



The Prescot School Mobile Phone-Free School Policy

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1. Policy Statement

The Prescott School is committed to providing a calm, orderly and disruption-free learning environment where every student can achieve their full potential.

The school believes that the best learning takes place when students are fully engaged in their education, free from unnecessary distraction, social pressures and interruptions created by personal mobile technology.

In line with the Department for Education's guidance on mobile phones in schools, The Prescott School operates a mobile phone-free environment throughout the school day.

All students bringing a mobile phone onto the school site are required to surrender the device during morning registration for secure storage until the end of the school day unless an authorised exemption applies.

The policy supports the school's commitment to:

- excellent behaviour;
- high-quality teaching and learning;
- safeguarding and child protection;
- positive mental health and wellbeing;
- equality of opportunity;
- creating a respectful school community.

The school recognises that a very small number of students require access to mobile technology as part of an approved medical treatment plan. Appropriate reasonable adjustments will be made for these students in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the school's Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Educational Visits Policy

2. Purpose and Principles

At The Prescot School, we believe every student has the right to learn in an environment free from unnecessary digital distraction.

The widespread use of smartphones and internet-enabled devices has transformed the way young people communicate. Whilst technology has many benefits, unrestricted access to mobile phones during the school day can negatively affect concentration, behaviour, attendance, wellbeing and safeguarding. Even when not actively used, the presence of a mobile phone has been shown to reduce attention, working memory and engagement in learning.

Our vision is straightforward:

- Every child deserves uninterrupted learning.
- Every teacher deserves uninterrupted teaching.
- Every student deserves the opportunity to develop positive relationships without the constant pressures associated with mobile technology.
- Every member of our school community has a responsibility to contribute to a calm, respectful and purposeful learning environment.

By removing access to mobile phones throughout the school day, we aim to create a culture where students engage fully in learning, communicate face-to-face, participate confidently in school life and develop the resilience and independence needed to succeed both academically and personally.

This policy reflects our commitment to high expectations, consistency and fairness. It is not intended to punish students for owning mobile phones; rather, it establishes clear and consistent routines that support learning, safeguard students and enable all members of the school community to thrive.

3. Aims

The aim of this policy is to establish and maintain a safe, consistent and fully mobile phone-free environment that supports outstanding teaching, learning and student wellbeing.

Specifically, this policy aims to:

- establish clear expectations regarding the possession and storage of mobile phones and other smart devices during the school day;
- ensure full compliance with Department for Education guidance relating to mobile phones in schools;
- minimise disruption to learning by removing unnecessary digital distractions from classrooms and around the school site;
- improve behaviour, concentration and student engagement through consistent implementation of a whole-school approach;
- promote face-to-face communication and healthy social interaction between students;
- reduce opportunities for cyberbullying, online conflict, inappropriate photography, filming, social media misuse and unauthorised communication;

- strengthen safeguarding arrangements by limiting access to internet-enabled devices during the school day;
- provide secure daily procedures for the collection, storage and return of mobile phones;
- ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for students with authorised medical needs, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010;
- provide clear guidance for staff regarding collection, storage, searches, screening, confiscation and sanctions;
- work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure consistent expectations between home and school; and
- promote a culture where students can learn, socialise and develop without the distraction of mobile technology.

4. Legislative Framework

This policy has been developed with reference to the following legislation and statutory guidance:

Legislation

- Education Act 1996
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

Department for Education Guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Behaviour in Schools
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation
- Mobile Phones in Schools Guidance (2026)
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance

Other Relevant School Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

- SEND Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Attendance Policy

5. Scope

This policy applies to all **students in Years 7–11** attending The Prescott School.

The policy applies throughout the school day whilst students are under the supervision of the school, including:

- Arrival on the school site.
- Tutor time.
- Lesson time.
- Break and lunchtime.
- Movement around the school site.
- Detentions.
- Educational visits, unless alternative arrangements have been authorised by the school.

The policy applies to all mobile phones, smartphones, smartwatches and other internet-enabled personal communication devices brought onto the school site by students, unless an authorised exemption applies.

