



Tuesday 5th June 2026

RE: Mobile Phone Policy Trial – Term 6, 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following recent revised government expectations and a consultation process involving our staff, parents, and Student Council, I am writing to formally announce that Langtree School will implement a new mobile phone policy effective from 1st June 2026 (after half term).

Our goal is to foster a calm, focused, and inclusive learning environment that prioritises personal development, academic excellence and student wellbeing. With this in mind, we have reviewed our mobile phone rules and we are implementing a new **Mobile Phone Policy** to help reduce the "digital pull" of smartphones and social media. We aim to allow our community to focus on what matters most: learning and healthy social interaction.

The new phone policy is included at the end of this letter. I urge all parents and carers to take time to read this in full. However, the key change is that :

- **KS3 students (by which I mean current year 7 and 8 students) are no longer allowed to bring in smart phones/smart-devices.** In September this will include the new year 9 students.
- **No students can use their phones at any time while on site during the school day (even at breaks or lunchtime).**

Current Years 7 and 8 (but will roll over to include year 9 students from September 2026): Total Device Ban	Current Years 9, 10 and 11): Switched Off and Kept in Bags
Prohibition: Students are not permitted to bring smartphones or equivalent smart technology (including smartwatches, tablets, or internet-enabled wearables) onto the school site.	Permission: Students are permitted to bring smartphones onto the school site.
Alternative for Safety: For the commute, students may bring a "basic" or "brick" phone (e.g., a Nokia 105) which lacks WiFi, a camera, or internet access.	Usage Rule: Smartphones must be switched off and kept out of sight in school bags at all times while on the school site. This includes all areas of the school grounds including during lessons, outside and in toilets.
Storage Rule: Any permitted basic phone must be switched off, kept out of site and stored securely in the student's bag immediately upon arrival.	Scope: These rules apply during all lessons, transitions, breaks, lunchtimes, and after-school clubs.

We want to foster:

- **Parental Empowerment:** We want to empower the increasing number of parents who wish to delay the provision of a smart phone and access to social media, until their child is mature enough to deal with the content that these platforms provide.
- **Academic Gains:** Large-scale studies demonstrate that prohibiting phones significantly increases academic progress, with the most profound benefits observed for low-achieving and vulnerable students.
- **Reduced Distraction:** Removing smartphones provides the "headspace and calm" necessary for students to engage fully with their lessons without the interruption of notifications.
- **Safety and Wellbeing:** Constant connectivity and social media pressure is frequently linked to rising levels of anxiety. This policy also aims to help mitigate the risks of cyberbullying and the unauthorised sharing of content.
- **Trust and Maturity:** We have opted for a tiered approach because we believe Key Stage 4 students are generally more equipped to handle the responsibility of device ownership. Furthermore, as KS4 students are permitted off-site during lunchtimes, they may benefit from the additional safety and functionality a mobile phone provides during those periods.
- **Putting Learning First:** Our pastoral team are spending an increasing amount of time dealing with issues arising from inappropriate use of mobile phones and social media.

Pilot

We are going to be piloting this new approach during term 6 to ensure we can address any issues that arise. Please be aware that we will enforce all the rules strictly during this trial. If our older students seem incapable of adapting to these new expectations, or if the government expectations change, we may well extend the prohibition to the older year groups.

Practical Logistics and Parental Concerns

We have carefully reviewed the feedback from parents/carers on the March 2026 survey and have addressed the most common practical concerns as follows:

Emergency Contacts The school office remains the primary point of contact. If you need to reach your child, please call the office and we will pass on the message. Students needing to contact home should report to the reception or their Head of Year. We kindly ask that parents do not attempt to contact students directly on personal devices during school hours.

In order to ensure parents can contact their children while traveling to and from school all students are permitted to bring a basic phone.

Bus Passes: Students who currently use digital bus passes must transition to physical hard copies as soon as possible.

