



Phone Free Schools



Parent information evening



25 June 2026



Core Purpose

Our core purpose is to ensure every child achieves strong educational standards and is ready for the next stage of their life which includes their education, employment and training.



Our Pledge

L.E.A.D. Academy Trust and its three secondary schools firmly believe that mobile phones are harming the wellbeing and education of our young people and now is the time for change.

We pledge to make our schools phone free in September 2026.





Parental Feedback from Survey



Parental Feedback – Key Headlines

(822 responses over three secondary schools)

- Parents do not support an outright ban on mobile phones
- Phones should NOT be used during the school day (especially in lessons)
- Parents broadly support a **“have but don’t use”** or **“off and away”** model.



Parental Feedback – Screen Time Trends

- Most students: 1–5 hours daily
- Significant minority: 5+ hours
- Wide variation in parental concern

41% very or somewhat concerned

41% not very concerned

18% not concerned at all



Parental concerns re phone impact in schools

Concerns are mixed in intensity, but consistent in theme:

Most common concerns

- Distraction from learning
- Cyberbullying
- Filming / photos without consent
- Social pressure and comparison
- Negative impact on wellbeing



Areas of Agreement

- No phone use during lessons but parents want the security of being able to contact their child whilst travelling to and from school e.g location tracking, emergency contact
- Clear preference for "off and away" rule which would be supported by our preference for phone pouches
- Shared expectations needed – absolute consistency and enforcement/sanctions essential but reasonable adjustments made for those with **medical** issues e.g. diabetic students who require their phone to monitor blood sugars



Key Tensions

Trust & Communication

- Mixed confidence in school communication
- Some parents prefer direct contact (51% said it very important to be able to contact their child during the school day)
- Many parents explicitly said: "Phones are essential for *reassurance, communication and safeguarding outside school hours*".
- Reducing screen time v's online homework – conflicting message when most homework set online
- School v's parent responsibility – 66% parents did not feel it was school's role to help reduce students screen time





The Rationale for Change



1. Safety and safeguarding reasons

- Phones are addictive in nature and can be misused to record and immediately upload images/video/audio of staff or students without consent.
- Restricting use reduces risks linked to privacy and inappropriate content.
- Phones can be used for cyberbullying, taking photos or videos without consent, or spreading rumours.
- Protect students from online harassment during the school day.



2. Happiness and wellbeing of students

- Schools aim to teach balanced digital and communication habits.
- Limiting phone use helps students understand when technology is appropriate and when it is not.
- Social media can increase anxiety, comparison, and fear of missing out (FOMO).
- Phone-free time reduces pressure to constantly check notifications and improves emotional wellbeing.
- Without phones, students are more likely to talk, play, and build face-to-face social skills during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Supports stronger relationships including improved communication, empathy, and friendship development.
- Less peer pressure to own latest and most expensive devices.



3. Improved concentration, engagement, learning and progress

- Phones distract students with messages, games, and social media.
- Even silent phones can reduce attention and memory during lessons.
- Limiting phones helps students stay focused on teaching and tasks, reducing cognitive overload.
- Studies have shown that students—especially low prior attaining and disadvantaged pupils—often perform better when phone use is restricted.
- Lessons move faster and with fewer interruptions.
- Teachers spend less time policing phone use.
- Lessons are calmer, more structured, and easier to manage.



4. Government position on mobile phones

- The government expects all schools to be mobile phone-free environments by default.
- Schools are expected to prohibit mobile phone use throughout the entire school day, including lessons, between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.
- This expectation applies not just to phones but also to other smart devices with similar functions (e.g. messaging or recording).
- Schools are expected to have a clear, consistently enforced policy on mobile phone use that is understood by students, staff and parents.





Implementation Process



Our phone free school

This September, our school will be using pouches to make our site phone-free!

Every student will be assigned a personal pouch and required to use it whilst at school. The pouch is considered school property and part of our uniform and equipment expectations. It is students' responsibility to bring their pouch with you to school every day and keep it in good working condition.



How mobile phone pouches work



ARRIVAL

On arrival at school, your phone will be placed inside a mobile pouch.



SECURE

Once inside school, the pouch is locked. You will remain in possession of your phone at all times.



OPEN

To use your phone, step outside of the phone-free zone and tap your pouch to an unlocking base.

Any
question
s?