This policy does not regulate the personal use of mobile phones by staff, governors, visitors or contractors. Expectations relating to staff use of mobile phones are set out within the Staff Code of Conduct and associated school procedures.

6. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Mobile Phone

A mobile phone is any handheld electronic device capable of making or receiving telephone calls, sending or receiving text messages, accessing the internet, taking photographs or videos, recording audio, or running applications. This includes smartphones and any similar communication device.

Smart Device

A smart device is any wearable or portable electronic device capable of connecting to the internet or communicating with another device. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Smartwatches (e.g. Apple Watch, Samsung Galaxy Watch, Google Pixel Watch);
- Internet-enabled fitness trackers;

- Smart glasses;
- Any device capable of receiving notifications, messages or calls.

Unless specifically authorised under this policy, smart devices are treated in the same manner as mobile phones.

School Day

The school day begins when a student enters the school site and continues until the student leaves the school premises at the end of the normal school day or following any authorised school activity, including detentions.

Secure Storage

Secure storage refers to the locked mobile phone cabinets used during morning collection and the designated secure location in which those cabinets are stored throughout the school day. Access to stored devices is restricted to authorised members of staff.

Medical Phone Pouch

A medical phone pouch is a school-approved locking pouch issued to students with an authorised medical exemption. The pouch allows the student to retain possession of their mobile phone while preventing general access during the school day. The pouch may only be opened for the approved medical purpose in accordance with the student's Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) or other agreed medical arrangements.

Medical Exemption

A medical exemption is formal authorisation granted by the school for a student to retain access to a mobile phone where this forms an essential part of managing a recognised medical condition. Medical exemptions are approved by the Headteacher (or nominated senior leader) following consideration of appropriate medical evidence and are subject to regular review.

Reasonable Grounds

Reasonable grounds exist where a member of staff has an objective and justifiable reason to believe that a student is in possession of a mobile phone or smart device contrary to this policy. This may include, but is not limited to:

- observing a device;
- hearing a device ring, vibrate or emit notifications;
- information received from another member of staff or student;
- a student admitting possession of a device;
- behaviour that reasonably indicates concealment of a device.

Screening

Screening is the use of a handheld detection wand or other approved screening equipment to establish whether a student may be carrying a prohibited device. Screening is not a search and will be carried out in accordance with current Department for Education guidance.

Search

A search is the examination of a student's clothing, possessions or belongings by an authorised member of staff where there are reasonable grounds to suspect possession of a prohibited item. Searches will be conducted in accordance with the Education Act 1996, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Department for Education's *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* guidance.

Prohibited Item

For the purposes of this policy, a prohibited item is any mobile phone, smartphone, smartwatch or other internet-enabled personal communication device that has not been surrendered in accordance with the school's daily collection procedures or is not covered by an authorised exemption. Such devices are considered **contraband under this policy** and may be confiscated.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- approving and reviewing this policy;
- ensuring the policy supports the school's strategic aims and statutory responsibilities;
- monitoring the effectiveness of the policy through reports provided by the Headteacher.

7.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation and day-to-day operation of this policy.

This includes ensuring that:

- the policy is implemented consistently across the school;
- appropriate systems are in place for the secure collection and storage of mobile phones;
- staff receive appropriate training and guidance;
- reasonable adjustments are made for students with authorised medical needs;
- behaviour sanctions are applied fairly and consistently;
- the policy is reviewed regularly to ensure continued compliance with statutory guidance.

The Headteacher may delegate operational responsibilities to members of the Senior Leadership Team.

7.3 Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for supporting the implementation of this policy by:

- ensuring the policy is applied consistently across the school;

- overseeing the daily operation of the mobile phone collection and storage system;
- responding to incidents where students fail to comply with the policy;
- authorising and conducting searches or screening where appropriate and in accordance with statutory guidance;
- ensuring confiscated devices are managed securely;
- liaising with parents and carers where concerns arise;
- monitoring patterns of non-compliance and implementing appropriate interventions.

7.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- advising on safeguarding matters relating to the use or misuse of mobile phones;
- determining, where appropriate, whether safeguarding considerations require an exception to this policy;
- working with external agencies where the misuse of mobile technology presents a safeguarding concern.

