

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are writing to remind you about an important change to our mobile phone arrangements at The Birley Academy, which will come into effect from the start of the new academic year in September 2026.

From September, our academy will become a **mobile phone-free** environment during the school day. Information about this change has already been shared with students in assembly recently.

Secure Phone Pouches

To support this change, all students will be issued with a secure phone pouch on their first day of school in September. The phone pouch allows students to keep their phone with them throughout the school day while preventing access to it during lessons, social times and movement around the academy. Students will unlock their pouch at the end of the school day, before leaving site.

Students will be expected to take good care of their pouch throughout their time at the academy. Pouches must not be tampered with, damaged or defaced.

We appreciate that mobile phones play an important role outside school, and this approach enables students to bring their phones to and from school while ensuring they remain focused on learning during the school day.

We would like to remind you that this decision has been carefully considered, with students' safety, wellbeing and learning at its heart.

Why are we making this change?

Supporting Safety and Safeguarding

A mobile phone-free environment helps to protect students by reducing opportunities for:

- Recording or sharing images, videos or audio without consent
- Privacy breaches and accessing inappropriate online content during the school day
- Cyberbullying, online harassment and the spread of rumours
- Distractions that can impact students' wellbeing and sense of security.

Promoting Happiness and Wellbeing

We want students to enjoy meaningful interactions with their friends and develop healthy habits around technology use. Limiting access to mobile phones during the school day can help students:

- Build stronger face-to-face friendships
- Develop communication and social skills

- Reduce anxiety linked to social media and constant notifications
- Feel less pressure to compare themselves with others online
- Enjoy breaktimes and lunchtimes spending time with or making new friends.
- Avoid peer pressure to own the latest or most expensive devices.

Improved Concentration, Engagement and Learning

Mobile phones can be a significant distraction through messages, games and social media, even when switched to silent mode. Removing this distraction helps students to:

- Concentrate better and engage fully in their lessons
- Retain information more successfully
- Achieve stronger academic outcomes
- Learn in a calmer and more structured environment.

Teachers will also be able to spend more time focusing on learning and less time addressing issues related to mobile phone use.

National Guidance

The Government expects schools to be mobile phone-free environments by default. This also applies to other smart devices with similar functionality such as smart watches. This expectation includes lessons, movement between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtimes,. Schools are expected to have a clear and consistently enforced policy that is understood by students, staff and parents/carers.

Phone-Free Policy

Our full Phone-Free Policy can be viewed [here](#).

If you have any further questions, please contact your child's Year Leader or visit the Phone-Free School page on our website.

Thank you again for your continued support as we work together to create a calm, safe and focused learning environment which allows every student to thrive

Yours sincerely,

Eddie Child (Deputy Headteacher)