

Lochaber High School

Mobile & Smart-Device Policy






1 Purpose & Rationale

Lochaber High School, in partnership with our associated primary schools, is committed to providing every young person with a calm, focused and welcoming place to learn. Working together across the 3-18 learning community means pupils meet the same clear message about personal devices from the end of primary through S6, ensuring consistent expectations and smoother transition. Following recent Scottish Government guidance on mobile-phone use in schools, our policy aims to:

- guarantee consistent, disruption-free learning in every classroom
- foster positive face-to-face relationships across the school community
- protect pupils' safety, wellbeing and digital dignity

We recognise that mobile technology plays an important part in pupils' lives outside school. Inside school, however, constant alerts, notifications and camera access can interrupt learning and expose young people to risks that staff cannot supervise. By keeping personal devices out of sight during the school day, we create the best conditions for pupils to thrive.

 <p>ENHANCE LEARNING</p>	 <p>PRIORITISE SOCIAL INTERACTION</p>	 <p>PROMOTE SAFETY & WELLBEING</p>
<p>Maximise focus by removing the pull of messages, games and social media, allowing pupils to concentrate fully on lessons and coursework.</p>	<p>Build real connections by encouraging pupils to talk, collaborate and support one another face-to-face at breaks, lunches and during group tasks.</p>	<p>Reduce risk of cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, inappropriate images or unauthorised filming, and safeguard privacy in all areas of the school.</p>

In short: keeping phones out of classrooms and corridors lets everyone learn more, talk more and worry less. Together we create a school environment where respect, engagement and wellbeing can flourish.

2 Scope

This policy applies to **all pupils (S1–S6)** and **all personal mobile or smart devices** (phones, call / message-enabled smartwatches, tablets, handheld gaming or internet-enabled devices) **anywhere on school grounds during the school day - including break and lunch.**

3 Core Rule – SILENT & OUT OF SIGHT

- Devices must be on **silent or do not disturb** before pupils enter the school grounds..
- Devices must be stored **out of sight** in a schoolbag or locker **throughout the entire school day, including break and lunch**. This applies to pupils anywhere on school grounds.
- Ear-buds / headphones / AirPods are not to be worn or visible on school grounds. Exceptions apply for online UHI courses accessible to S5/S6 students.

Teacher-directed learning: A teacher may authorise limited phone use for a specific curricular task (e.g. photographing coursework evidence). Devices are then put out of sight immediately afterwards.

Restricted areas: Phones must never be used in toilets or changing rooms.

Lochaber High is **not liable for loss, theft or damage** to personal devices.

4 Roles & Responsibilities

Pupils

- Follow the *Silent & Out of Sight* rule without reminders.
- Hand a device to staff immediately when requested.
- Bring their school-issued Chromebook fully charged every day – this is the main tool for digital learning. Full Chromebook Acceptable Use Policy [here](#).
- Bring their pocket sized paper timetable to school.

Parents / Carers

- Model appropriate device use and discuss the policy at home.
- Provide a separate purse or wallet for lunch money to reduce reliance on a phone.
- Contact the school office (01397 702512) for urgent messages rather than a child's phone.
- Support the graduated sanctions in Section 5.

Staff

- Apply the policy consistently and fairly.
 - Confiscate devices discreetly and store them securely at reception.
 - Staff are expected to model the same standards - no personal use during lessons. Operational use (e.g. first aid, fire evacuation or safeguarding) may be permitted, but visible use will be minimised.
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5 Graduated Sanctions

Stage	What happens?
1st or 2nd breach	Device confiscated, labelled and stored at reception. The pupil collects it at 15:40. Parents/carers will receive a text notification that the phone has been removed.
3rd breach	Parent / carer contacted. They must collect the device in person from the school office. From this point on, the parent/carers will be required to collect the phone every time it is confiscated.

Refusal to hand over device

Immediate referral to a Head of Department / Depute Head / SLT. Treated as misconduct under the *Promoting Positive Behaviour* policy.

