



Mobile phones in schools

Draft guidance to help schools make clear
and fair rules



About this document



This is an Easy Read version of our draft guidance about using mobile phones in schools in Wales.



You might need help to read it. You can ask someone you know to help you.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Where the document says **we**, this means **Welsh Government**. For more information contact:

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Hawdd ei Ddeall Cymru
Easy Read Wales

[Easy Read Wales](#) made this Easy Read document. Please complete our online form to tell us what you think.

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About this draft guidance



We want schools to set rules for using mobile phones in school.



We want to know what you think.



Please read this draft guidance. Then send us your views using the response form.

Why schools need rules about mobile phones



Mobile phones can be useful, but they can also cause problems.

Phones can:



- Affect learning.



- Make bullying worse.



- Affect mental health.



- Affect how well you do at school.

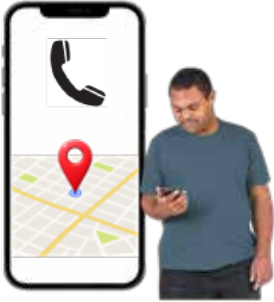


- Affect your sleep and energy levels in school.



We know technology is important. But it must be used in the right way.

Mobile phones can also:



- Help keep you safe.



- Help you manage your health.



- Be used as a tool for learning.



Schools need to think about the good and bad.

Who this draft guidance is for



This draft guidance is mainly for schools and education organisations.

This includes:



- Local councils.
- School governors.
- School leaders.



- Pupil Referral Units.
- Independent schools.



Parents, carers, and learners should also be told what the school rules are.

What schools should do



Every school in Wales should have its own mobile phone policy.



A policy is a written set of rules. The policy should help to:



- Keep learners safe.



- Support learning.



- Support wellbeing.



- Lower bullying.



- Make rules clear for everyone.



- Make sure learners are treated fairly.

Ways schools can limit the use of mobile phones



Schools should choose rules that work best for their learners.

Options

No mobile phones at school



This is a clear and easy way to manage mobile phones.



But it may make emergency contact harder.



Schools would need to think about learners who use their mobile phones for their health. For example, to manage diabetes.

Asking learners to hand in their mobile phones when they arrive at school



Learners can use mobile phones before and after school.



It would be an easy way to limit mobile phone use.



This can take a lot of time to sort out.



Schools would need staff to manage this. They would need to find a safe place to store mobile phones.



There could be a risk of loss or damage.

Keeping mobile phones in lockers or a safe place



Mobile phones are kept in a safe place until the end of the day.



Learners could use their mobile phones when travelling to and from school.



This would cost schools staff time and money.

Never used, never heard



Learners keep mobile phones with them, but they must never be used or heard.



There must be actions for learners who break the rule such as detention, or having their mobile phone taken away.



This is hard to check. Mobile phones could be misused.

Mobile phones used in certain places or at certain times



This could work well for older learners.



This is hard to check. Mobile phones could be misused.

Things schools should think about



- Age of learners. Younger learners may need stricter controls.



- Safety risks such as viewing harmful content online and bullying.



- How mobile phones affect learning.



- Learner needs such as medical needs and additional learning needs. Some learners may use mobile phones for extra support.



- Learners who do not have mobile phones.



- Making sure all learners are treated fairly.



- Young carers and children who are looked after.
They made need contact with home during the school day.



- Travel to and from school.



- School trips.



- How mobile phones may be used safely for learning.



No learner should be treated unfairly by the school's mobile phone policy.



Schools should have a clear way for parents or carers to ask for changes to the rules for their child.



For example, if something is happening at home, and parents or carers need to be able to contact their child.



Any changes should be agreed and written down.



Staff should know how to support the learner.



Changes should be handled carefully.

Making the rules



Schools should explain why the policy is needed.
They should show how it will be good for learners.

They should:



- Look at evidence and check what works and what is needed.



- Listen to learners, staff, parents, carers and governors.



- Think about their duties to:
 - Keep people safe.
 - Treat people fairly.
 - Keep information safe.



- Make sure the policy works with other policies. For example, about behaviours and wellbeing.



Schools can ask people what they think. For example, using surveys, meetings, focus groups or school councils.

Putting the rules in place



Schools should introduce the policy clearly, so everyone understands the rules.



They can use things like posters, social media, or meetings.



Schools may start new rules slowly over time. This will help learners get used to them.



They should explain what will happen if someone breaks the rules. Actions should be clear and fair.



For example, a school might:

- Give a warning.
- Take the mobile phone for a short time.
- Speak with the learner.
- Give detentions.
- Contact parents or carers.
- Record what happened.



What everyone needs to do



School leaders and governors

School leaders and governors should make sure the policy is clear, fair, and checked at least once a year.



Staff

Staff should follow the policy and help learners understand the rules.



Learners

Learners should follow the rules and use technology safely and responsibly.



Parents and carers

Parents and carers should support the school policy.

They should avoid contacting learners during lessons, unless it is an emergency.

Checking the rules



Schools should check if the policy is working.



They should check it often, at least once a year.



To check if the policy is working, schools can look at:

- Behaviour information.
- Attendance.
- Wellbeing surveys.
- Feedback from learners, staff, parents and carers.
- How often mobile phones cause problems.

Using mobile phones safely



Schools should also teach learners how to use technology safely.

This includes learning about:



- Screen time – not spending too much time looking at screens.

- Privacy settings.



- Keeping personal information safe.

- Cyberbullying – bullying that happens online.



- Treating people with respect online.



Mobile phone rules should help schools be safe, calm, and focused places to learn.



The rules should protect learning and wellbeing.



The rules should also make sure learners are treated fairly.