

The **GALLERY** TRUST



A community of special schools



Bloxham Grove
ACADEMY

Mobile Phones and Devices Policy

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Introduction

Bloxham Grove Academy is a special academy for children and young people, up to the age of 18, with complex special educational needs and disabilities. All of our students are individuals and we pride ourselves on taking a personalised approach to their provision. Students have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and our area of expertise supports students with Moderate Cognition and Learning Difficulties, Autism and/or Social Emotional and Mental Health needs. All of our students have some form of cognition and learning need.

Our students also have a wide range of secondary special educational needs including:

- Social Emotional and Mental Health needs
- Communication and Interaction needs
- Sensory and/or Physical needs

We are situated in Bloxham Village, approximately 3 miles outside Banbury, and our vision is to support the needs of students who live in North Oxfordshire.

The Academy currently has 102 students on roll and will gradually increase numbers over the coming years. When full, Bloxham Grove Academy will have approximately 120 students on roll between the ages of 7 and 18, across Key Stages 2, 3, 4 and 5.

All our students are encouraged to fulfil their academic potential through a creative and engaging curriculum. This ensures that all our students are encouraged, valued and respected.

We are a member of The Gallery Trust, a special multi-academy trust based in Oxfordshire. The Gallery Trust is dedicated to providing outstanding education and support for children and young people with SEND.

Our Aims and Intentions

Aligned with Bloxham Grove Academy's mission to educate, inspire and celebrate our students, this Mobile Phones and Smart Devices Policy reinforces our commitment to creating a safe, nurturing and welcoming community where students can thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

Given the complex needs of our cohort, we recognise that mobile phones and internet-enabled devices can present additional challenges relating to:

- Emotional regulation
- Online safety and safeguarding
- Peer relationships and conflict
- Distraction from learning
- Anxiety and social pressures

At the heart of our work is a belief in fostering active citizenship, resilience and confidence, ensuring that every student is equipped to embrace their individuality and achieve their fullest potential. Our approach is guided by our school values of **belonging, resilience, trust, honesty, kindness and respect**.

By integrating these values into whole-school practice, this policy seeks to:

- Promote a calm and focused learning environment
- Safeguard students from online harm and peer conflict
- Reduce distraction and support engagement
- Provide clarity and consistency for students, staff and families
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are made where appropriate, recognising that as a specialist academy, some students may require planned adaptations to support their medical needs, communication, independence, emotional regulation or Preparation for Adulthood outcomes. Any adaptations will be proportionate, carefully planned and consistent with the overall aims of this policy.

As a specialist academy, we recognise that a "one size fits all" approach is not always appropriate. In line with the Equality Act 2010 and the individual needs identified within students' Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), reasonable adjustments may be made where the use of a mobile phone or smart device supports learning, independence, communication, medical needs or preparation for adulthood. Any adaptations will be clearly planned, risk assessed where appropriate, and communicated to relevant staff whilst maintaining the academy's overall expectation of a phone-free school day.

Through restorative and relational practice, we emphasise the importance of clear communication, mutual respect and partnership with families when reinforcing expectations. Our intention is protective and supportive, recognising that clear boundaries create safety and predictability for our students.

This policy reinforces independence, responsibility and healthy digital habits, which are essential skills as students prepare for adulthood in an increasingly digital world.

Purpose

Bloxham Grove Academy is committed to its duty of care towards all members of our school community: students, employees, parents and visitors. We endeavour to create a safe, respectful and disruption-free learning environment where students can engage fully in education without unnecessary distraction.

This policy provides clear guidance regarding:

- The prohibition of mobile phone use during the school day
- Secure storage arrangements
- Agreed exceptions for medical or individual need
- Procedures for responding if a device is accessed
- Communication with parents and carers

This policy is aligned with current Department for Education guidance on mobile phones in schools and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025). It reflects national expectations that schools operate as mobile phone-free environments by default, with any exceptions clearly defined.

All staff must comply with this policy and implement it consistently.

Definition of Devices Covered

This policy applies to:

- Mobile phones
- Smart watches with messaging, camera or internet functions
- Any personal device capable of communication, recording audio/video or accessing the internet

Core Expectation: Phone-Free School Day

Bloxham Grove Academy operates a **phone-free school day**.

Students must not use or access mobile phones or devices anywhere on site during the school day, including:

- Lessons
- Time between lessons
- Breaktimes and lunchtime
- Corridors and outdoor areas

Phones must be switched off on arrival and stored securely in line with this policy.

Parents/carers must contact the academy office if they need to communicate with a student during the school day.

Storage Procedures

1.1 On Arrival

Where a device supports regulation during travel, this may be agreed in advance and the device must be handed in immediately upon arrival.

- Students bringing a mobile phone or device to school must hand it in on arrival
- Phones and devices are stored in a **lockable Safe Lock box** within the classroom
- Lock boxes are secured by key and managed by staff

1.2 End of the School Day

- Phones are not returned during the school day
- Devices remain in the **lockable Safe Lock box** until the student's taxi is called
- Phones are handed back at the end of the day when taxis are arriving

Devices Used for Regulation During Travel

Some students may use devices during their journey to support regulation (e.g., listening to music).