For Reading buses, you can obtain these:

1. **In-person:** At the shop in Reading Broad Street Mall (existing digital passes can be transferred to hard copies here).
2. **Online:** Physical copies can be ordered online (please allow additional time for postage).
3. **Telephone:** Call 0118 959 4000 to pay via the customer service team and have the pass posted to your address.

For Oxford buses:


1. You will have to purchase a Key Card. This will cost £10 and then you top this up with the travel money. You purchase a Key card online: [Oxfordkey.co.uk](https://www.oxfordkey.co.uk)
2. The ticket (through the app) cost £209 for a 13 week pass. On the card it costs £219.
3. Once topped up, it takes 24 hours to update and you need to activate it on the bus.
4. If you lose a card, you have to pay another £10
5. For any queries, contact key@oxfordbus.co.uk

We are aware that parents will have already purchased electronic passes and may not be able to convert it to a card. If this is the case please inform the school and we will work with you to find a solution. As of September all students will be expected to have a physical bus pass.

Location Tracking For parents who wish to track their child's commute, permitted alternatives include (albeit expensive) Xplora devices or more affordable tracking tags (e.g., AirTags), which allow for location monitoring without the full functionality of a smartphone.

Student Organisation To replace digital tools, the school is moving toward providing student diaries. Please note that while we are working to procure these, they **may not be available for the start of Term 6**. In the interim, we will provide students with alternative resources to manage their schedules and homework.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Bamford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Simon Bamford

Head Teacher
Langtree School

Other FAQs that parents asked:

Have you considered alternative ways of further tightening your management of smartphones?

We have consulted with several schools who require phones to be stored in lockable pouches during the school day but discounted this option for the following reasons:

- The pouches cost £20 to £25 pounds each - a cost that must either be covered by our budget or, as some schools do, passed on to parents/carers. We would much prefer to invest this money in technology that will be used in school to replace the functionality provided by smart phones.
- Students still find their way round these systems by breaking into the pouches or putting a second phone in them
- Schools that implement these systems effectively often benefit from more easily controlled access points to their sites where phones can consistently be locked on entry and unlocked on exit
- Locker-based solutions present similar cost and logistical barriers.
- Perhaps most importantly, unlike pouches and lockers, a ban on smartphone possession gives parents/carers a credible reason to withhold smartphone ownership for longer should they wish to. There is no longer a justification for children to receive a smartphone as a 'rite of passage' when they begin secondary school.

Why can't they just be switched off and in bags?

For many students, the proximity of a smartphone may create a constant "digital pull," making it difficult for students to fully disconnect from smartphones. They can be tempted to check their device, this can generate conflict between staff and students.

Our pastoral team are spending an increasing amount of time dealing with issues arising from inappropriate use of mobile phones and social media - these issues often originate from the use of these devices outside of school time. We therefore want to empower those parents who do not wish to buy a smartphone for their child.

Why is it different for different years?

We are trialling banning KS3 students bringing their smartphones and other similar devices onto the school grounds. We want to see what impact this has on our school community. Thus, we are trialling this. We may roll this ban out to all years if we feel the older years might benefit from a similar policy, or if expectations on schools change, we may implement this at a later date.

How will my child organise themselves?

We will provide a student diary. This will initially be a slimline version produced in-house but from September we will purchase a student diary that will ensure all students have access to the important information they need during the school day. We will continue to use Satchel One as the mechanism for communication with parents and students.

Evaluation and Closing

This trial is an essential step in empowering parents who wish to delay smartphone ownership and reducing the digital pressure on our young people. We will evaluate the impact of this ban on our school community throughout Term 6. We will evaluate the trial and use anything we learn to revise our policy for the full launch in September 2026.

For further details, please refer to the full "Mobile Phone Policy" on our school website and attached to this letter. We thank you for your continued support in making Langtree School a focused environment where we all put learning first.



Langtree School Trustees

Mobile Phone Policy

LANGTREE SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST COMPANY

AN EXEMPT CHARITY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

COMPANY NUMBER 7980335

In this policy as in all documents of The Langtree School Academy Trust Company ("TLSATC") any reference to Langtree School, School, Trustees of Langtree School or Trustees of Langtree School Academy Trust Company is a reference to The Board of Directors of The Langtree School Academy Trust Company and any reference to the Headteacher of Langtree School is a reference to the Chief Executive Officer of TLSATC.