7.5 Heads of Year

Heads of Year are responsible for:

- supporting students to understand and comply with the expectations of this policy;
- working with parents and carers where repeated concerns arise;
- monitoring repeated incidents of non-compliance and implementing appropriate pastoral support.

7.6 Teaching and Support Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- promoting and reinforcing the expectations set out in this policy;
- reminding students of the school's mobile phone procedures where necessary;
- reporting concerns regarding non-compliance to the appropriate member of staff;
- following agreed school procedures where a prohibited item is suspected.

Teaching and support staff are **not expected to conduct searches unless authorised to do so in accordance with school procedures and statutory guidance.**

7.7 Students

Students are responsible for:

- complying with the requirements of this policy at all times;
- placing their mobile phone into their allocated secure storage location on arrival at school unless an authorised exemption applies;
- ensuring any authorised medical exemption is used only for its intended purpose;
- following the instructions of staff where concerns arise regarding possession of a prohibited device;
- collecting their mobile phone at the end of the school day in accordance with school procedures.

7.8 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play a vital role in supporting the successful implementation of this policy.

Parents and carers are expected to:

- support the school's expectation that mobile phones are surrendered at the start of each school day;
- avoid contacting students directly on their mobile phone during the school day except in exceptional circumstances;
- contact the school office where urgent communication with their child is required;
- work in partnership with the school where concerns arise regarding compliance with this policy;
- ensure that any request for a medical exemption is supported by appropriate medical evidence where required.

8. Daily Mobile Phone Procedures

8.1 General Expectations

The Prescot School operates a mobile phone-free environment throughout the school day.

Students who bring a mobile phone onto the school site are required to surrender the device during morning tutor time for secure storage unless an authorised exemption applies in accordance with Section 13 of this policy.

Students must not retain possession of a mobile phone during the school day unless they have an approved medical or safeguarding exemption.

Students who choose to bring a mobile phone to school do so at their own risk and are expected to comply fully with the procedures set out in this policy.

8.2 Morning Collection

The daily collection of mobile phones takes place during morning tutor time.

Students bringing a mobile phone to school must:

- switch the device **off completely** before placing it into storage;
- place the device into their allocated numbered compartment within the designated mobile phone cabinet;
- ensure the device is fully placed inside the allocated compartment before leaving the collection point;
- follow all reasonable instructions given by staff during the collection process.

Each student will be allocated a permanent numbered storage compartment. Students must only use their allocated compartment unless directed otherwise by a member of staff.

Once tutor time has concluded, the member of staff supervising the collection process will secure the cabinet before it is transferred to the school's designated secure storage area.

8.3 Secure Storage

Following collection, the locked mobile phone cabinet will be transferred to the school's designated secure storage area.

Mobile phones will remain securely stored throughout the school day and will only be accessed by authorised members of staff for the purposes of:

- returning devices at the end of the school day;
- facilitating authorised early collection;
- responding to an emergency;
- implementing the procedures set out within this policy.

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that all collected devices are stored safely and securely throughout the school day.

8.4 Students Arriving Late

Students arriving after the completion of the morning collection process must report to Reception on arrival.

Reception staff will ensure that the student's mobile phone is placed into secure storage before the student attends lessons.

Students arriving late must not retain possession of a mobile phone because they have missed the scheduled collection process.

8.5 Students Leaving or Returning During the School Day

Where a student leaves the school site during the school day for an authorised appointment, arrangements will be made for the return of their mobile phone before they leave the premises.

Students returning to school later the same day must surrender their mobile phone immediately on arrival so that it can be placed into secure storage for the remainder of the school day.

8.6 End of Day Collection

Mobile phones will be returned during afternoon tutor time between **2:55 pm and 3:05 pm**.

Students will collect their mobile phone from their allocated numbered compartment under staff supervision.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they collect their own device before leaving the school site.

Any concerns regarding missing or incorrect devices must be reported immediately to the supervising member of staff.

Students must not attempt to access stored mobile phones before the authorised collection time.

