of implementation.
Deputy Headteacher (Behaviour)	Lead operational implementation, staff training, monitoring, review and consistency of sanctions.
SLT	Support visible implementation, respond to significant defiance, review patterns and ensure consistency.
SENCo	Support medical exemptions and reasonable adjustments for students with SEND or health needs.
House Teams	Securely store confiscated devices, label devices, communicate with parents where required and record repeat breaches.
ACS / Behaviour Team	Collect confiscated devices at 3:25pm, support refusal/defiance procedures and return devices at 3:45pm.
All Staff	Apply the policy consistently, confiscate devices when seen/heard/used, complete BRFs promptly where required and avoid negotiation.
Students	Keep devices out of sight, silent and unused throughout the school day and follow reasonable staff instructions.
Parents and Carers	Support the policy, avoid contacting students directly during the school day and contact House Teams with questions or urgent messages.

8. Expectations for Students

Students may bring a mobile phone or personal device to school. However, the device must not be seen, heard or used from the moment the student enters the school gates until the moment they leave the school site.

This applies in all areas, including:

- lessons
- lesson changeovers
- corridors
- toilets
- breaktime
- lunchtime
- outside spaces
- assemblies
- tutor time
- Reflection Unit and behaviour spaces

There are no routine educational exceptions for phone use in lessons. Students should not be asked to use their own mobile phone as part of lesson activities. Where technology is required for learning, school-approved devices and systems should be used.

The key student message is: Seen. Heard. Used. = Confiscated.

9. Sixth Form Arrangements

Sixth Form students are expected to model maturity, responsibility and the values of Ursuline College. Their arrangements are separate from those for Years 7 to 11 because Sixth Form is a period of increased independence and preparation for adult study and work.

Sixth Form students may use mobile phones only within the Sixth Form building. Devices must not be used elsewhere on the school site, in corridors, around younger students, in toilets, in assemblies or in shared school spaces.

If a Sixth Form student uses a device outside the agreed arrangements, the device may be confiscated and further sanctions may apply. Repeated misuse may result in the removal of Sixth Form phone privileges and contact with parents/carers.

10. Staff Expectations

Staff are expected to model the standards and behaviours expected of students. Mobile phones should not be visible or used in the presence of students except where required for educational, safeguarding or emergency purposes.

Staff should only use mobile phones in offices or staff-only areas and should avoid unnecessary use around students. Staff should not use personal phones for casual communication, social media, personal browsing or non-urgent purposes in student-facing areas.

Where a staff member needs to use a phone for safeguarding, emergency or operational reasons, this should be done discreetly and professionally. Staff should continue to follow the Staff Code of Conduct, Safeguarding Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

11. Visitors, Volunteers and Contractors

Visitors and volunteers are expected to follow the same expectations as staff. They should not use mobile phones in front of students or in student-facing areas unless authorised by a member of staff for a specific reason.

Contractors may use mobile phones for work-related communication, health and safety, site coordination or emergency purposes. Where possible, such use should take place away from students and should not involve photographing or recording students or school activities.

12. Medical Exemptions and Reasonable Adjustments

Ursuline College recognises that a small number of students may require access to a mobile phone or personal device for medical reasons, such as diabetes monitoring or other health needs. Medical exemptions will be authorised by SLT and the SENCo.

Where an exemption is agreed:

- the student will be issued with an exemption card
- a note will be recorded on Arbor by the House Team
- relevant staff will be informed on a need-to-know basis
- the device must be used only in line with the agreed medical plan

- misuse of an exempted device may lead to review of the arrangements

Reasonable adjustments may also be considered for students with SEND, EHCPs or identified vulnerabilities. The expectation of a mobile-free school day remains, but the route to compliance may be adapted where appropriate and proportionate.

13. Confiscation Procedure

Any member of staff may confiscate a mobile phone or personal device if it is seen, heard or used during the school day, or where there is clear evidence that the student has used the device during the school day.