6 Exceptional Circumstances & Reasonable Adjustments

- Long-term medical monitoring (e.g. diabetes app), or to support a medical condition supported by a doctor's letter.
- Parents / carers should contact the Guidance Teacher **in advance** to create a written plan.
- The device must remain out of sight at all other times.

All adjustments will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain necessary and proportionate.

7 Communication & Safeguarding

- Pupils who feel unwell must report to the office; staff will phone home if needed. Pupils must not contact home directly using their mobile phone. If a pupil arrives at the office having already contacted their parent or carer on their mobile phone, this will be recorded as an instance of mobile phone use and will count as one strike towards the three-strike system.
 - All contact with home during the school day must go through the office. This is to support safeguarding and ensure that staff speak to the correct trusted adult, confirm that arrangements are safe and appropriate, and record any decision for our records.
 - Parents / carers should phone the office for urgent messages. We will relay information or arrange supervised contact.
 - Difficult news is always delivered with pastoral support present.
 - Photography or filming of anyone without explicit permission is forbidden and may result in disciplinary action or police involvement.
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8 Monitoring & Review

The Senior Leadership Team will review this policy annually - or sooner if national guidance changes - in consultation with the Parent Council and Pupil Voice.

9 Support for Families – Digital Safety & Reducing Screen Time

We encourage all families to support healthy, positive digital habits at home. These trusted sites provide excellent tips, controls and advice:

- **UK Safer Internet Centre** saferinternet.org.uk – Age-specific guides and digital safety tools
- **NSPCC: Keeping Children Safe Online** nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety
- **Internet Matters** internetmatters.org – Custom advice for different ages/devices and parental control guides
- **YoungMinds: Screen Time & Wellbeing** youngminds.org.uk
- **Apple/Android Digital Wellbeing Settings**
 - iPhone: [Settings > Screen Time](#)
 - Android: [Settings > Digital Wellbeing](#)

These tools can help families set clear boundaries, monitor online activity, and support a healthy balance between screen time and other aspects of life.

Quick Q & A – Pupils

Question	Answer
I need my phone for the bus journey – can I bring it?	Yes, but once you enter the school gate it must be out of sight until you leave.
I've forgotten my timetable – what do I do?	Use the pocket timetable created in Tutor Support or ask the main office for a print-out.
Can I check my phone after 15:40?	Yes. Pupils may check their phones after leaving the school building at the end of the day.
Can I wear my smart-watch instead of a phone?	No. Any watch capable of calls or messages counts as a phone - same rule applies.
My teacher is on their phone – is that fair?	Staff phones are for first-aid, SQA, fire evacuation or other essential duties only; use is discreet and purposeful.
What happens if I refuse to hand over my phone?	It is treated as misconduct and goes straight to Head of Department / SLT. Consequences escalate (see Section 5).
Will I get my phone back at lunch if it is taken off me?	No. You will need to stick to the policy and not use your phone on school grounds. Your phone will be returned at the end of the day.
I have a medical condition, and I need access to my phone. What should I do?	Speak to your guidance teacher. Where there are exceptional circumstances, such as this, pupils can carry phones as long as these remain out of sight and are used appropriately.
Can I check the time on my phone during the day?	No. Phones should be out of sight all day. If you need to check the time, wear a basic watch. All classrooms have a clock and your Chromebook has the time as well.

Quick Q & A – Parents & Carers

Question	Answer
How do I reach my child in an emergency?	Phone the school office. We will relay the message or arrange supervised contact.
My child needs their phone for a medical app - can they keep it?	Contact the Guidance Teacher to agree a plan. The phone will be used only as set out in the plan.
Will pupils ever use phones in class?	Very occasionally, under direct teacher instruction for a specific task. Otherwise Chromebooks meet digital needs.
I sometimes need to contact my child during the school day about changes to after-school arrangements or pick-up plans - how will this work under the new policy?	Pupils will be able to check their phones at 3:40pm as they exit the school building, allowing them to see any updates or messages from parents/carers. Pupils who go off-site at lunchtime may also check their phone at that time. For urgent or important messages during the school day, we ask that parents contact the school office directly - we will ensure the message is passed on promptly.
What if the phone is confiscated three times?	You will be asked to collect it and meet Guidance staff to discuss prevention strategies.