8.7 Students Attending Detention

Students attending an after-school detention remain subject to this policy.

Where a student is required to attend detention, their mobile phone will remain securely stored throughout the detention period.

Where necessary, the device will be transferred by an authorised member of staff to the designated detention storage point before the end of the school day.

The device will be returned only when the detention has concluded.

8.8 Communication During the School Day

Parents and carers who need to contact their child during the school day should do so by contacting the school Reception.

Students who need to contact a parent or carer during the school day must seek permission from a member of staff. Where appropriate, school communication systems will be used.

The school will ensure that urgent messages are communicated promptly.

9. Smartwatches and Other Smart Devices

9.1 General Principles

The Prescott School recognises that many wearable devices now have the same functionality as mobile phones and can be used to communicate, access the internet, record images or audio, and receive notifications.

To maintain a consistent mobile phone-free environment, smartwatches and other internet-enabled wearable devices are subject to the same expectations as mobile phones.

Students must not wear, carry or use smartwatches or other internet-enabled smart devices during the school day unless an authorised exemption applies.

9.2 Prohibited Smart Devices

For the purposes of this policy, prohibited smart devices include, but are not limited to:

- Smartwatches (e.g. Apple Watch, Samsung Galaxy Watch, Google Pixel Watch);
- Internet-enabled fitness trackers capable of receiving notifications;
- Smart glasses;
- Any wearable or portable device capable of:
 - making or receiving calls;
 - sending or receiving messages;
 - accessing the internet;
 - receiving notifications;
 - taking photographs or recording audio;
 - connecting to social media or online applications.

This list is not exhaustive.

9.3 Collection and Storage

Students bringing a prohibited smart device onto the school site must surrender the device during morning tutor time in the same manner as a mobile phone.

Where practicable, smart devices should be switched **off** before being placed into secure storage.

Approved medical devices that do not provide communication or internet functionality are not affected by this policy.

9.4 Failure to Comply

A student found wearing, using or concealing a prohibited smart device during the school day will be managed in accordance with Sections 18 to 21 of this policy.

The device may be confiscated, and behaviour sanctions may be applied in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

10. Medical Exceptions

10.1 General Principles

The Prescott School recognises that a small number of students may require access to a mobile phone during the school day as part of the management of a recognised medical condition.

The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the *Supporting Students with Medical Conditions* statutory guidance, whilst maintaining a mobile phone-free environment for all students.

A medical exemption will only be granted where a mobile phone is an essential part of a student's agreed medical care and has been authorised by the school.

10.2 Eligibility

Medical exemptions will only be considered where:

- the student's medical condition requires access to a mobile phone as part of their treatment or monitoring;
- appropriate medical evidence has been provided;
- the requirement is recorded within an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP), Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or other agreed medical documentation where appropriate;
- the exemption has been approved by the Headteacher or nominated senior leader in consultation with the school's Medical Needs Lead.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- students using Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) systems linked to a mobile phone for the management of Type 1 Diabetes;
- other medical conditions where access to a mobile phone is clinically required.

Each request will be considered on its individual merits.

10.3 Medical Phone Pouches

Students granted a medical exemption will be issued with a school-approved locking medical phone pouch.

The pouch enables the student to retain possession of their mobile phone whilst preventing unauthorised access during the school day.

The pouch must remain locked at all times unless access to the phone is required for the approved medical purpose.

Students must not open the pouch for any reason other than their authorised medical need.

10.4 Conditions of Use

Students with an approved medical exemption are expected to:

- use their mobile phone only for the authorised medical purpose;
- keep the phone secured within the issued medical phone pouch when it is not required for medical use;
- comply with any arrangements detailed within their Individual Healthcare Plan;
- follow reasonable instructions given by members of staff.

An approved medical exemption does not permit general use of a mobile phone during the school day.

10.5 Misuse of a Medical Exemption

Where a student uses an exempted mobile phone for purposes unrelated to their authorised medical need, the incident will be investigated.

Depending on the circumstances, the school may:

- apply appropriate behaviour sanctions;
- review the student's medical arrangements;
- meet with parents or carers;
- amend the arrangements for managing the student's medical needs, where appropriate.