1. The member of staff instructs the student to hand over the device immediately.
2. The student hands over the device without negotiation.
3. The member of staff takes the device to the nearest designated collection point at the earliest available opportunity.
4. The designated collection points are Ursula House Office, Hatton House Office and the Reflection Unit.
5. House Team or RU staff place the device into a jiffy bag, clearly label it and secure it in locked storage.
6. ACS collects all confiscated devices at 3:25pm each day.
7. Students collect devices from Ursula House Office at 3:45pm. A member of the Behaviour Team will be present to return devices.

Staff should not negotiate, bargain, delay the consequence or create informal exceptions. Consistency is essential to successful implementation.

14. Storage, Security and Return of Devices

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure confiscated devices are stored securely. House Teams are responsible for ensuring that phones are kept safe, clearly marked and placed in a jiffy bag until collected by ACS.

Storage process:

- device placed in a jiffy bag
- jiffy bag sealed where possible
- student name and tutor group clearly written on the bag
- date recorded
- device placed in locked drawer, cabinet or secure location
- device collected by ACS at 3:25pm
- device returned to student at 3:45pm from Ursula House Office

Students who leave school early for an approved reason, or who are suspended during the school day, will have their phone returned before leaving the school site. Where a phone is not collected at 3:45pm, it will remain in locked storage and may be collected after 3:45pm on the next school day.

Parents do not routinely need to collect confiscated devices. The school may require parent/carers collection in exceptional cases, for safeguarding reasons, or where repeated breaches require a change to arrangements.

15. Refusal, Defiance and Suspension

Refusal to hand over a mobile phone or personal device when instructed by a member of staff is treated as defiance. It is not a disagreement about phones; it is a refusal to follow a reasonable instruction from a member of staff.

8. If a student refuses to hand over the device, they will be directed to the Reflection Unit.
9. The student will remain in Reflection until the device is handed over.
10. The student will only leave Reflection once the phone has been handed over.
11. If the student refuses to attend Reflection and walks away, the member of staff must complete a BRF as quickly as possible.
12. ACS will respond, locate the student and either take the student to the Reflection Unit or issue the agreed sanction.
13. Refusal to attend Reflection or to hand over the phone may result in suspension for a period of time.
14. Upon return from suspension, the student may be required to complete time in the Reflection Unit.

The proposed sanction for refusing to hand over a phone and refusing to attend the Reflection Unit is a half-day suspension for incidents before lunch or a full-day suspension for incidents after lunch. The Headteacher retains discretion in line with the Behaviour Policy, statutory guidance and individual circumstances.

16. Repeated Breaches

Incident	Response
1st occasion	Phone confiscated. Returned at 3:45pm.
2nd occasion	Phone confiscated. Returned at 3:45pm.
3rd occasion	Phone confiscated. Returned at 3:45pm. House Team telephone call home requesting parental support.
4th occasion	Phone confiscated. Returned at 3:45pm.
5th occasion	Phone confiscated. Returned at 3:45pm. Formal parental meeting.
Further breaches	Escalating behaviour sanctions and interventions, which may include further parental meetings, behaviour support, loss of privileges, Reflection Unit placement, or suspension where appropriate.

Repeated breaches will be monitored by House Teams and the Behaviour Team. The aim of escalation is to secure parental support, reduce recurrence and ensure the student understands and follows the school expectations.

17. Searching Devices, Safeguarding and Investigations

Staff will not routinely search the contents of mobile phones or ask students to unlock devices as part of ordinary confiscation. The normal response is confiscation only.

However, where there are safeguarding concerns, suspected criminal activity, serious behaviour incidents, bullying, sexual harassment, peer-on-peer abuse, filming, image sharing, threats, or other significant concerns, the school may take further action in accordance with statutory guidance, safeguarding procedures and legal powers available to schools.

Such action may include securing the device, requesting support from the DSL, consulting parents/carers where appropriate, seeking advice from police or safeguarding agencies, and examining or searching a

device where legally permissible and proportionate. Any such action must be led or authorised by appropriate senior staff and recorded.

18. Loss, Damage and Liability

Students bring mobile phones and personal devices onto the school site entirely at their own risk. Mobile phones are not required for learning at Ursuline College and students are not expected to use their own mobile phone during the school day.

