

St Ivo Academy – A Truly Phone-Free School

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents and Carers

Question	Answer
I need to contact my child during the school day. How will this be possible if they cannot access their phones?	If you need to contact your child during the school day, please contact the main school reception. Reception staff will ensure that urgent messages are passed on promptly.
How will my child contact me if they need to?	Students can speak to a member of staff during the school day (primarily the Student Support Advisor (SSA), for their year group) if they need to contact home. In most cases, a member of staff will contact parents/carers on a student's behalf.
How does this new approach work at the start of the day?	Students will place their mobile phone(s), smart watch and headphones into their pouch before entering the school site and show the locked pouch to staff on duty.
How will my child access their bus pass at the end of the day?	Pouches will be unlocked at designated unlocking stations at the end of the school day. Including stations next to where buses collect students.
What happens if my child arrives late due to a medical appointment?	Students arriving late should report to Reception and show their locked pouch to the reception staff when entering the school.
What happens if my child needs to leave school during the day?	Reception will have access to an unlocking device for students leaving site before the end of the day.
What happens if my child does not put their device in the pouch and it is seen on the school site?	Any device seen or used during the school day will be confiscated in line with the St Ivo Academy Behaviour Policy. Please see the phone-free school statement for more details.
What if my child currently uses their phone for a medical need?	Students with a documented medical need may be provided with an alternative medical pouch arrangement. For specific arrangements around

	this, please contact anthony.ward@astreastivo.org and ben.daly@astreastivo.org
What happens if my child loses their pouch at home?	Replacement pouches will be available, through the My Child at School (MCAS), app. A replacement charge will apply.
What if my child does not bring their phone to school?	This is fine, however, students should still bring their pouch and keep it in their school bag. Students will still need to show their pouch to staff when they enter via the gates.
What happens if a child arrives to school without their pouch?	A replacement pouch can be issued through the school's support arrangements. This process will be explained to students in September.
What happens if a child brings two phones to school?	Any device seen during the school day will be confiscated in line with the Behaviour Policy. Both phones will need to be placed in the pouch, to avoid consequences.
My child has coordination issues and will struggle to get their devices in or out of the pouch without support.	Staff will be available at the start and end of the school day to provide support where required. We have staff on duty at both exit gates and from where buses collect students.
Do schools have the right to confiscate pupils' or parents' private property?	Schools have legal powers to confiscate items prohibited by school rules in accordance with DfE guidance.
Will staff check what is in the pouches?	The school may conduct spot checks in accordance with DfE guidance and school policy.
Will children miss their buses due to queuing to unlock their pouches?	Multiple unlocking stations will be available to minimise delays. Unlocking stations will be placed next to bus bays.
How long will it take to unlock the pouches	Pouches are very easy to unlock taking around 1-2 seconds.
Will there be a health and safety risk due to students jostling to unlock pouches?	Staff supervision and sufficient unlocking stations will ensure a calm and safe process.
What happens if my child arrives to school and their pouch is locked and they cannot put their phone in?	Unlocking devices will be available at the start of the day by members of staff on the school gates.
Is this a good use of school funds?	The school believes the educational and wellbeing benefits represent good value for money.
What happens if a device is confiscated in the run up to the school holidays?	Devices will be returned in accordance with the St Ivo Academy Behaviour Policy and any published collection arrangements. Please see the phone-free school statement for more details.
What evidence is there which supports this approach to reducing distractions and improving focus?	Evidence from government guidance and research suggests reducing phone use supports concentration, wellbeing and learning. Please see

	the links at the end of this document, for more information.
How will the school know if this new approach is working?	The school will monitor behaviour, engagement, confiscation data and stakeholder feedback.
In the event of a wider emergency, how will the school communicate with parents to confirm student safety?	Parents and carers will be contacted through the school's established communication systems including Bromcom (MCAS).
Is this new initiative reflected in the behaviour policy?	Yes, there will be amendments made to the behaviour policy for 2026/27 that will reflect these changes. The updated policy will be available to read on our school website in September 2026.
Does this new initiative impact 6 th Form students?	No, the same rules apply as currently. 6 th Form students can use their phones in the Keep (6 th Form centre) but shouldn't be using them whilst walking around the school site. 6 th Form students will not require a pouch.

References and Evidence

1. Department for Education - [Mobile phones in schools guidance](#):
2. Department for Education - Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance: [Searching, screening and confiscation in schools \(DfE\)](#)
3. Education Endowment Foundation: Cognitive Science Approaches in the Classroom, pp.13 & 24: [Cognitive Science Approaches in the Classroom: A Review of the Evidence \(PDF\)](#)
4. King's College London: Teens with problematic smartphone use are twice as likely to have anxiety: [Teens with problematic smartphone use are twice as likely to have anxiety – and many are eager to cut down](#)
5. Schools Week: School smartphone bans reduce overall screen time, poll suggests: [School smartphone bans reduce overall screen time, poll suggests](#)
6. UNESCO: [Global Education Monitoring Report](#)
7. Schools Week: 'Transformational': Smartphone-free schools reveal impact of ban: [Smartphone bans: What is the impact in schools?](#)
8. Policy Exchange: The Case for a Smartphone Ban in Schools: [Policy Exchange - Disconnect](#)