



HALEWOOD
ACADEMY



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Dear Parents/Carers

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - Mobile Phone Policy Update

I am writing to you to reaffirm our expectations regarding mobile devices. You may be aware of updated government guidance published last week that is very clear and states that *"all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only."* The full guidance is available to read here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools> and the school's **Mobile Devices and Confiscation of Items Policy** is available on our Policy webpage: https://www.halewoodacademy.co.uk/academy_information/policies/

Our mobile phone policy is very clear and has not changed. Phones should **not be heard, used or visible between 8.30am and 3.00pm.**

If it is heard, used or visible, the member of staff will confiscate the phone and this can be collected at the end of the day. Refusal to comply with a reasonable request may well result in suspension from school.

As per our policy, if a pupil has their phone confiscated on more than one occasion in a term; students will not be given the item(s) back until collected by a parent/carer. This will not be negotiated on or with students. We would expect a parent/carer to collect the phone.

I am sure you are fully aware of the detrimental effect phones can have and we have attached some links to news articles for your information.

We understand that sometimes it might be necessary to get a message to your child during the school day. **Please DO NOT contact your child directly** as this will likely lead to them having their phone confiscated. **Messages should be passed to the school office.** For urgent messages, please call 0151 477 8830. For non-urgent messages, please email admin@halewoodacademy.co.uk.

I have written to parents and carers previously about the use of social media and on-line content previously and this the letter is also included.

IMPORTANT: We will carefully monitor mobile phone usage and confiscations to determine if the policy needs to be amended in the future to consider further restrictions such as a school wide ban.

This year alone, news articles have highlighted the increasing calls for restrictions and bans of mobile phones in schools due to concerns about online harm, mental health and distraction from learning. Excessive phone usage in teenagers can lead to various physical and mental health issues, including sleep disruption, anxiety, depression and addiction, as well as social and academic problems.

The Guardian only reported last month on how a study undertaken shows teenagers who report addictive use of screens are at greater risk of suicidal behaviour:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/jun/18/teenagers-social-media-mobile-phones-video-games-mental-health>

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) funded research of 13-16 year olds and reported last year how they found a link between problematic smartphone use and mental health, stating teenagers with problematic smartphone use are twice as likely to have anxiety:

<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/news/teenagers-problematic-smartphone-use-are-twice-likely-have-anxiety>

Below is also some information and videos about how you can support us and your child by monitoring, limiting and controlling their mobile phone usage.

How to Create a Child Account with Family Sharing on iPhone

1. **Open Settings:** Launch the Settings app on your iPhone.
2. **Access Apple ID:** Tap on your name at the top of the settings screen.
3. **Go to Family Sharing:** Select "Family" (or "Family Sharing").
4. **Set Up Family:** Tap "Set Up Your Family" or "Add Member".
5. **Invite Family Members:** Choose to invite existing Apple ID users or create a new account for a child.
6. **Follow Instructions:** The setup process will guide you through inviting members, setting up parental controls (if applicable), and enabling location sharing.
7. **Share Purchases and Subscriptions:** You can choose to share eligible purchases and subscriptions with your family.

Key features of Family Sharing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8siFNH-brM4>

How to Set App Limits on iPhone iOS

1. **Open Settings:** Launch the Settings app on your iPhone.
2. **Go to Screen Time:** Scroll down and tap on "Screen Time".
3. **Enable Screen Time (if not already):** If Screen Time is not already enabled, tap "Turn On Screen Time" and follow the on-screen instructions. You may also need to set a Screen Time passcode.
4. **Tap App Limits:** Select "App Limits".
5. **Tap Add Limit:** Choose "Add Limit" to start setting limits.
6. **Select App Categories or Apps:** Choose the app categories or individual apps you want to restrict. For example, you can choose "Games" or specific apps within the "Social Networking" category.
7. **Set Time Limit:** Tap "Next" and set the desired time limit for the selected apps or categories. You can also customize limits for specific days by tapping "Customize Days".
8. **Add the Limit:** Tap "Add" to finalize the app limit.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ue9zGqSK3A>

How to activate and Set Up System Downtime on iPhone

1. **Open Settings:** Locate and tap the "Settings" app on your iPhone's home screen.
2. **Access Screen Time:** Scroll down and tap on "Screen Time".
3. **Go to Downtime:** Tap on "Downtime".
4. **Turn On/Schedule:**
 - To enable Downtime immediately until the next day, tap "Turn On Downtime Until Tomorrow".
 - To schedule Downtime, toggle the "Scheduled" switch to the right. You can then choose to have the same schedule every day ("Every Day") or customize the schedule for different days of the week ("Customize Days").
5. **Set Start and End Times:** If scheduling, set the start and end times for each day you've selected. A 5-minute reminder will be sent before the scheduled Downtime.
6. **Configure Allowed Apps and Contacts:**
 - Within the Screen Time settings, you can also choose which apps and contacts are allowed during Downtime.
 - To do this, go to Settings > Screen Time > Always Allowed. You can add or remove apps and contacts from this list.
7. **Optional: Block at Downtime:** If you've set a Screen Time passcode, you can also choose to block all apps and activity during Downtime.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_D9xJoYMdM&t=2s

Kind regards



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