

19 June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

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**, Yr7 to Yr11 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. Sixth Form students will also have restrictions.

Our reasons for making this change

Our smartphone-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.

Principal: Mr M Avoth

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6th Form Strategy

Smartphones are permitted for sixth-form students. However, they may not be used, seen, or heard outside the sixth-form area

- Outside the 6th Form Common Room, Smartphones/devices must not be seen around the Academy, (unless required for medical purposes, where no other device will suffice)
- No other smart devices may be used around the Academy: airpods, glasses, ipads.
- If Academy infrastructure (IT capabilities) allows for use of a smart device in classes or on trips, then permission will be expressly granted by the member of staff in charge. This may include use of smart device for accessing Unifrog.

Sanctions

If a student is found using or carrying a **smartphone or smart device outside the 6th Form Common Room**:

- The phone will be confiscated and stored securely until the end of the day. The student can then collect the smartphone
- An email will be sent home and the event recorded as a behaviour incident on Arbor
- In addition, for a 2nd offence - The phone will be confiscated & stored securely until the following day. The student can then collect after 9.15am the next day. They will receive a Principal's Detention
- 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, which may include suspension.

Further Information

Further information, including answers to frequently asked questions, will be shared. 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

The Bourne Academy

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