Whilst Ursuline College will take reasonable steps to ensure that confiscated devices are handled carefully, labelled, stored securely and returned through the agreed process, the school cannot accept responsibility for loss, theft, damage, data loss, unauthorised access, screen damage, battery failure, device malfunction, cosmetic damage, accidental damage, loss of accessories, or any consequential loss arising from a student choosing to bring a device to school, except where liability cannot lawfully be excluded or where loss or damage is directly caused by the proven negligence of the school or its staff.

Parents/carers and students should ensure that any device brought to school is appropriately insured, protected by a secure passcode and backed up. The school will not reimburse families for loss or damage to devices or accessories unless legally required to do so.

The school will not accept responsibility for devices that are not handed directly to a member of staff, devices left unattended by students, devices stored in bags or lockers, or devices passed between students. Students remain responsible for their own property unless and until it is formally confiscated and received by staff under this policy.

19. Equality Impact Statement

Ursuline College is committed to ensuring that this policy is implemented fairly, consistently and in accordance with the principles of equality, inclusion and safeguarding. The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and has considered the potential impact of this policy on students with protected characteristics and additional needs.

The expectation of a mobile-free school day applies to all students. However, equality does not always mean treating every student identically. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments may be made in accordance with individual needs, professional advice and the school's duties under equality and SEND legislation.

- Students with SEND may require additional explanation, support, reminders or planned approaches to compliance.
- Students with medical conditions requiring device access may be issued with an exemption card.
- Students with EHCPs or identified vulnerabilities may require reasonable adjustments agreed by SLT, SENCo and relevant staff.
- Sanctions will be applied proportionately and in line with the Behaviour Policy, while maintaining the clear expectation that the policy applies to all students.

The school will monitor the impact of this policy through behaviour data, confiscation data, safeguarding information, parental feedback and student voice. If evidence suggests a disproportionate impact on any group, leaders will review implementation and consider appropriate adjustments.

20. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be reviewed six months after implementation and annually thereafter. It may also be reviewed earlier if significant issues arise, if statutory guidance changes, or if school leaders determine that changes are needed.

Monitoring will include:

- number of confiscations
- repeat breach patterns
- refusal and defiance incidents
- parental complaints or concerns
- student voice
- staff feedback
- behaviour and safeguarding data
- impact on attendance, punctuality, learning climate and social time

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher (Behaviour) will report to the Full Governing Body as appropriate. The Full Governing Body will retain oversight of the policy and its effectiveness.

21. Related Policies and Guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Suspensions and Exclusions Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy

Relevant guidance and legislation includes Department for Education Mobile Phones in Schools guidance, Behaviour in Schools guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, Education Act 2011, Equality Act 2010 and SEND Code of Practice 2015.

Appendix A: Staff Quick Guide

Core message: Seen. Heard. Used. = Confiscated.

15. Challenge calmly and clearly.
16. Ask the student to hand over the phone or device immediately.
17. Do not negotiate or issue informal warnings.
18. Take the device to Ursula House Office, Hatton House Office or the Reflection Unit at the earliest available opportunity.
19. Ensure the device is handed to House Team/RU staff for secure storage.
20. If the student refuses, direct them to the Reflection Unit.
21. If the student walks away or refuses Reflection, complete a BRF as quickly as possible.
22. ACS will respond to refusal and defiance.

Suggested staff script: "Your phone has been seen/heard/used. You need to hand it over now. It will be stored safely and returned at 3:45pm."

Refusal script: "You are refusing a reasonable instruction. You now need to go to Reflection. You will only leave Reflection once the phone has been handed over."

