



# YSGOL BRO GWAUN

## MOBILE PHONES & SMART DEVICES Policy

Adolygiad/Review: Blynnyddol / Annually

Adolygiad nesaf/Next Review: <date>

**Wedi Cytuno gan Bwyllgor y Llywodraethwyr**

Approved by Governors Committee

Arwyddwyd/Signed:

Pennaeth/Headteacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Llywodraethwr/Governor: \_\_\_\_\_

Rhiant/Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Disgybl/Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_

Dyddiad/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Mobile Phone and Smart Devices Policy

### Rheoli Dogfennau / Document Control:

| Fersiwn/<br>Version | Adolygiad/<br>Reviewed | Crynodeb o Newidiadau /<br>Summary of changes | Wedi cytuno /<br>Approved: |
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Mae copi cyflawn o'r polisi hwn ar gael o swyddfa'r ysgol ar gais, gyda dyddiad cymmeradwyaeth, dyddiad adolygu a llofnod bob rhanddeiliad oedd yn rhan o cymmeradwyaeth polisi.

A complete copy of this policy is available from the school office upon request, they include an approval date, a review date and signatures of all stakeholders involved in the approval of the policy.

## Introduction

Ysgol Bro Gwaun recognises that mobile phones and smart devices are a normal part of young people's lives. However, extensive evidence and school experience demonstrate that unrestricted access to mobile phones during the school day can have a detrimental impact on pupils' learning, behaviour, wellbeing and safeguarding.

This policy establishes a clear, consistent and enforceable framework that removes mobile phones from pupils during the school day, while still recognising the practical needs of pupils travelling to and from school.

## Aims of the Policy

By limiting the use of mobile phones during the school day, this policy aims to establish a calm, safe and supportive learning environment in which pupils can engage fully with teaching and learning and where safeguarding is strengthened.

This policy operates alongside and complements the school's Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety and Anti-Bullying Policy.

It is intended that the policy will contribute to:

- create a calm, focused and distraction-free learning environment where pupils can engage fully with teaching and learning
- improve pupil wellbeing by reducing anxiety, social pressure and dependency associated with mobile phone use during the school day
- support positive behaviour, strong routines and consistent expectations across the school
- strengthen safeguarding by reducing risks linked to cyberbullying, inappropriate contact, filming or sharing of images, and online conflict
- promote positive social interaction and respectful face-to-face communication between pupils
- support effective attendance, pastoral care and communication through clear, supervised systems
- help pupils develop healthy, balanced digital habits by establishing clear boundaries between learning time and personal screen use

The policy is designed to remove mobile phones from pupils during the school day while still recognising families' needs for safety and communication before and after school.

## Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all pupils at Ysgol Bro Gwaun during the school day.

For the purposes of this policy, a *mobile phone* is defined as any personal device capable of communication, internet access, or audio and/or video recording, whether through mobile networks, Wi-Fi or Bluetooth.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- mobile phones and smartphones
- smartwatches and fitness trackers with communication or notification functions
- personal devices paired to a mobile phone, such as wireless earbuds or headphones
- any similar personal smart technology capable of messaging, recording or accessing online content

The policy applies throughout the entire school day, including:

- before lessons
- during lessons
- between lessons
- breaktime and lunchtime

The policy does not apply to school-owned devices used for learning under staff supervision, or to agreed individual exceptions authorised in advance in line with Section 10.

## Expectations

To achieve the aims of this policy, the following expectations apply to all pupils:

- Pupils may bring a mobile phone to school for safety or travel purposes only.
- Mobile phones must **not be kept on a pupil's person** during the school day.
- All mobile phones must be **switched off** and handed in in line with the school's agreed procedures.
- Mobile phones must not be used, seen or heard at any point during the school day.
- Pupils are responsible for following staff instructions regarding the hand-in and collection of mobile phones.

These expectations apply to all pupils equally and consistently and form part of the school's behaviour and safeguarding framework.

### Daily Operational Procedures

The following procedures apply to the management of mobile phones during the school day:

#### Morning registration

- Pupils must ensure their mobile phone is switched off before registration.
- Mobile phones are handed in during morning registration in accordance with school procedures.
- Pupils place their own phone into the correct allocated slot within the secure storage system under staff supervision.

#### Late arrival

- Pupils arriving late to school must hand their mobile phone in immediately at the school office before attending lessons.

#### During the school day

- Mobile phones are stored securely and are not accessible to pupils at any point during the school day.
- Staff are not required to release phones during the school day under normal circumstances.

#### End of the school day

- Mobile phones are returned to pupils at the end of the school day in line with agreed procedures – afternoon registration. Buses will not leave school site until 3:20pm.

