PRENTON HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

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1 INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

At Prenton High School, we recognise that mobile phones, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for our students, parents, staff, and the wider school community.
This policy aims to:

- Actively support positive emotional, mental health, and social development in both staff and students.
- Reflect the school's commitment to building positive relationships.
- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones and recordable devices for students, staff, parents, and volunteers.
- Support the school's safeguarding and data protection responsibilities.

This policy also addresses challenges such as:

- Child protection risks
- Data protection concerns
- Lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate classroom technology use

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Staff

All staff (including teaching, support, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this mobile phone policy.

Volunteers and others engaged by the school must inform a member of staff if they witness or are made aware of a breach.

The governing body is responsible for reviewing this policy annually and ensuring its implementation.

3 USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY STAFF

3.1 Personal Mobile Phones

Staff may not use personal phones for calls or texts when students are present. Personal use is restricted to non-contact time and student-free areas (e.g. staff room).

Agency staff recruited on a short term basis are expected to lock mobile phones in a pouch whilst on school premises.

Exceptions may be permitted by the Headteacher for emergencies (e.g., contact from a dependent or medical issue). Staff may use the school's main number for emergencies if needed.

3.2 Data Protection

Staff must not process personal data or confidential information on personal devices. Full details are in the school's Data Protection Policy (available on the website).

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must:

- Not share personal contact details with students or parents.
- Avoid publicising personal information on social media.
- Not photograph or record students using personal devices and use school equipment only.

3.4 Using Personal Mobiles for Work

In exceptional cases (e.g., trips, evacuations), personal phones may be used, following professional standards. However, staff must not:

- Take photos/recordings of students
- Contact parents directly (use the school office instead)

3.5 Work Phones

School-issued phones must only be used for work purposes. Use must remain professional and appropriate at all times.

3.6 Sanctions

Staff failing to follow this policy may face disciplinary action (see Staff Disciplinary Policy).

4 USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY STUDENTS

4.1 Main School

Prenton High School recognises the practical need for students to carry mobile phones, especially for travel and communication before and after school.

To support student wellbeing and focus, the school uses **huSH**, a phone-locking system allowing students to keep phones on them without access during the school day.

Rationale:

- Provide a calm, phone-free learning environment
- Improve student mental health and reduce phone-related incidents
- Reduce online bullying and peer-on-peer abuse
- Improve classroom engagement and concentration

How It Works:

Upon arrival, students place their phone into their **huSH case** and lock it.

Students retain possession of the locked case throughout the day. Students who leave lessons to access the toilets will be asked to leave their locked pouches in classrooms, in view of staff.

Cases are unlocked at one of the unlocking stations on exiting the grounds when leaving school.

Students who arrive late or leave early for, e.g. medical appointments, will be asked to lock and unlock pouches at the main office.

We reserve the right to wand/search students. Searching, screening and confiscation is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Exceptions:

Students with approved medical needs may use a velcro **huSH case** for easy access as agreed with staff.

In emergencies, Student Services and the office team can support communication with home. Unlocking stations are also located in the main office and the Wellbeing Hub.

Staff may allow phone use for educational purposes at their discretion to meet subject specification requirements.

Misuse of mobile phones will result in the following sanctions:

- The mobile phone will be confiscated and placed in the school office. (*Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006*)

- If a student has a phone confiscated, a suitable intervention will be given.

4.2 Educational Visits

Trip leaders will determine mobile phone use. Phones may be used for entertainment or photography if permitted.

4.3 Further Sanctions

Staff may search a student's phone if there is reasonable cause (e.g., offensive content, bullying, or illegal activity) in accordance with DfE guidance.

The school will involve the police when necessary. Misuse includes:

- Sexting
- Threats or abusive messages
- Cyberbullying or identity theft
- Filming or sharing content without consent
- Invasion of privacy
- Grooming attempts by strangers
- Misuse occurring outside of school but involving Prenton High School uniform or identity will result in school sanctions.

5 USE OF MOBILE PHONES BY PARENTS, VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

All visitors must follow this policy:

- No photos/videos of students unless at public events or of their own child
- No social media sharing without consent
- No phone use during lessons or while working with students

Volunteers on trips must not:

- Contact parents directly
- Photograph or film students

The school office must be used for all communications with students during the school day.

6 LOSS, THEFT OR DAMAGE

Students must:

- Keep phones in locked **huSH cases** and store them in their school bags during the day
- Use password/PIN protection
- Staff must also secure devices. Prenton High School accepts no responsibility for lost, damaged, or stolen devices.

Copies of this policy are provided to new students and parents, and can be accessed on the school website.

Confiscated phones will be stored securely. Found devices should be returned to the Main Office.

7 MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure positive outcomes for students' education, wellbeing, and behaviour. Review will consider:

- Student and parent feedback
- Staff feedback
- Behaviour and safeguarding data
- DfE and local authority guidance