



# Urmston Grammar

## Mobile Device Policy

### Parent & Carer Guidance (Years 7-11)

#### This document outlines:

1. The rationale for our Mobile Device Policy
2. How will the policy work for Years 7-11
3. 'What if' scenarios



# Rationale

Students having use of mobile devices in school has many benefits. These include helping to develop technological literacy, the ability to research online, use as an organisational tool and to access a range of educational apps and platforms.

There are however many disadvantages including the over-use of social media, screen time addiction, over-reliance on instant communication, reduction in attention span, accessing inappropriate material and use of devices at inappropriate times or places. These can result in a significant distraction from educational objectives, hamper personal development, and can feed into social, emotional and mental health problems.

We now believe that, on balance, the disadvantages of mobile phone use in school outweigh the advantages and as such are implementing a new policy. From September 2025 Urmston Grammar School will become phone-free for all students in Years 7 to 11. Each day students will hand in their phones during morning form time. These will be securely stored throughout the day and then returned to students before they depart at the end of the day.



# How will the policy work?

## Morning Routine

- Every day in morning form time (8.30-8.45am), students will turn off their mobile phones and hand them in to their form tutor.
- Each form group will have a dedicated mobile phone storage box, and each student will have their own labelled compartment within this.
- Students will secure their phone in their own compartment. The storage boxes are very sturdy with internal padding and insulation.
- At the end of morning form time, form tutors will take their storage box to a dedicated phone locker. These are for the sole purpose of storing student mobile phones and are only accessible by using staff ID badge.
- All phone lockers will be under CCTV camera surveillance, and the ID card used to access each locker at any time can be tracked and monitored.
- Mobile phones will remain in the storage lockers for the duration of each school day.



# How will the policy work?

## Afternoon Routine

- To facilitate returning mobile phones we have made changes to the sequence of the school day. Afternoon form time will be moved to the end of the day after Period 5, rather than after lunch as at present.
- After Period 5 lessons, students will return to form time where tutors will complete a register and return mobile phones.
- Phones will be distributed systematically to ensure that each student receives their own mobile phone back.
- Please note that the end of the school day **remains at 3.15pm**. As such returning mobile phones should have no impact on student's departure from school or journey home

AM Form Time	8.30-8.45
Lesson 1	8.45-9.45
Lesson 2	9.50-10.50
Break	10.50-11.10
Lesson 3	11.10-12.10
Lesson 4	12.15-13.15
<b>Lunch*</b>	<b>13.15-14.05</b>
<b>Lesson 5*</b>	<b>14.05-15.05</b>
<b>PM Form Time*</b>	<b>15.05-15.15</b>

\* = time change compared to current school routine



# 'What if' Scenarios

## What if a student is late to school?

Any student who arrives at school after 8.30am should go to the main entrance and sign in with a member of staff.

If only slightly late the student may be sent to form time and will hand in their mobile phone there. If there isn't time for this they will hand their mobile phone in to the main office in exchange for a plastic token.

The student's phone will remain securely stored in the main office for the day. During afternoon form time, students with plastic tokens will be allowed to go to the office shortly before 3.15pm and will exchange their token for their mobile phones in time for a 3.15pm departure from school.

If a student is persistently late the above process may be amended to account for this.



# 'What if' Scenarios

## What if a student has an appointment and needs to leave school early?

Parents & carers must inform school in advance when their child has an appointment during the school day. In this situation, students should hand in their phone at the main office (not their form tutor) by 8.30am in the morning in exchange for a plastic token. Their phone will be securely stored in the main office. The token can be used to show to their form tutor to prove they have handed their phone in.

When it is time to leave for their appointment, students should go the main office to sign out and exchange their plastic token for their mobile phone.

It is important to note that if students forget to hand their phone in at the main office and had them in to their form tutor, or school are not made aware of appointments in advance, there is likely to be a delay in reuniting a student with their mobile phone when collected to attend an appointment.



# 'What if' Scenarios

What if a student is ill and needs to leave school early? (or leave early for any other unforeseen reason)

When a student is ill, typically there will be a delay between school contacting parents/carers to collect their child, and the student leaving school. This will allow time for a member of staff to go and collect the student's phone from the relevant phone storage locker where the form group box of phones are stored.

The main office will keep a log of where all phones are stored.



# 'What if' Scenarios

## What if a student is found with/using a mobile phone during the school day?

- The phone will be confiscated and the student issued a 1 hour after school detention.
- Confiscated phones will **only** be returned to a Parent or Carer on the day of confiscation. Parents & Carers will be informed of the confiscation and will have until 4.30pm (when our main office closes) to collect the phone.
- If Parents & Carers cannot collect the phone by 4.30pm, it will be returned to the student at the end of the following school day.

Where there are significant concerns about a student travelling home without their mobile device the student can either:

- Wait in school until their parent/carer comes to collect it.
- When necessary they can be issued with a basic mobile phone from the school along with parent/carer contact details. This phone should be returned to the main office the next day. Students will be able to use the school phone for basic communication, but any excessive charges made using this phone will be added to their ParentPay account.

*Students handing in their mobile phone on a daily basis as per our new policy will avoid the need for any of these consequences to be used.*



# 'What if' Scenarios

## What if a student has a phone but refuses to hand in?

In this situation, staff members will speak to them to reiterate the reason for our new school policy. This can be escalated to pastoral leaders/pastoral managers/SLT as needed.

Contact can be made to parents/carers to confirm if a student actually has a phone with them. If a student continues to be obstructive the school Behaviour Policy will be followed.

Staff will be mindful that, due to our new policy, some students may choose not to bring a phone into school and as such will be sensitive when dealing with such instances.

