



Bottisham Village College

Achievement through Inspiring, Caring, Enriching

Principal: Mrs Jenny Rankine M.Ed LLCM

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EC/bg

September 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Mobile Phone Policy

Summary of Actions	Deadline
Complete the survey to ensure your views are included. Mobile Phone Policy Consultation — Parent Feedback Form	Friday 10 October 2026.

I am writing to update you on an important change to our approach to mobile phones and smart watches in school, and to invite your views on how we take this forward.

As you may be aware, [Anglian Learning wrote to families last term](#) to explain that, across the Trust, mobile phones should not be accessible to pupils during the school day. This expectation is in line with current government guidance and reflects our wider commitment to supporting pupils' wellbeing, concentration, relationships and sense of belonging in school.

The Department for Education's statutory guidance, Mobile phones in schools, applies from 1 September 2026. It states that schools should prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day, including lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime, and makes clear that this extends to other smart technology with similar functionality, such as devices that can send or receive notifications or messages, or record audio or video. The [guidance](#) is unambiguous:

"All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only."

At Bottisham Village College, we are therefore reviewing our Positive Behaviour Policy and Mobile Phone Policy so that our local arrangements reflect both the Trust expectation and the practical needs of our school community. Whatever approach we adopt must meet the DfE guidance; the consultation is about how we do that in a way that works for our students and families, not whether we do it. Any exceptions will need to be limited, proportionate and based on individual pupil need, for example where a device is required for medical or safeguarding reasons.

Interim Arrangements – In Place Now

While we consult, the following rules apply to every student, every day, with immediate effect:

- Phones and smart watches must be switched off before your child enters the school site in the morning.
- Once switched off, the device must be stored in their school bag and stay there until they leave the site at the end of the day. **Students may not use their phones during after-school enrichment activities.**



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- Phones and smart watches must not be carried in a pocket or coat, and smart watches must not be worn.
- This applies at every point in the school day: lessons, moving between lessons, break, lunch and any other time on site.
- Ordinary watches without smart functionality are still permitted.
- Phones allowed to support students with Type 1 Diabetes

If a phone or smart watch is seen by a member of staff, or staff reasonably suspect one is being used, it will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day. Repeated breaches may lead to further sanctions, including parents or carers being required to collect the device from school.

Senior staff will be at the school entrances each morning to remind students of these expectations. The interim arrangements stay in place until the consultation is complete, and a final approach has been approved by the Local Governing Body.

For your information, since the start of term we have only had 35 incidents where a smartphone has been confiscated.

The Options We Are Consulting On

The guidance is clear about the outcome but leaves schools to decide how to achieve it. We have identified two main routes, and we have not decided between them: we have ruled out on site storage, based on the logistics and risk. That is what the consultation is for, and the survey asks you to indicate your preference.

Option A – Lockable pouches

Each student is issued a pouch. The phone goes in on arrival, the pouch is locked, and it is unlocked at the end of the day. Students keep their phones with them throughout. The main challenge is cost: the upfront outlay is estimated at more than £18,000, which is money that would be taken out of our existing school budget: there is no additional funding. There are then ongoing costs to replace lost, damaged and deliberately broken pouches, and staff would need to be at the gates every morning and afternoon to supervise locking and unlocking. Pouches also depend on every student using them honestly; a phone in a pocket rather than in the pouch defeats the system, so policing would still be needed.

Option B – No smartphones or smart technology on site

Smartphones and smart watches are not brought to school at all, with agreed exceptions for medical needs and students with Education, Health and Care Plans. This has no direct financial cost and no daily administration, so school time and resources stay focused on teaching. It does place more responsibility on families, and it raises genuine questions about journeys to and from school, particularly for students who travel independently, have longer journeys, or live in rural communities. A basic mobile phone, often referred to as a 'brick phone', may offer a practical answer: it allows a call or text before and after school without bringing a smartphone into the day. These are widely available and inexpensive; a basic Nokia handset typically costs between £15 and £20.



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Whichever option is chosen, we will need to agree how we handle medical requirements, as we know some students require smartphones for certain conditions.

Timeline

When	What happens
Now	Interim arrangements in place: phones and smart watches switched off and in bags, not on the person, throughout the school day.
Now to Friday 10 October 2026	Consultation open. Parents and carers complete the survey; students and staff are also consulted.
Thursday 15 October 2026	Survey findings discussed with Parent Forum.
November 2026	Options reviewed in light of the consultation. Proposals taken to the Local Governing Body for approval.
By the end of November 2026	Clear written guidance sent to parents and carers setting out exactly what has been agreed and what it means for your child from January.
From January 2027	Agreed approach implemented and reflected in our Positive Behaviour Policy and Mobile Phone Policy.

Whatever is agreed, we will write to you again with clear, practical guidance well before any change takes effect, so that every family knows exactly what is expected and has time to prepare.

Consultation and Feedback

We are asking parents and carers to complete a short survey using the link below. We will review the responses before discussing the findings with Parent Forum on Thursday 15 October 2026, and Parent Forum will have the opportunity to consider the key themes with us before any proposals are finalised.

To give us time to review responses beforehand, please complete the survey by **Friday 10 October 2026**. Your feedback will help us shape an approach that is effective, practical and supportive of our students and families.

[Mobile Phone Policy Consultation — Parent Feedback Form](#)

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr E Compton
Deputy Principal