Mobile Devices Policy (Secondary School)

Last reviewed on: October 2026 **Next review due by:** October 2027

Responsible: Michael W. Clack (Principal)

1. Purpose

This policy sets out clear, consistent expectations for the use of mobile phones and other personal devices by students in the Secondary School at Britannica International School, Budapest. It follows a six-week consultation and evidence gathering process and replaces the school's previous, relatively informal approach.

Its aim is to remove the availability and visibility of personal devices during unstructured parts of the school day, rather than relying on students to make repeated decisions about whether and when to use them, while keeping appropriate and purposeful use of technology for learning in lessons. In doing so, it supports learning, wellbeing, relationships and the day to day operation of the school.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Secondary students in Years 7 - 13, on the school site, during the school day. It covers mobile phones and all other personal screen-based devices, including laptops, tablets and games consoles.

Years 7 - 11 and Sixth Form (Years 12 - 13) operate under different arrangements, set out in sections 4 and 5.

3. Principles

- **Clear and predictable.** Students, parents and staff should know what is permitted, when it is permitted, and what happens when expectations are not followed.
- **Simple and enforceable.** A complicated set of exceptions or different rules for different locations increases the burden on staff, so this policy is deliberately simple.
- **Availability and visibility matter.** A device does not need to be actively used to be a distraction. Requiring devices simply to be "out of sight" leaves ambiguity and relies heavily on staff intervention.
- **Beyond phones.** A genuinely screen-free environment applies to personal screens generally, not exclusively to phones.
- **Meaningful alternatives.** Students are not only restricted; they are offered attractive alternatives to engage with instead.
- **Understanding, not only restriction.** Students should understand why the change is being made.

4. Years 7 - 11: a phone-free campus

4.1 Phones

- Students will secure their phones in their pouches by 08:30 (the end of the morning registration period), and retain their pouch, with the phone secured inside, throughout the school day.
- Mandatory PhoneLocker phone pouches will be used for this purpose.

- Phones must remain secured in the pouch for the whole school day, including break, lunchtime and transitions between lessons.

4.2 Provision, loss and damage of pouches

- The school will provide each student with their first pouch.
- If a pouch is lost or damaged, any subsequent replacement must be paid for by the student/parent.

4.3 Forgotten pouches

Any student who has a mobile phone but has forgotten their pouch must deposit their device in the Head of Secondary's office. It will remain there until 15:30, or earlier if the student leaves site before the end of the school day.

4.4 Other personal devices

Laptops, tablets, consoles and all other personal devices must not be used outside of lessons including morning breaktime, lunchtime and transition between lessons.

4.5 Use in lessons

- Teachers retain professional discretion for students to use technology (excluding mobile phones) where it supports learning.
- On such occasions, teachers should use pedagogy that reduces students' temptation and the likelihood of inappropriate device use.

4.6 Use for study or revision

Personal devices may not be used during break or lunchtime for academic study or lastminute revision before class-based assessments. This would be inconsistent with the principles of effective learning and retrieval practice that the school seeks to develop through its teaching.

5. Years 12 - 13: Sixth Form

Sixth Form students operate under a different set of expectations, reflecting their greater independence and the different structure of the Sixth Form curriculum, including study periods.

- Sixth Form students are not required to use a PhoneLocker pouch.
- Mobile phone use is restricted to the Sixth Form Club area. Mobile phones should not be used in corridors, the canteen, classrooms or any other part of the school during the school day.
- Sixth Form students are expected to use their time on campus purposefully and in support of their academic studies. They may use their personal devices (laptops, tablets, etc.) during study periods.
- Gaming or other non-academic use of personal devices during lessons is not permitted.
- Where a Sixth Form student is found using a personal device inappropriately, they will be instructed to use their time on campus for academic study. If they wish to use their time for non-academic purposes instead, they must leave the school campus.

This approach recognises the greater autonomy expected of Sixth Form students while maintaining clear boundaries around appropriate device use within the wider school environment.

6. Non-compliance

The policy has a clear and consistent consequence for students who breach the expectations.

- **Years 7 - 11:** where a mobile phone is found to be accessible or being used contrary to this policy, the phone will be confiscated and can only be returned to, or collected by, a parent.
- **Sixth Form:** breaches will be managed in accordance with the greater level of autonomy and responsibility expected of students at this stage, including the expectations in section 5 regarding the appropriate use of study and non-contact time.

7. Supporting students

- The school will actively create an environment in which there are other alternatives for students to engage with at break and lunchtime, such as social spaces, reading, games, activities and House-based opportunities.
- PSHE will be used to develop an explicit, student-focused programme of metacognition and learning strategies, helping students understand how they learn, how to revise effectively and how to manage their time and attention without relying on their devices.
- Staff INSET time will also be used to focus on this area regularly.
- Students should be helped to understand why the policy has been introduced and the practical adjustments it may require, for example using a watch to tell the time.

8. Roles and responsibilities

Students

- Follow the expectations for their year group in this policy.
- Bring their pouch to school each day (Years 7 - 11).

Parents

- Support the policy and help their child understand the reasons for it.
- Ensure their child brings their pouch to school each day (Years 7 - 11).
- Collect confiscated phones in person, as phones will be returned to a parent only (Years 7 - 11).
- Cover the cost of any replacement pouches if their child's pouch is lost or damaged (Years 7 - 11).

Teachers and staff

- Apply the policy consistently.
- Use pedagogy in lessons that reduces students' temptation and likelihood of inappropriate device use.

Head of Secondary

- Oversees implementation and review of the policy.
- Holds devices deposited by students who have forgotten their pouch.

9. Implementation and review

This policy is effective 2nd November 2026.

The effects of the policy on students, staff and the school environment should be monitored and the policy reviewed accordingly.