*We are hopeful that the vast majority of students settle into a regular routine of handing in their mobile phone each day and it quickly becomes the 'new normal' in school.*



# 'What if' Scenarios

## What if a student hands in a fake/burner phone?

If a form tutor suspects a student is trying to hand in a fake/burner phone they may ask the student to turn it on and show them that it functions fully to determine whether it is their typical working mobile phone or not.

Parents/carers may also be contacted to find out what make/model the phone is, and may be asked to call their child's mobile number to see if the device they are handing in is their normal working phone.

Ultimately, if a student is found using a mobile device in school this will be dealt with using the consequences outlined previously.

*We are hopeful that the vast majority of students settle into a regular routine of handing in their mobile phone each day and it quickly becomes the 'new normal' in school.*



# 'What if' Scenarios

## What if a parent/carers needs to make contact with their child in an emergency?

As is our current policy, in emergency situations parents/carers should contact the school directly via the main office and messages can be relayed to the relevant student(s).

It is important to mention that the majority of reasons why a parent/carer may wish to contact their child during the school day are not emergencies and these should wait until the end of the school day when students have had their mobile devices returned. SMS Messages/WhatsApps can still be sent to student mobile phones and they will be able to read these at 3.15pm at the end of the school day.



# 'What if' Scenarios

## What if a student needs to make contact with their parent/carer in an emergency?

In such instances students should go to the main office or their Pastoral Manager. In most situations a member of staff will contact parents/carers on behalf of the student.

It is important to mention that the majority of reasons why students may wish to contact their parent/carer during the school day are not emergencies and these should wait until the end of the school day. If a student encounters personal difficulties during the day, there are a number of staff available in school who they can speak to for support. This will be prioritised over contacting parents/carers.

In situations where a student has forgotten their PE kit/Musical Instrument/Ingredients for Food Tech etc. school will aim to support by contacting home but depending on timing of lessons this may not always be possible. It will be important for students to be organised to minimise the need for this.



# 'What if' Scenarios

## What if a student's phone is lost/damaged whilst school has possession of it?

We are hopeful such incidents will be minimised by the following steps:

- Staff will have minimal contact with phones. Mobile phones will be secured in storage boxes in the morning, and retrieved from them in the afternoon, by students themselves.
- The storage boxes are very sturdy, have lids and ample padding and insulation inside.
- All storage lockers will be under CCTV surveillance, can only be accessed by staff ID card, and the specific card(s) used to access the locker can be monitored at any given time.

Ultimately if there is any loss or damage that school has sufficient insurance.



# 'What if' Scenarios

## What if there is a school trip?

The types of school trip and educational visit can vary significantly, but we recognise that when students are off the school site there are significant additional advantages to students having access to their mobile devices.

For each individual trip a decision will be made regarding how the use of mobile phones will be managed.

## What if a sports fixture requires students to leave school early?

Some sports fixtures require students to leave school slightly early. In this case, students should hand their phones in to the main office (just like if they have an appointment) and can collect them again when signing out before departure for their fixture.



# ‘What if’ Scenarios

What if a parent/carer doesn't consent their child handing in their phone each day and it being stored by school?

No student has the legal right to keep a mobile phone in their possession whilst at school, and government guidance allows all schools to set their own mobile device policy. As such, where parents/carers do not give consent for their child to hand in their mobile phone to be stored in school, **the expectation is that they should ensure their child does not bring their mobile phone into school at all.** This means any student in Years 7 to 11 who brings their mobile device in to school will be required to follow our policy.

It should be noted that increasingly there is a national shift in how mobile devices are managed in schools. Many schools are beginning to adopt policies very similar to this and we anticipate that in the coming years such policies will be very typical in secondary schools.



# Queries raised in Student & Parent/Carer Feedback

Many of the questions raised from student, parent and carer feedback will have been addressed on the previous pages. The following are the remaining queries which have not yet been addressed:

How can students use the vending machines?	Vending machines allow payment by fingerprint, bank card and mobile phone. Though fingerprint payments can be temperamental students are still able to purchase items using a bank card.
How can students pre-order their lunch using the App?	This is still possible and is actively encouraged. Students will still be able to pre-order their lunch, but must do so before their phone is handed in during morning form time.
What if I currently like to study/make flashcards using revision apps or online platforms on my phone at break/lunchtime?	Students are still welcome to complete independent study/revision during break or lunch, but will need to use phone free study exercises (of which there are plenty). Computers in the LRC can also be used.



# Queries raised in Student & Parent/Carer Feedback

How can students use SatchelOne/Show My Homework to check homework assignments?

SatchelOne/Show My Homework is largely designed for use outside of school. If students wish to complete homework during break or lunchtime they are welcome to complete tasks which they can recall from memory, or use a computer in the LRC to log in and check what work has been set.

Currently we use our phones in some lessons for research and other tasks. Will we still be able to do this?

No. At present use of phones in lessons is fairly infrequent and largely occurs out of convenience. There are very few tasks in lessons which *need* use of a mobile phone. Teaching staff will amend lesson plans and resources which previously may have required use of a mobile phone. There are IT rooms and laptop trolleys which can also be booked for lessons when needed.



# Queries raised in Student & Parent/Carer Feedback

We need use of mobile phones/Pintrest for GCSE Art/Textiles. How will this work?

GCSE Art/Textiles students will need to establish new routines of working. Research using Pintrest will need to take place as homework outside of school time. School will look to provide additional tablet devices for use in lessons and taking photos of work.

How can students check their timetable during the day?

At the start of the year, all students will be issued with a timetable card and plastic wallet to keep their timetable in their blazer pocket.