The school will always ensure that any revised arrangements continue to support the student's medical condition safely and effectively.

10.6 Review of Medical Exemptions

Medical exemptions will be reviewed periodically by the school, or sooner if:

- the student's medical needs change;
- updated medical advice is received;
- concerns arise regarding the use of the exemption.

The school reserves the right to amend the arrangements for a medical exemption following consultation with the student, parents or carers and relevant healthcare professionals where appropriate.

11. Safeguarding Exceptions

11.1 General Principles

The Prescott School recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, safeguarding considerations may require alternative arrangements to those set out within this policy.

Any safeguarding exception will only be considered where it is necessary to protect the welfare, safety or wellbeing of a student.

Safeguarding exceptions will be granted only in exceptional circumstances and will not be used for reasons of convenience or personal preference.

11.2 Authorisation

Any safeguarding exception must be authorised by the Headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Before authorising an exception, consideration will be given to:

- the nature of the safeguarding concern;
- advice from relevant professionals or external agencies where appropriate;
- the potential risks associated with the student retaining access to a mobile phone;
- whether alternative arrangements can meet the student's needs.

Where appropriate, parents or carers will be consulted.

11.3 Individual Arrangements

Where a safeguarding exception is approved, the school will agree an individual plan which will clearly set out:

- the reason for the exception;
- any restrictions on the use of the device;
- arrangements for supervision;
- the duration of the exception;
- review arrangements.

The school may withdraw or amend the exception at any time should circumstances change.

11.4 Review

All safeguarding exceptions will be reviewed regularly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will cease when they are no longer required.

12. Visitors, Contractors and Volunteers

Visitors, contractors and volunteers are not subject to the student mobile phone procedures set out in this policy.

However, all visitors are expected to use mobile phones responsibly and in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures whilst on the school site.

Mobile phones must not be used:

- in a manner that compromises safeguarding or confidentiality;
- to photograph, film or record students or staff without prior authorisation from the Headteacher or a designated senior leader;
- in areas where their use has been restricted by the school.

Visitors must comply with any instructions given by school staff regarding the use of mobile phones whilst on the premises.

Any concerns regarding the inappropriate use of a mobile phone by a visitor, contractor or volunteer will be reported immediately to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

13. Educational Visits

13.1 General Principles

The Prescot School recognises that educational visits, residential visits and off-site activities may require alternative arrangements for the management of mobile phones.

Unless otherwise stated by the Visit Leader, the expectations set out within this policy remain in place during educational visits.

13.2 Day Visits

For day visits, students will normally be expected to follow the school's mobile phone procedures.

Where students are permitted to bring a mobile phone for travel to and from the visit, arrangements will be made by the Visit Leader for the secure collection and storage of devices where appropriate.

Students must not use mobile phones during the visit unless expressly authorised by a member of staff.

13.3 Residential Visits

For residential visits, the Visit Leader will determine the arrangements for mobile phone use following an assessment of:

- the educational purpose of the visit;
- safeguarding considerations;

- the age and needs of the students;
- health and safety requirements;
- guidance from the venue or external provider.

Parents and carers will be informed of the arrangements before the visit takes place.

13.4 Emergency Communication

Where students are not permitted access to their mobile phones during an educational visit, parents and carers will be provided with appropriate school emergency contact arrangements.

Students should not use personal mobile phones to contact home unless authorised by a member of staff.

13.5 Medical Exemptions

Students with an approved medical exemption will continue to use their authorised medical phone pouch and associated arrangements during educational visits unless alternative arrangements have been agreed as part of the visit risk assessment or Individual Healthcare Plan.

14. Failure to Comply with Mobile Phone Procedures

14.1 General Expectations

All students are expected to comply fully with the requirements of this policy by surrendering any mobile phone brought onto the school site during the morning collection process.

Students must not retain possession of a prohibited item during the school day unless an authorised exemption applies.

Deliberately concealing, retaining or using a prohibited item during the school day is considered a breach of this policy and will be managed in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

14.2 Reasonable Grounds

Where a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe that a student is in possession of a prohibited item, appropriate action will be taken.

