



Dear Parents and Carers,

At Consilium Academies, we are committed to creating calm, safe, and focused learning environments where every student can thrive. To support this, all Consilium schools operate as **mobile-free zones** throughout the entire school day. This approach aligns with national Department for Education (DfE) guidance and reflects strong evidence about the impact of mobile phones on learning, wellbeing, and safeguarding.

Increased Expectations from the DfE and Ofsted

In recent months, the DfE and Ofsted have reinforced the importance of clear, consistent expectations around mobile phone use in schools. National guidance highlights that removing mobile phones during the school day is a key factor in improving behaviour, reducing distraction, and ensuring a calm learning environment.

In light of these strengthened expectations, we are re-emphasising our existing approach across all Consilium schools. This is not a change to our policies, but rather a reaffirmation of the high standards we already hold. Clear guidance is essential for students, parents, and staff, ensuring consistency and supporting a positive school culture.

Why We Have a Mobile-Free Approach

Supporting learning:

National evidence shows that mobile phones can cause significant distraction in lessons. By keeping phones away during the school day, we ensure students remain fully engaged in their learning.

Promoting wellbeing:

Reducing screen time in school creates more opportunities for face-to-face social interaction, physical activity, and positive break-time routines.

Protecting students:

With one in five children reporting experiences of online bullying, limiting school-day mobile phone use helps reduce exposure to harmful online content and the pressures of constant digital communication.

Keeping in line with national practice:

Almost all primary schools and the vast majority of secondary schools in England now have mobile phone restrictions in place, reflecting widespread consensus on the benefits.

What This Means for Students

During the school day, including arrival, lessons, transitions, breaktime, and lunchtimes, students must ensure that their mobile phone or smart device is:

- Not used, seen, or heard at any time.
- Kept securely in their bag.
- Handed over immediately if requested by a member of staff.



Heworth Grange School

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions

Exemptions

We recognise that some students may require access to a mobile device for specific, essential reasons – for example:

- Medical needs (e.g., diabetes monitoring)
- SEND-related communication needs
- Safety needs linked to home circumstances (e.g., young carers)

Any request for an exemption must be made in writing and authorised by the Principal and will be reviewed regularly.

If a phone is used during the day

If a student breaches the mobile-free expectations:

- **First and second** offences: The phone will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day.
- **Third** offence: A parent, carer or responsible adult will be required to collect the phone from school. It will not be returned directly to the student.
- Further consequences may apply in line with the school's Behaviour Policy and Department for Education guidance.

How we will work with you

We appreciate your support in reinforcing these expectations. Parents and carers play a vital role in reducing distractions and helping students develop healthy digital habits.

Schools will continue to communicate these expectations clearly through home–school agreements, transition events, school websites, and regular reminders.

A Shared Commitment

Our staff will model appropriate mobile phone use and apply this policy consistently and fairly. We will also continue to train staff, review our processes, and ensure that our approach remains aligned with national guidance.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership in helping us maintain safe, respectful, and focused learning environments for all students.

Yours sincerely,

Principal