

19 June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Introducing a Smartphone Free approach for students in Years 7-11, from September 2026

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our recent consultation/survey on Smartphones, it has been very valuable in shaping our next steps. Most parents/carers concerns were centred around safely getting to and from school. We believe we have taken this concern into account, and I am now writing to share the important developments in our approach to safeguarding, student wellbeing and creating the very best environment for learning.

At The Bourne Academy, we are committed to ensuring that every student is known, valued and challenged to achieve their full potential. We strive to create a culture where students can flourish academically, socially and personally in a safe, focused and supportive environment.

Following careful consideration of the national picture, Government announcements, [statutory guidance](#) from the Department of Education, emerging research and our own professional experience, we have concluded that smartphones and unrestricted access to social media present significant challenges to the wellbeing, safety and development of young people. The evidence increasingly demonstrates that the risks associated with smartphone use—including distraction, exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying and negative impacts on mental health—often outweigh any perceived benefits, particularly for younger students.

For this reason, **from September 2026**, all students at The Bourne Academy will be part of our new smartphone-free approach. This new strategy is designed to support the wellbeing, safety and success of all students across the Academy.

Our reasons for making this change

Our smartphone/device-free approach will:

- Strengthen safeguarding both within and beyond the Academy
- Reduce students' exposure to online risks and harmful content
- Improve focus, engagement and behaviour in lessons
- Support positive wellbeing and healthy social interactions
- Minimise the risk of theft, loss and distraction
- Support families who choose to delay introducing smartphones.

We also recognise the importance of helping students develop independence, resilience and self-confidence as they make the transition to secondary education.

What this means for students in Years 7-11:

- Smartphones must not be brought onto the Academy site (unless required for medical purposes, where no other device will suffice). This will be agreed on an individual basis.
- Where a phone is required for travel arrangements, students should use a basic mobile phone without smart features, commonly referred to as a "brick phone"

Principal: Mr M Avoth

The Bourne Academy, Hadow Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH10 5HS

01202 528554 | admin@thebourneacademy.com | www.thebourneacademy.com

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- No other smart devices may be brought onsite: for example, airpods, glasses, ipads, watches.

Acceptable phones must (see Appendix 1):

- Allow calls and text messages only
- Have no internet access, nor camera
- Have no applications or app store functionality.

Expectations when arriving at the Academy

Our existing expectations regarding mobile phones remain unchanged for any 'Brick' phones:

- 'Brick' Phones must be switched off before entering the Academy site
- 'Brick' Phones must be placed securely in the bottom of the student's bag
- These expectations apply from the moment students enter the Academy grounds until they have left school site at the end of the day.

SANCTIONS – 'Brick' phones (MISUSE OF PERMITTED DEVICES) If a student is found using or carrying a permitted **basic 'brick' phone** incorrectly:

- The phone will be confiscated and stored securely until the end of the day
- An email will be sent home and the event recorded as a behaviour incident on Arbor
- In addition, for a 2nd offence - the student will receive a DoL detention (1 hour) and parent/carer should collect from Reception
- In addition, for a 3rd Offence – the student will receive a Principal's Detention and parent/carer should collect from a senior member of staff by appointment only
- Further breaches demonstrate clear persistent disregard for our Behaviour Policy. Therefore, the student may face severe additional sanctions, in line with that policy.

SANCTIONS – Smartphones or smart devices (PROHIBITED DEVICES)

If a student is found using or carrying a **smartphone or smart devices, which are classed as a prohibitive items**:

- The phone will be confiscated & stored securely **until the following day** when it can be collected, by a parent/carer after 9.15am
- An email will be sent home and the event recorded as a behaviour incident on Arbor
- The student will attend a Principal's Detention
- In addition, for a 2nd offence - the phone will be kept for one week and the student will be suspended – parents/carers will be able to arrange to collect the phone (after 9.15am) by appointment only
- In addition, for a 3rd Offence – the phone will be kept until the end of that half term (to be collected from a Senior member of staff, by the parent/carer and by appointment only). The student will be suspended
- Further breaches demonstrate clear persistent disregard for our Behaviour Policy and the safety and welfare of our community. Therefore, the student may face severe additional sanctions, in line with that policy.

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- Any smartphone seen during morning staff duties will be collected in line ups and the above sanctions implemented. We may run spot checks at any time. Refusal to handover a phone would result in suspension.

Further Information

Further information, including answers to frequently asked questions, will be shared separately. We will also be hosting an information evening to share more about the Academy's approach.

We are grateful for your support as we work together to provide students with the safest possible environment in which to learn, grow and thrive. By establishing clear boundaries around smartphone use, we believe we can better support students in developing positive habits, strong relationships and a successful start to their secondary education.

Kind regards

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Appendix 1

Permitted 'brick phones'

The following simple "brick" phones have no access to apps and no camera

<u>Nokia 105 4G</u> (2023 version) Around £24 Amazon, Argos 	<u>Artfone F30 4G</u> Around £40 Amazon, eBay 		
	<u>Uleway T190 4G</u> Around £40 Amazon, eBay (also branded as Chakeyake)		<u>Easyfone Prime A6 4G</u> Around £40 Amazon

* These can also be found second-hand at CeX (in store or online), eBay etc.

SIM CARDS: Most brick phones have a simple internet browser, so to make sure the phone has no internet, we ask that you use a SIM card with no data. Here are some ***no data SIM options:***

- [Ecotalk Just Talk SIM](#) £4 a month: unlimited calls & texts, no data
 - uses EE network
 - invests its profits into rewilding projects within the UK
- [Asda Talk & Text SIM](#) £4 a month: unlimited calls & texts, no data
 - uses Vodafone network

Tracking options (available at various retailers):

- [Tile](#) (around £20)
- [Samsung Smart Tag](#) (around £20)
- [Apple Airtag](#) (around £20)
- Cheaper unbranded versions also available e.g. on Amazon

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