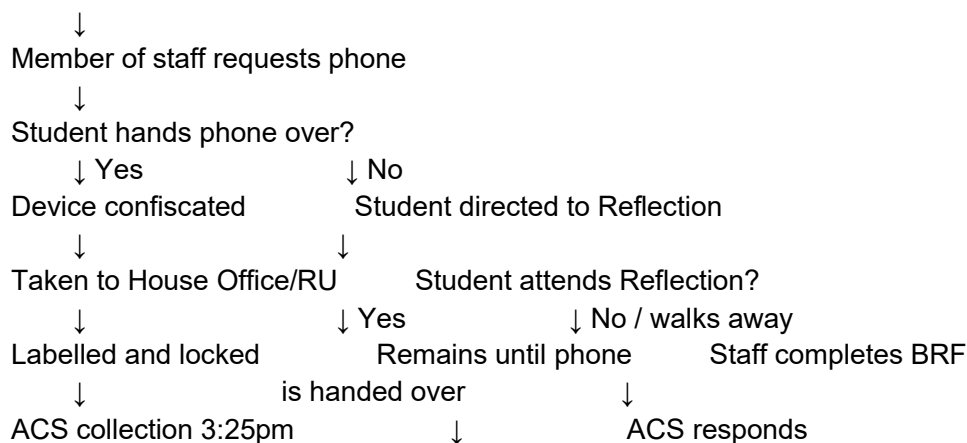
Appendix B: Student Expectations

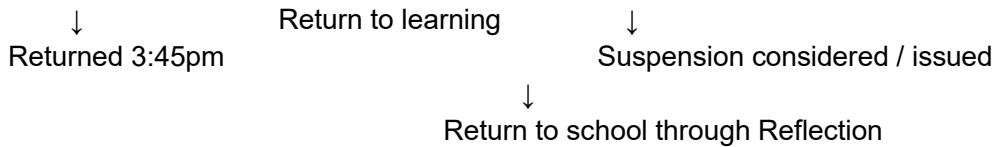
Students may bring a phone to school, but it must stay out of sight and unused all day. The rules apply from the moment students enter the school gates until the moment they leave school.

- Phones must not be seen.
- Phones must not be heard.
- Phones must not be used.
- If a phone is seen, heard or used, it will be confiscated.
- Confiscated phones are returned at 3:45pm.
- Refusal to hand over a phone is defiance.
- Refusal to attend Reflection may result in suspension.
- Parents can contact students through the House Team or School Office if needed.

Appendix C: Refusal and Defiance Flowchart

Phone seen, heard or clear evidence of use





Appendix D: Medical Exemption Procedure

23. Parent/carer or staff member identifies a medical need requiring device access.
24. Evidence or professional information is reviewed where appropriate.
25. SLT and SENCo agree whether an exemption is required.
26. House Team records the exemption on Arbor.
27. Student is issued with an exemption card.
28. Relevant staff are informed on a need-to-know basis.
29. The exemption is reviewed periodically or when circumstances change.

Examples may include diabetes monitoring or other agreed medical conditions. Exemptions are for medical access only and do not permit general phone use, messaging, social media, filming or entertainment.

Appendix E: Parent and Carer FAQs

Can my child still bring a phone to school?

Yes. Students may bring a phone to school for use before and after school, but it must not be seen, heard or used during the school day.

Why has the school chosen this approach rather than pouches or a total ban?

The school has chosen this approach as a first step because it creates a mobile-free school day while recognising that families may want students to carry a phone when travelling to and from school. The approach will be reviewed.

What happens if my child's phone is confiscated?

It will be labelled, placed in a jiffy bag, stored in a locked location and returned at 3:45pm from Ursula House Office.

Who should I contact if I need to speak to my child?

Please contact the relevant House Team or the School Office. Staff will ensure urgent messages are passed on.

What if my child needs to contact me?

Students should go to their House Office or speak to a member of staff. School staff will support appropriate contact home.

What if my child needs their phone for medical reasons?

Medical exemptions will be authorised by SLT and the SENCo. Students will receive an exemption card and a note will be recorded on Arbor.

Can teachers allow phones for learning?

No routine educational exceptions are permitted for Years 7 to 11. School-approved technology should be used where required.

What if my child refuses to hand over their phone?

Refusal is treated as defiance. The student will be directed to Reflection and may be suspended if they refuse to attend or continue to refuse.

Are Sixth Form students included?

Sixth Form students may use phones only in the Sixth Form building. Phones must not be used elsewhere on site.

Who should I contact with questions?

Please contact your child's House Team in the first instance.