Reasonable grounds may include, but are not limited to:

- a prohibited item being seen by a member of staff;
- a prohibited item being heard ringing, vibrating or receiving notifications;
- information received from another student or member of staff;

- a student admitting possession of a prohibited item;
- behaviour which reasonably indicates that a prohibited item is being concealed.

Each incident will be considered on its individual circumstances.

14.3 Opportunity to Comply

Where concerns arise, the student will normally be given the opportunity to surrender the prohibited item voluntarily.

Staff will explain the reason for the request and provide the student with the opportunity to comply before any further action is considered.

Where the student complies, the prohibited item will be confiscated and managed in accordance with Section 16 of this policy.

14.4 Refusal to Comply

Where a student refuses to surrender a prohibited item, the matter will be referred immediately to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The Senior Leader will:

- speak with the student;
- explain the school's expectations;
- provide a further opportunity for the student to comply voluntarily;
- determine whether further action is appropriate in accordance with this policy and current statutory guidance.

Parents or carers may be contacted to support the school in resolving the matter.

14.5 Persistent Refusal

Where a student continues to refuse to comply with a reasonable request to surrender a prohibited item, the school may implement additional procedures in accordance with the Department for Education's *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* guidance.

These may include:

- screening using a handheld detection wand;
- a search conducted by an authorised member of staff where the legal threshold for a search has been met;
- confiscation of the prohibited item;

- application of behaviour sanctions.

Where appropriate, parents or carers will be informed of the actions taken.

14.6 Behaviour Consequences

Failure to comply with this policy will be managed in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Deliberately refusing to surrender a prohibited item, concealing a prohibited item, or acting dishonestly when asked about possession of a prohibited item may be regarded as serious defiance.

Depending on the circumstances, sanctions may include:

- detention;
- removal from lessons;
- internal suspension;
- suspension where the seriousness or persistence of the behaviour warrants such action.

Each incident will be considered on its individual merits, taking account of the student's age, needs, any protected characteristics and the circumstances of the incident.

14.7 Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

The Prescott School values the support of parents and carers in maintaining a calm, safe and disruption-free learning environment.

Where concerns arise regarding a student's compliance with this policy, parents or carers will normally be informed and may be asked to support the school in encouraging the student to comply with reasonable instructions.

The school expects parents and carers to reinforce the importance of adhering to this policy and to work collaboratively with staff where concerns arise.

15. Searching, Screening and Use of Detection Wands

15.1 General Principles

The Prescott School is committed to maintaining a safe, calm and mobile phone-free learning environment. Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a student is in possession of a prohibited item contrary to this policy, the school may undertake screening or a search in accordance with the Education Act 1996, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Department for Education's *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* guidance.

Any screening or search will be lawful, proportionate, reasonable and conducted with due regard to the student's dignity, welfare and any individual needs.

15.2 Reasonable Grounds

A member of staff may have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is in possession of a prohibited item where, for example:

- a mobile phone or smart device has been seen;
- a device is heard ringing, vibrating or receiving notifications;
- a student admits to having a prohibited item;
- reliable information has been received from another student or member of staff;
- the student's behaviour reasonably indicates that they may be concealing a prohibited item.

Each incident will be considered on its own merits.

15.3 Screening Using a Detection Wand

Where appropriate, a member of the Senior Leadership Team may ask a student to undergo screening using a handheld detection wand to establish whether they may be carrying a prohibited item.

Screening:

- will be undertaken only by authorised members of staff;
- will be carried out respectfully and proportionately;
- will be explained to the student before it takes place;
- does not involve physical contact between staff and the student.

Students are expected to comply with reasonable instructions given by staff during the screening process.

15.4 Searches

Where the legal threshold for a search has been met, an authorised member of staff may conduct a search for a prohibited item in accordance with current legislation and Department for Education guidance.

Searches will:

- be carried out only where there are reasonable grounds;
- be conducted respectfully and proportionately;
- take account of the student's age, SEND, medical needs and any other relevant circumstances;
- be undertaken by authorised staff in accordance with statutory guidance.

