

Phone-Free School Statement

Purpose

This document explains the rationale and approach that St Ivo Academy will take to ensure the academy is a truly phone-free school. We believe this is important so that we:

- support wellbeing and mental health of our students by guaranteeing six phone-free hours each day;
- provide a high-quality learning environment in which disruption and distraction due to devices is eliminated;
- enable students to socialise without the distraction of devices during the school day.

Relationship to other Academy Policies and government guidance

This statement should not be read in isolation as it links with many of the other academy policies, including but not limited to the:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Home–School Agreement
- Equality guidance and relevant Astrea Academy Trust policies

It is informed by DfE statutory guidance, including Mobile Phones in Schools (June 2026), Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for schools, Keeping Children Safe in Education, SEND code of practice and Prevent Duty Guidance.

Definitions

- Phone: any device capable of making or receiving calls
- Smart watch: any watch capable of connecting to a phone, via a wireless connection e.g. Bluetooth.
- Headphones: wired or wireless audio devices, which can be connected to a phone
- Devices: any phones, smart watches and headphones
- Entry points – bottom gate, near to the corner of the Burgess Hall and top gate, near to the roundabout/Leys building.

- Exit points – include the entry points listed above, plus the bus collection points, near to the Basketball courts.

Operation of the ‘Pouch’ Approach

- All students will be provided with a ‘Hush’ pouch by the school, which they must bring to school with them each day
- All students must place their phone or phones, smart watch and headphones in their pouch before they cross a school entry point and show the member of staff on duty at that entry point that they have done this and locked the pouch
- Students should turn all devices off before placing them in the pouch
- Students are expected to keep the pouch in their possession throughout the school day, in their bag.
- Unlocking devices will be available to students at the school’s entry/exit points from 3:00pm each day
- Students attending extra-curricular activities after school may unlock their pouches prior to attending these activities
- Students attending detentions after school may only unlock their pouches after their detention
- Students should label their pouch with their preferred first and surname
- The pouch remains the school’s property
- Any damage must be reported, and any deliberate damage or inappropriate customisation will result in a consequence in line with the school’s behaviour policy and a replacement must be paid for by the student and/or their parents/carers

Reasonable Adjustments

Where a student has a specific medical need requiring access to a device, they will be provided with a Velcro medical pouch in which to store their devices. Evidence of need must be provided from a medical professional.

Consequences

The expectation is that no phones, headphones or smart watches are seen during the school day. Confiscation and sanctions will be applied in accordance with the St Ivo Academy Behaviour Policy.

For the first half-term (3rd September – 23rd October): We recognise that students and their parents/carers will be learning about our new approach during the first half-term of implementation. If a student chooses not to follow the expectation and a phone, headphones or/and a smart watch is seen, used or heard, then the student will receive a Detention, and devices will be confiscated until the end of the second school day. This means that a device confiscated on a Monday can be collected by the student at the

end of the school day on Tuesday. For devices confiscated on a Friday, the student will be able to collect this at the end of their Detention on that day.

From half-term 2, 2026-27: If a student chooses not to follow this expectation and a phone, headphones or/and a smart watch is seen, used or heard, then the devices will be confiscated for a week. This means that the device will be confiscated for a seven day period; for example, a device confiscated on a Monday can be collected by the student at the end of the school day on the following Monday. Where a collection day will fall in the school holidays or on a Bank Holiday, the student will be allowed to collect their device at the end of the school day on the final day of term or the final day before the Bank Holiday. In the event of a confiscation and in response to a request from a parent/carers, the school will either return the SIM card to the parent/carers or loan a basic mobile phone that lacks the advanced functionality of a smartphone, or both. This is to support parents/carers in the safeguarding of their children. Students who require a device to complete homework in this period, are encouraged to use the computer facilities in the Resource Centre.

Loss or replacement of the pouch

A pouch will last a student the five years that they attend St Ivo Academy. The pouch will be replaced by the school if it stops working effectively due to a manufacturing defect. Where the pouch is either lost or no longer functions as a result of misuse or deliberate damage, then the student and their parents/carers will be liable for the replacement of the pouch at a cost of £15. Pouches will be available to purchase through the My Child at School (MCAS), app.

Monitoring to ensure the approach is effective

To ensure that the approach is effective and robust, spot checks will be carried out on a regular basis, in that students will be asked to open their pouch and demonstrate that their phone works and connects to a mobile network.

Contact with/by parents/carers during the school day

If parents/carers need to share a message with a student during the school day, then they should contact the main school reception, who will arrange for the message to be shared with the student. Similarly, if a student needs to contact their parents/carers during the school day, they should speak to their Student Support Assistant (SSA) in their Year Office. The SSA will, in most cases, contact the parents/carers on the student's behalf, but may, in exceptional circumstances and at their own professional discretion, allow the student to contact their parent/carers using the Year Office phone.