#### Pupils leaving early (Trips, Sports fixtures etc)

- Pupils leaving early for a trip or sports fixture etc should hand their mobile phone into the school office at the start of the day for secure storage.

These procedures are designed to ensure consistency, security and fairness for all pupils.

### **Staff absence or change of cover**

If a member of staff with responsibility for mobile phone storage is absent or becomes unavailable during the school day, alternative arrangements will be put in place to ensure the continued secure storage and management of mobile phones.

Senior staff will ensure that appropriate cover is identified and that access to mobile phone storage is managed safely and proportionately. These arrangements will always maintain the security of pupils' property and the integrity of the policy. Failure to follow these expectations will be treated as a breach of the school's Behaviour Policy.

Where able, external cover staff will not hold responsibility for the secure storage of mobile phones. They will be supported through YPMs and SLT to ensure that phones are collected in line with the policy and held securely.

### **Staff movement – PE staff**

PE staff must ensure pupils are able to return to pick up their phones in a timely fashion at the end of the school day. They must also ensure they are available to support the pick up of phones for their own form group.

## **Security and Responsibility**

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that mobile phones handed in during the school day are stored securely and supervised appropriately.

Systems and procedures are designed to minimise the risk of loss, damage or unauthorised access while mobile phones are in the school's care.

However, mobile phones are brought onto the school site **at the owner's risk**, and the school cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage beyond the exercise of reasonable care.

Pupils are expected to ensure that mobile phones are handed in correctly and that no attempt is made to access devices during the school day. Any concerns regarding storage or collection should be reported to staff immediately.

### **Contacting Home During the School Day**

During the school day, communication between pupils and home is managed by the school to ensure safeguarding, consistency and appropriate supervision.

If a pupil needs to contact home during the school day, this will be facilitated through the Attendance team. Staff will support pupils to make contact where this is necessary and appropriate.

Parents and carers are asked not to contact pupils directly on their mobile phones during the school day. Any urgent messages should be communicated to the school, where they will be dealt with appropriately.

These arrangements ensure that pupils can be supported effectively without the need for mobile phones to be accessible during the school day.

### Role of Parents and Carers

The school recognises the important role that parents and carers play in supporting pupils' learning, wellbeing and behaviour. The success of this policy depends on clear communication and consistent expectations between home and school. Parents and carers are expected to:

- support the school's mobile phone policy and the expectation that mobile phones are not accessible to pupils during the school day
- ensure that pupils understand the rules and boundaries set out in this policy
- refrain from contacting pupils directly on their mobile phones during the school day
- work constructively with the school where concerns or issues arise

Where a pupil has trouble following the expectations of this policy, the school will work with parents and carers to provide appropriate support and guidance.

### Curriculum, Prevention and Digital Wellbeing

Evidence from the School Health Research Network (SHRN) Student Health and Well-being Survey, which includes all secondary schools in Wales, highlights ongoing concerns relating to young people's wellbeing, anxiety levels, sleep, social pressure and the impact of digital technology and social media on daily life. This evidence reinforces the importance of clear, consistent boundaries around mobile phone use during the school day to support learning and wellbeing.

Through the curriculum and pastoral provision, pupils are taught about:

- online safety and digital safeguarding
- appropriate online behaviour and respectful communication
- the impact of screen time on concentration, wellbeing and relationships
- managing peer pressure and social media responsibly

By establishing clear boundaries around mobile phone use during the school day, the school supports pupils to focus on learning, build positive face-to-face relationships and develop self-regulation skills. This approach is consistent with national Welsh evidence from SHRN, which is used by schools, local authorities and the Welsh Government to inform whole-school wellbeing practice.

This educational and preventative approach complements the restrictions set out in this policy and reinforces the message that technology should be used purposefully and appropriately, rather than continuously or without limit.

## Exceptions

The school recognises that a very small number of pupils may require an agreed exception to this policy for legitimate reasons.

Exceptions may be granted in advance for:

- medical needs where access to a personal device is required to support health or safety
- pupils with specific SEND needs where reasonable adjustments are necessary
- safeguarding circumstances identified by the school

All exceptions must:

- be authorised by senior staff
- be clearly defined in terms of purpose and use
- be time-limited and reviewed regularly

Where an exception is agreed, this does not permit unrestricted or social use of a mobile phone, nor does it remove the school's right to supervise or restrict use as necessary. Unauthorised use of a mobile phone, or use outside the agreed terms of an exception, will be treated as a breach of this policy. Decisions regarding exceptions will be made on an individual basis and will not disadvantage pupils with additional learning needs or disabilities.