Where appropriate, students will be given the opportunity to surrender the prohibited item before a search is undertaken.

15.5 Refusal to Cooperate

A student's refusal to cooperate with reasonable screening or search procedures will be managed in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Refusal may be considered a serious breach of school expectations and may result in further disciplinary action, including suspension where appropriate.

The school may also ask parents or carers to attend to support the resolution of the matter where this is considered appropriate.

15.6 Recording and Reporting

Where screening or a search has taken place, the school will maintain an appropriate record of the incident.

Records may include:

- the reason for the screening or search;
- the staff involved;
- the outcome;
- any prohibited items found;
- any action taken;
- whether parents or carers were informed.

Records will be retained in accordance with the school's record management procedures.

15.7 Safeguarding Considerations

Where a search or screening gives rise to a safeguarding concern, the matter will be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The school will take any further action required to safeguard the student or others in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

16. Confiscation Procedures

16.1 General Principles

Where a student is found to be in possession of a prohibited item during the school day or voluntarily surrenders a prohibited item following a request from a member of staff, the device may be confiscated in accordance with this policy and the Department for Education's *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* guidance.

Confiscation supports the consistent implementation of the school's mobile phone procedures and helps maintain a calm, safe and disruption-free learning environment.

16.2 Secure Storage of Confiscated Devices

Once confiscated, the mobile phone or other prohibited device will be:

- switched off where reasonably practicable;
- labelled where necessary to identify the owner;
- placed in a secure location;
- accessible only to authorised members of staff.

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure confiscated devices are stored securely until they are returned.

16.3 Return of Confiscated Devices

The arrangements for returning a confiscated device will be determined by the member of the Senior Leadership Team dealing with the incident, taking account of:

- the nature of the incident;
- the student's previous conduct;
- the school's Behaviour Policy.

Depending on the circumstances, the device may be:

- returned to the student at the end of the school day;
- returned to a parent or carer;
- retained until a meeting with a parent or carer has taken place.

Parents and carers will be informed where appropriate.

16.4 Refusal to Surrender a Prohibited Item

Where a student refuses to surrender a prohibited item following a lawful request, the matter will be managed in accordance with Sections 14 and 15 of this policy.

Persistent refusal to comply with reasonable instructions may be regarded as serious defiance and managed through the school's Behaviour Policy.

16.5 Liability

The Prescott School will take reasonable care to ensure that confiscated devices are stored securely.

Students bring mobile phones onto the school site at their own risk. The school accepts no liability for loss, theft or accidental damage to personal mobile phones except where this results from the school's negligence.

17. Behaviour Sanctions

17.1 General Principles

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy will be managed in accordance with The Prescott School's Behaviour Policy.

The school will consider each incident individually, taking account of:

- the nature and seriousness of the incident;
- whether the behaviour was deliberate;
- any previous breaches of this policy;
- the student's age, SEND, medical needs and any other relevant circumstances.

Behaviour sanctions will be applied fairly, consistently and proportionately.

17.2 Examples of Breaches

Breaches of this policy include, but are not limited to:

- failing to surrender a mobile phone during the morning collection process;
- bringing a prohibited smart device into school;
- retaining possession of a prohibited item during the school day;
- using a prohibited item during the school day;
- deliberately concealing a prohibited item;
- refusing a reasonable instruction to surrender a prohibited item;
- providing false or misleading information regarding possession of a prohibited item;
- attempting to retrieve a stored device without permission;
- using a mobile phone issued under a medical exemption for purposes unrelated to the approved medical need.

17.3 Sanctions

Where a breach of this policy has occurred, the school may apply one or more of the following, in accordance with the Behaviour Policy:

- a verbal reminder or warning;

- detention;
- removal from lessons;
- parental contact;
- restorative meeting;
- internal suspension;
- suspension.

The sanction applied will reflect the seriousness of the incident and the individual circumstances of the student.

17.4 Serious or Repeated Breaches

Serious or repeated breaches of this policy, including persistent refusal to comply with reasonable instructions or repeated possession of a prohibited item, may be regarded as serious misconduct.