STATUS			
RECOMMENDED	✓	STATUTORY	
REVIEW FREQUENCY		Annual	
DATE OF LAST REVIEW		April 2026	
REVIEW DUE		April 2027	
COMMITTEE		Pastoral & Community	

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Langtree School Mobile Phone Policy

1. Introduction and Aims

Langtree School is committed to creating a **calm, focused, and inclusive learning environment** where every student can achieve and thrive. Research and professional experience demonstrate that smartphones can be a distraction to learning, social interaction, and emotional wellbeing, particularly for younger students.

This policy aims to:

- Maximize **academic performance** by removing digital distractions.
- Protect student **mental health** and reduce risks associated with social media and cyberbullying.
- Encourage **face-to-face socialisation** and meaningful peer connections.
- Support students in developing **healthy digital habits** and self-regulation¹⁰¹¹.

2. Terms used in this policy

Smart Phone: a device that can run apps, access social media and connect to the internet.

Basic Phone: a device incapable of running apps, accessing social media, taking photos/videos, or connecting to the internet/Wi-Fi.

Wearable Tech: smartwatches, glasses or other internet enabled devices.

3. Key Requirements by Key Stage

Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8, and 9): Total Device Ban

- **Prohibition:** Students in KS3 are **not permitted to bring smartphones or equivalent smart technology** (including smartwatches, tablets, or internet-enabled wearable devices) onto the school site.
- **Alternative for Safety:** To ensure safety during the commute, students may bring a **traditional mobile phone** (a basic device without WiFi, camera, or internet access, such as a Nokia 105 or similar).
- **Storage Rule:** If a basic phone is brought, it must be **switched off and stored securely in the student's bag** immediately upon arrival. It must not be seen or heard at any point during the school day.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11): "Off and Away"

- **Permission:** Students in KS4 may bring smartphones to school.
- **Usage Rule:** All phones must be **switched off and kept out of sight in school bags** at all times while on the school site.
- **Scope:** This rule applies during **lessons, transition times between classes, break times, and lunchtimes**. It also extends to all after-school extra-curricular clubs and activities.

3. Rationale

Our decision to implement tiered regulations is based on extensive evidence:

- **National Policy:** The government now requires all schools to be smartphone free.
- **Academic Gains:** Some studies show that banning phones significantly increases test scores, with the most profound benefits for **low-achieving and vulnerable students**
- **Reduced Distraction:** Removing phones provides students with the **"headspace and calm"** needed to engage fully with their lessons. Classroom observations show that

phone-free environments have fewer instances of disruptive behavior and off-topic chatter.

- **Safety and Wellbeing:** Constant connectivity is linked to a rise in **anxiety, self-harm, and depression** among youth. Restricting devices helps mitigate the risks of cyberbullying and the unauthorized sharing of inappropriate content
- **Developmental Needs:** A stricter ban in KS3 helps younger students settle into secondary school life and build real-world relationships without the pressure of digital validation.
- **Trust and Maturity:** We feel KS4 students are generally more able to deal with the responsibility of owning a mobile phone and as they go off site during lunchtime might benefit more from the additional safety a mobile phone provides.

4. Exemptions

Langtree School recognizes that some students may require access to a smartphone for specific needs. Exemptions will be granted on a case-by-case basis by school leadership:

These will be restricted to students with physical health conditions, such as students with diabetes who require a smartphone for monitoring glucose levels.

Parents must provide documentation to the school in advance to arrange these accommodations.

5. Consequences for Non-Compliance

Failure to meet these expectations will result in sanctions in line with the school's behaviour policy.