## Breaches of Policy and Sanctions

A breach of this policy occurs when a pupil:

- retains a mobile phone on their person during the school day
- uses, attempts to use, or accesses a mobile phone during the school day
- refuses to follow staff instructions relating to mobile phone procedures
- uses a mobile phone outside the terms of an agreed exception

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour Policy and will follow a clear, staged approach:

### Stage 1

- The mobile phone is confiscated.
- Pupils will be placed in 'Reset'.
- The mobile phone must be collected by a parent or carer.

### Stage 2 – multiple breaches

- The mobile phone is confiscated.
- Pupils will be placed in 'Reset', **and a parental meeting organised.**
- The mobile phone must be collected by a parent or carer.

Refusal to hand over a mobile phone when requested, or serious misuse of a device (including filming, harassment or inappropriate content), will be treated as a **serious breach** of the Behaviour Policy and may result in immediate escalation.

## Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by senior leaders to ensure that it is applied consistently and achieves its intended aims.

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required, taking account of:

- safeguarding considerations
- pupil wellbeing and behaviour
- feedback from staff, pupils and parents
- changes to local or national guidance

Any significant amendments to the policy will be approved through the school's agreed governance processes and communicated clearly to the school community.

## Frequently asked questions

### **Why has the school introduced this policy?**

The policy has been introduced to support a calm, focused and safe learning environment. Reducing access to mobile phones during the school day helps minimise distraction, improve concentration, support wellbeing, and strengthen safeguarding. It also helps pupils build positive face-to-face relationships and healthy digital habits.

### **Are mobile phones banned from school altogether?**

No. Pupils may bring a mobile phone to school for safety or travel purposes, but phones are not kept on pupils during the school day. Phones are handed in at the start of the day and returned at the end of the day.

### **When exactly does the policy apply?**

The policy applies throughout the entire school day, including:

- before lessons
- during lessons
- between lessons
- breaktime and lunchtime

Phones are returned once pupils leave the school site at the end of the day.

### **How are mobile phones stored during the day?**

Mobile phones are switched off and stored securely using agreed school procedures. Pupils place their own phone into the designated storage system under staff supervision.

### **What happens if my child forgets to hand their phone in?**

If a pupil is found with a mobile phone on their person during the school day, this will be treated as a breach of the policy and managed in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. The phone will be confiscated and a sanction applied.

### **How can my child contact me during the school day if they need to?**

If a pupil needs to contact home during the school day, this will be supported through the school, via the Attendance team. Staff will ensure contact is made where necessary and appropriate. Parents and carers are asked not to contact pupils directly on their mobile phones during the school day.

### **What if I need to get an urgent message to my child?**

Please contact the school directly. Urgent messages will be passed on appropriately by staff, ensuring safeguarding and minimal disruption to learning.

### **Does this policy take account of pupils with SEND or additional learning needs (ALN)?**

Yes. The school recognises that a small number of pupils may require reasonable adjustments.

Exceptions may be agreed in advance for:

- medical needs
- SEND / ALN needs
- safeguarding reasons

Any exceptions are individual, authorised by senior staff, time-limited and reviewed regularly.

**Does this mean pupils with anxiety or medical needs are not supported?**

No. Pupils are supported in a range of ways, and mobile phone access is not the only or automatic support. Where a phone is genuinely required to support a pupil's needs, this will be considered carefully and agreed on an individual basis.

**Will pupils with agreed exceptions be able to use their phones freely?**

No. Any agreed exception will be strictly limited to the purpose identified. It does not allow unrestricted or social use of a mobile phone, and the school retains the right to supervise or restrict use as necessary.

**What happens if my child repeatedly breaches the policy?**

Repeated breaches will be addressed in line with the school's Behaviour Policy using a clear, staged approach. Where appropriate, the school will work with families to identify additional support to help pupils meet expectations.

**Isn't it part of life for children to have phones?**

Yes — and that is why the school also teaches pupils about digital wellbeing, online safety and responsible technology use through the curriculum and pastoral programmes. The policy is designed to help pupils develop healthy boundaries, not to deny the role of technology.

**How will parents and carers be kept informed?**

Any significant changes to the policy will be communicated clearly. The school welcomes constructive dialogue and will work with parents and carers where concerns arise.

**Who can I contact if I have questions or concerns about this policy?**

If you have any questions, please contact the school directly. Staff will be happy to explain how the policy works and how individual needs can be supported.

## References

Welsh Government (2026)

Written Statement: National Engagement on Mobile Phone Use in Schools

School Health Research Network (SHRN)

Public Health Wales / SHRN (2025)

Secondary School Children's Health and Well-being Dashboard

Welsh Government (via SHRN)

Student Health and Well-being Survey

Estyn (2019)

Healthy and Happy – School Impact on Pupils' Health and Wellbeing

Welsh Government (2021)

Whole-School Approach to Mental Health and Well-being

UNESCO (2023)

Global Education Monitoring Report: Technology in Education – A Tool on Whose Terms?