The Chantry School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Important Information: Mobile Phone Expectations from September 2026

As we look ahead to the new academic year, I would like to make you aware of an important change to our expectations regarding mobile phones at The Chantry School.

From September 2026, the Department for Education's guidance on mobile phones in schools becomes statutory. It is now clear expectation that pupils must not use, or have mobile phones seen or heard, during the school day. Whilst The Chantry School has always expected responsible use of mobile phones, this national change allows us to remove any ambiguity. From September, our expectations will be clear, consistent and applied equally to every pupil.

What this means

- From the moment a pupil enters the school site, whether through the school gates or after stepping off their school bus, their mobile phone, AirPods, headphones and any similar electronic devices must be switched off, stored in their school bag (not in a pocket) and remain out of sight and unheard throughout the school day.
- Smartwatches may continue to be worn as a watch only. However, all notifications, messaging, calls, internet access, music and other smart functions must be switched off. If a smartwatch is used for anything other than telling the time during the school day, it will be treated as a breach of the Mobile Phone Policy and the appropriate sanction will be applied.
- As previously, devices must not be used during lessons, between lessons, at breaktime or lunchtime. They may only be used once pupils have left the school site at the end of the day or, for those travelling by bus, once they have boarded their bus home.
- Year 9-11 Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) arrangements will cease from September. This removes any uncertainty about when phones can and cannot be used.

Contacting home

If pupils need to contact home during the day, they should go to Pupil Services where they will be able to use a school telephone or, where appropriate, use their own device in a supervised area away from other pupils. Parents and carers who need to contact their child should do so via the school office.

Sanctions

To ensure this policy and approach is effective, the sanctions have been strengthened. Experience tells us that expectations only work when they are applied consistently and when pupils understand that there are meaningful consequences for choosing not to follow them. The revised sanctions are intended to act as a deterrent, encourage pupils to make the right choices and ensure that the vast majority who follow the rules are not disadvantaged by the actions of a small minority. Our aim is not to issue sanctions, but to create a calm, focused learning environment where mobile phones are no longer a distraction, and we are compliant with DFE expectations.

Incident	Sanction
1st	60-minute Middle Leader detention. Phone confiscated until the end of the day. Parents informed.
2nd	90-minute Leadership detention. Head of Year contacts home.
3rd	One day in Reflection (BRR), letter home and meeting with parents. Consideration given to the phone remaining at home or being handed in daily.
4th	Two days in Reflection (BRR). Assistant Headteacher meeting. Phone handed into Pupil Services each morning for 10 school days.
5th	Suspension may be considered.

Why we have chosen this approach

Some schools have invested in lockable phone pouch systems. For a school of our size this would cost in the region of £30,000. At a time when school budgets are under significant pressure, I believe this money is better invested directly in teaching, learning and supporting our pupils. Clear expectations, applied consistently, are both effective and financially responsible.

Supporting pupils

During the first week of September, all year groups will receive assemblies explaining the new expectations, the reasons behind the policy and the consequences of not following it. Tutors and Heads of Year will reinforce these expectations so that every pupil understands exactly what is expected. By making the policy explicit from the outset, there should be no uncertainty for pupils or parents.

Thank you in advance for your support. The mobile phone policy will be available on the website from September 1st.

Yours sincerely,

Nicola Clear
Headteacher