



TANFIELD  
SCHOOL

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29th June 2026

## **Changes to Our Mobile Phone Policy**

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to inform you of an important change to our mobile phone policy, which takes effect immediately.

For many years, our school has operated on a simple principle: we have trusted our students to act responsibly by ensuring that mobile phones are switched off and kept out of sight throughout the school day. I am pleased to say that this approach has worked exceptionally well, and we have experienced very few issues.

However, from **29th June 2026**, the legal position has changed. **Section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026** requires all state-funded schools in England to have regard to the Department for Education's published guidance on mobile phones in schools. The Department for Education's guidance is clear that schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default and that students should not have access to mobile phones throughout the school day, including during lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes and between lessons.

As a result, our policy has been updated so that **mobile phones must not be used anywhere on the school site at any time during the school day.**

The Department for Education's statutory guidance also makes clear that schools should prevent access not only to mobile phones but also to other smart technology that can be used for communication, internet access, photography, video recording or messaging, such as smart watches and similar wearable devices.

Therefore, our policy applies to mobile phones, smart watches and any other internet-enabled smart devices. These devices must not be used anywhere on the school site during the school day. If worn, smart watches must be in a mode that does not allow communication, messaging, internet access, photography or recording.

TANFIELD SCHOOL  
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## **Why are mobile phones not permitted?**

The purpose of this policy is not to punish students but to create the very best environment for learning and wellbeing. Research consistently shows that reducing access to mobile phones during the school day:

- improves concentration and engagement in learning;
- reduces distractions and interruptions in lessons;
- helps prevent cyberbullying and inappropriate online communication during the school day;
- reduces opportunities for photography or video recording without consent;
- supports positive face-to-face relationships and social interaction;
- contributes to a calmer, safer and more inclusive school environment.

We appreciate that most of our students already follow these expectations, and we thank them for their continued cooperation.

## **How will the policy be enforced?**

To ensure that the policy is applied consistently and fairly to everyone, we will introduce the following procedures:

### **Spot checks**

Staff will carry out occasional spot checks during the school day. These are not because we believe students are doing the wrong thing; rather, they are an important part of ensuring that the policy is applied consistently, fairly and equally across the school. Consistent enforcement protects all students and avoids situations where expectations differ between classrooms or year groups.

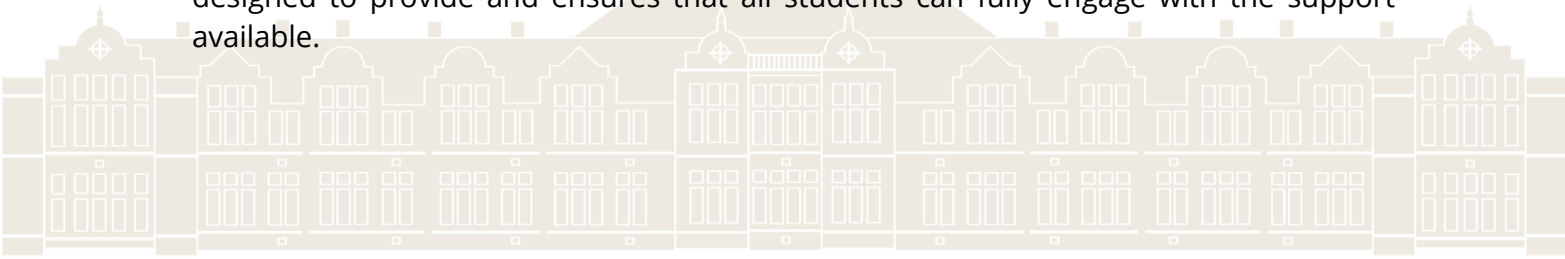
### **Students leaving lessons to use the toilet**

Any student who needs to leave a lesson to use the toilet will be asked to hand their mobile phone to the member of staff before leaving the classroom. The phone will be returned immediately upon their return.

This procedure is designed to ensure that phones are not used unsupervised around the school, helping to safeguard students, prevent inappropriate use of social media or messaging during lesson time, and maintain the integrity of the school's mobile phone-free environment.

### **Inclusion and SEMH Base**

Students accessing our Inclusion Provision or SEMH Base will be required to hand their mobile phone to a member of staff immediately upon entering the provision. This supports the calm, structured and therapeutic environment that these provisions are designed to provide and ensures that all students can fully engage with the support available.



## **Consequences for using a mobile phone or smart device**

Any student found using a mobile phone, smart watch or other smart device anywhere on the school site will:

- receive an after school detention.
- have the device confiscated immediately.
- have the device held securely by the school and not returned to the student.
- A parent or carer will be required to collect the phone from school at the end of the day. This reinforces the seriousness of the policy and provides an opportunity for school and home to work together in supporting students to meet expectations.

In addition, students who break this rule will be placed on a temporary phone ban. During this period, the student will not be permitted to bring a mobile phone onto the school site. If a phone is brought to school during the ban, it will be confiscated and parents will be contacted immediately.

This additional sanction is intended to help students develop better habits around technology use and to ensure that the school's mobile phone-free environment is maintained consistently for everyone.

## **Working together**

We recognise that many students carry mobile phones for their journey to and from school, and our policy does not prevent this. However, once students enter the school grounds, phones must remain switched off, out of sight and must not be used until they have left the site at the end of the school day.

If you need to contact your child during the school day, please do so through the school office or their Year Manager and we will ensure that any urgent messages are passed on promptly.

Thank you for your continued support. By working together, we can ensure that our school remains a calm, focused and safe environment where every student is able to learn and thrive.

Yours sincerely,

Mr C Jones

Deputy Headteacher