How can I support safe online habits at home?	Set clear boundaries, use parental-control tools and encourage device-free family time.
My child needs their phone for travelling to and from school. What do I do?	Pupils may use phones on the school bus, but these must be out of sight and in bags at all times on the school grounds.
What's the difference between Chromebooks and phones for learning?	Chromebooks are controlled, filtered and provided for safe, focused digital learning. Phones allow access to apps, games and social media - which we can't monitor or support in the same way.
How can I manage screen time at home?	Set limits, use parental tools, and talk regularly about digital habits. Resources are in Section 9.
Who do I speak to to discuss this policy in more detail?	Contact the school via email on lochaber.high@highland.gov.uk and arrange a meeting.

The Facts About Phones & Screen Time

! Constant Distraction

- 📱 **Teens get over 200 notifications a day** - that's one every 7 minutes!
- 👁️ **Every time you check your phone**, it takes your brain around **23 minutes** to fully refocus.
- 🚫 **89% of pupils** say they check their phones in class even when they know they shouldn't.

🧠 Impact on Learning

- 🖋️ Using a phone during lessons can reduce memory and understanding by **up to 20%**.
- 📝 Pupils who keep phones away during revision **perform better in exams**.

💤 Sleep & Wellbeing

- 🌙 **1 in 2 young people** say they don't sleep well because of late-night scrolling.
- 😞 **1 in 3 teens** say they feel anxious or low if they don't check their phone often.
- 💬 Constant messages and social media alerts can increase stress and reduce self-esteem.

🕒 Screen Time

- 🧑 UK teenagers now spend **7+ hours a day** on screens - **not including schoolwork**.
- ⌚ Just **30 minutes less per day** can improve mood, sleep, and focus.

Together We Will Succeed

By following this clear, consistent policy we create a focused, respectful and supportive environment where every young person at Lochaber High School can thrive academically, socially and emotionally.



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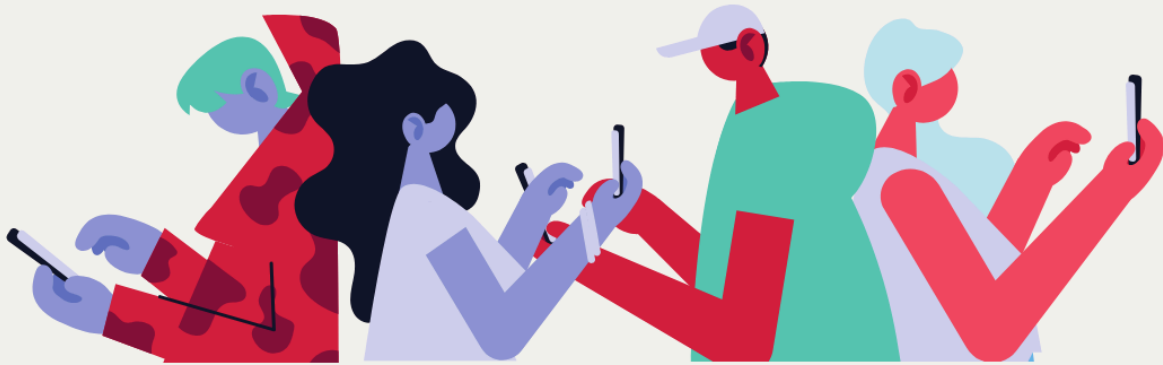
CONNECT



SAFE



MOBILE & SMART DEVICES



LEARNING



FOCUS



CONNECT



SAFE