Such behaviour may result in more significant sanctions, including suspension, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and current Department for Education guidance.

17.5 Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

The school values the support of parents and carers in reinforcing the expectations of this policy.

Where a student repeatedly fails to comply with the school's mobile phone procedures, parents or carers may be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and agree strategies to support future compliance.

18. Lost or Damaged Property

18.1 General Principles

Students bring mobile phones onto the school site at their own risk.

The Prescot School provides a secure system for the daily collection and storage of mobile phones and will take reasonable steps to safeguard devices whilst they are in the school's care.

18.2 Responsibility for Personal Property

Students are responsible for:

- ensuring that they collect the correct device at the end of the school day;
- reporting any concerns regarding a missing or damaged device immediately to a member of staff;
- taking reasonable care of their own device whilst travelling to and from school.

The school cannot accept responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, stolen or damaged before they are surrendered for secure storage or after they have been returned to students at the end of the school day.

18.3 Loss or Damage Whilst in School Care

If a mobile phone is believed to have been lost or damaged whilst in the school's secure storage system, the matter will be investigated.

Where appropriate, the school will:

- establish the circumstances of the incident;
- review the handling and storage arrangements;
- inform the student and their parent or carer of the outcome.

Nothing in this policy limits the school's legal responsibilities where loss or damage results from negligence.

18.4 Reporting Concerns

Any concerns relating to a lost or damaged mobile phone should be reported to the school as soon as reasonably practicable.

The school will investigate reported concerns in accordance with its internal proc

19. Equality Impact

The Prescot School is committed to ensuring that this policy is implemented fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

The school recognises its duty to make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities or medical conditions where required. Where a student requires access to a mobile phone as part of an agreed medical treatment plan, appropriate arrangements will be made in accordance with Section 10 of this policy and the student's Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP).

The implementation of this policy will have due regard to the needs of students with:

- disabilities;
- special educational needs and disabilities (SEND);
- recognised medical conditions;
- other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

The school will ensure that decisions made under this policy are proportionate, reasonable and based on individual circumstances where appropriate.

No student will be treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic, and any reasonable adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The school will monitor the implementation of this policy to ensure that it does not result in unlawful discrimination and that all students continue to have equitable access to education in a safe, calm and purposeful learning environment.

20. Monitoring

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of this policy.

Operational monitoring may be delegated to members of the Senior Leadership Team.

The school will monitor:

- compliance with the daily mobile phone procedures;
- incidents involving prohibited items;
- the use of screening and search procedures;
- behaviour trends relating to mobile phones and smart devices;
- the use of medical and safeguarding exemptions;
- feedback from staff, students and parents, where appropriate.

Monitoring information may be used to identify patterns, evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and inform future improvements.

21. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where:

- there are changes to legislation or statutory guidance;
- Department for Education guidance is updated;
- operational experience identifies a need for amendment;
- the Governing Board or Headteacher determines that a review is necessary.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the policy remains up to date and reflects current legislation, statutory guidance and best practice.

The Governing Board will approve any substantive changes to this policy.

Appendix A – Summary of Student Expectations

Students who bring a mobile phone to school must:

- switch the device off before entering the mobile phone cabinet;
- place the device into their allocated numbered compartment during morning tutor time;

- not retain possession of a mobile phone during the school day unless an authorised exemption applies;
- not bring smartwatches or other prohibited smart devices into school;
- collect their phone during afternoon tutor time before leaving the school site;
- comply with all reasonable instructions given by members of staff regarding this policy.

Failure to comply with these expectations may result in behaviour sanctions in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Appendix B – Summary of Parent and Carer Expectations

Parents and carers are asked to support the successful implementation of this policy by:

- reinforcing the expectation that mobile phones must be surrendered at the start of each school day;
- ensuring students understand that smartwatches and other prohibited smart devices must not be brought into school;
- contacting the school Reception should urgent communication with their child be required during the school day;
- working in partnership with the school where concerns arise regarding compliance with this policy;
- supporting the school's decisions where reasonable screening, searches or confiscation procedures are required in accordance with this policy and statutory guidance.