In these cases:

- Devices must be handed in on arrival

- Students must wear headphones while using devices on transport to minimise noise and respect others
- Devices must not create disruption or safeguarding concerns

If a Phone Is Seen or Used During the School Day

If a phone is seen or accessed:

- The device will be confiscated immediately
- It will be placed in the **lockable Safe Lock box** within the student's classroom
- A phone call home will be made to discuss this with parents

As Bloxham Grove Academy operates within a restorative framework the following process will take place:

- A conversation will take place with parents/carers
- Parents may be invited into the academy to discuss next steps
- Supportive strategies will be agreed to reinforce expectations
- Individual arrangements may be reviewed where necessary

Repeated incidents may result in review of permission to bring a device onto site.

Post-16 Arrangements

Whilst Bloxham Grove Academy operates a phone-free school day, we recognise that the Post-16 curriculum places a significant emphasis on Preparation for Adulthood, independence and the responsible use of technology.

To support these curriculum outcomes, Post-16 students are permitted access to their mobile phones at designated times and for agreed educational purposes. This enables students to develop responsible digital habits, manage their screen time appropriately and use technology safely in preparation for adult life.

Unless an agreed exception applies, Post-16 students must hand their mobile phone into the lockable Safe Lock box at the beginning of each school day. Phones must be deposited before students access the common room each morning and will not be available during the morning session.

Post-16 students may use their phones only in the following circumstances:

- During lunchtime, once lunch has begun, whilst in the Post-16 Common Room for OPAL time or supported study.
- During planned off-site shopping visits where cashless payments form part of developing independent living skills.
- During independent off-site activities, including work experience placements and independent community visits where phone use has been agreed as part of the activity.
- During planned gym sessions, either on or off site, where devices are being used solely to listen to music through headphones to support exercise and wellbeing.

The following expectations apply at all times:

- Mobile phones must not be used during lessons.

- Mobile phones must only be used at the agreed times and in the agreed locations.
- Mobile phones must never be used to photograph or film students, staff or members of the public.
- Mobile phones must not be used to contact other students during the school day.
- Following any permitted use, phones must be returned immediately to the lockable Safe Lock box.

The academy places significant trust in Post-16 students by providing these planned opportunities as part of the Preparation for Adulthood curriculum. Staff will challenge any mobile phone use outside of these agreed arrangements. Where expectations are not followed, the student's individual arrangements may be reviewed and additional support provided to help them develop responsible and appropriate use of technology.

Medical or Individual Needs Exceptions

Bloxham Grove Academy recognises that, as a specialist provision, some students may require individual adaptations to this policy in order to meet their educational, medical or developmental needs.

Reasonable adjustments may be made where:

- A student requires medical monitoring (e.g. diabetes monitoring).
- A device forms part of an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) or Risk Assessment.
- A student's EHCP or SEND needs require an agreed adaptation.
- The use of a device supports Preparation for Adulthood outcomes, independence, communication or access to the curriculum.
- Exceptional safeguarding or personal circumstances apply.

Such arrangements must:

- Be agreed in writing with parents/carers.
- Be recorded in appropriate documentation such as an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP), Risk Assessment or EHCP provision.
- Be communicated to all relevant staff.

These adaptations do not remove the academy's overall expectation of a phone-free school day. They provide carefully planned exceptions to support individual learning outcomes whilst maintaining the safety, wellbeing and consistency of the wider school environment.

Examples of reasonable adjustments may include students using mobile phones during planned community visits to make cashless payments, access travel information, support communication or develop independence skills as part of the academy's Preparation for Adulthood curriculum.

Safeguarding and Online Safety

Mobile phones and devices present safeguarding risks including:

- Access to inappropriate content
- Cyberbullying
- Image sharing without consent
- Filming or photographing others

Unauthorised recording or sharing will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in line with safeguarding procedures.

To support students with their understanding of safeguarding risks posed by online use, students are educated about digital safety through the curriculum.

Roles and Responsibilities

Staff

- Implement this policy consistently
- Ensure secure storage procedures are followed
- Communicate clearly with parents where concerns arise
- Not carry or use personal devices in front of students

Parents/Carers

- Support the academy's phone-free expectations
- Understand that devices kept in school bags are at their child's own risk
- Engage in supportive discussions where required

Students

- Follow academy expectations
- Hand devices in on arrival
- Respect the phone-free environment

Monitoring and Review

Senior leaders will monitor:

- Consistency of implementation
- Impact on learning and wellbeing
- Feedback from students, staff and parents

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if national guidance changes.

Legal frameworks and guidelines underpinning this policy

[Mobile Phones in Schools – Department for Education \(Guidance, updated January 2026\)](#)

[Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff \(2024\)](#)
[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\)](#)

[Online Safety Act 2023](#)

[Equality Act 2010](#)

[Children and Families Act 2014](#)

[Children Act 1989](#)

[Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[Use of Reasonable Force in Schools \(2025\)](#)

[Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention \(2019\)](#)

Complaints and Concerns

Parents can raise concerns through The Gallery Trust's Complaints Policy. In line with the Complaints Policy, we strongly encourage parents to contact the Head Teacher on office@bloxhamgroveacademy.co.uk in the first instance.