- **Confiscation:** If a smartphone is brought to school by a KS3 student or a basic phone is seen or heard while a student is on site at any point in the school day, it will be confiscated.
- **Collection:** Confiscated devices will be held securely in the school office.
- For a basic device or a smartphone in KS4, the student may collect it at the end of the day; for a smartphone in KS3 (or for repeated confiscations of a basic phone), a parent or guardian will be required to collect the device.

Staff are authorized by the Department for Education to confiscate devices for a period they deem proportionate.

6. Emergency Contact

Parents and guardians must use the School Office as the primary point of contact if they need to reach their child during the school day. Students needing to contact home should report to School Reception or their Head of Year. Parents must not attempt to contact students directly on personal devices during school hours.

7. Responsibility for Devices

The school cannot accept responsibility for the loss, theft, or damage of any mobile phone or electronic device brought onto the premises. Students who bring these devices do so at their own risk.

8. School Trips and Educational Visits

The school recognises that mobile phones may, in certain circumstances, support communication and safety during educational visits.

The decision as to whether students are permitted to bring a mobile phone on a school trip is **at the discretion of the Trip Leader**, in discussion with the Headteacher (or delegated member of the Senior Leadership Team).

In making this decision, consideration will be given to:

- The age and maturity of students.
- The nature and duration of the visit.

- Safeguarding and supervision arrangements.
- The potential impact on learning, behaviour, and group cohesion.
- The need for communication in the event of an emergency.

Where mobile phones are permitted on a trip:

- Clear expectations for use will be communicated to students and parents/carers in advance.
- Phones may be restricted to specific times (e.g. travel periods or free time).
- The switched off and in your bag principle may still apply during structured educational activities.
- Misuse of a mobile phone during a trip may result in confiscation for the remainder of the visit and may lead to further sanctions under the school Behaviour Policy.

Where mobile phones are not permitted, this will be clearly stated in pre-trip communications, and students will be expected to comply fully.

The school reserves the right to withdraw the privilege of bringing a mobile phone on future visits where expectations are not met.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Ensuring the consistent and effective implementation of this policy is a shared responsibility across the school community.

9.1 Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school has a clear and robust Mobile Phone Policy in place.
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation and consistent application of the policy.
- Ensuring the policy aligns with statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements, and the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Reviewing the policy at agreed intervals.

9.2 Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Implementing and enforcing the Mobile Phone Policy consistently across the school.
- Ensuring all staff, students, and parents/carers are aware of the policy and its expectations.
- Determining, alongside Trip Leaders, whether mobile phones may be permitted on school trips.
- Approving reasonable adjustments or exceptions (e.g. medical or safeguarding needs).
- Ensuring appropriate sanctions are applied fairly and proportionately.
- Monitoring the impact of the policy on behaviour, safeguarding, and learning.

9.3 Teachers and School Staff

Teachers and school staff are responsible for:

- Consistently enforcing the switched off and in your bag expectation.
- Challenging and addressing breaches of the policy in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Modelling appropriate and professional mobile phone use in the presence of students.

- Reporting repeated breaches or concerns to senior leaders.
- Supporting students to understand the rationale behind the policy.

9.4 Students

Students are responsible for:

- Complying with the expectations of this policy at all times while on the school site.
- Ensuring their mobile phone is switched off and stored out of sight during the school day.
- Following any additional expectations communicated for school trips or off-site activities.
- Using mobile phones responsibly when permitted off-site.
- Respecting the privacy and safety of others at all times.

Failure to meet these responsibilities may result in sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

9.5 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are responsible for:

- Supporting the school's Mobile Phone Policy.
- Reinforcing these expectations with their child.
- Contacting the school office if they need to communicate with their child during the school day.
- Collecting confiscated devices where required under the school's procedures.
- Informing the school of any medical or safeguarding reasons that may require an exception to the policy.
- **Monitoring their child's use of social media and being responsible for their child's use of social media. Langtree will intervene if issues arise in school; however, we reserve the right to request a parent to resolve conflicts, contact police, restrict their child's use of social media if their child has used social media inappropriately outside of school, or if they are the target of inappropriate social media use. Our staff cannot be expected to intervene in all conflict that occurs.**