



Friday 05 June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Introducing a Smartphone – Free School Approach

As your child prepares to attend Glenmoor and Winton Academy, we are writing to share an important development in our approach to safeguarding and student wellbeing.

At Glenmoor and Winton, we seek to empower students to surpass their potential and lead joyful, fulfilled lives. And to achieve that, we want to ensure that all students learn and grow in a safe, focused, and positive environment.

As a school, we firmly believe that smartphones and social media pose a significant safeguarding risk to children. Evidence and professional experience indicate that the negative impact on wellbeing, behaviour and learning far outweighs any perceived benefits, particularly for younger students.

For this reason, we are moving to a smartphone-free school site, beginning with students joining Year 7 in September 2026. This is the first step in a phased, whole-school approach.

Why We Are Taking This Step

This approach will:

- Improve safeguarding in and out of school
- Reduce exposure to online harm
- Improve focus, behaviour, and wellbeing
- Reduce risks linked to theft and distraction
- Support all families, including those choosing to delay smartphones

We also recognise the importance of helping students develop independence, resilience, and confidence as they transition to secondary school.

What This Means for Year 7 Students

- Smartphones must not be brought onto the school site
- If a phone is required for travel, students should bring a device that has no smart features enabled e.g. no camera, no facility for applications. These are commonly referred to as brick phones

Acceptable phones must:

- Allow calls and texts only

Principal: Mr Leon Lima

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- Have no internet access or apps
- Have no camera

Expectations on arrival at School

Our existing behaviour policy remains in place for all mobile phones (both smartphones and brick phones):

- Phones must be switched off
- Placed in the bottom of the student's bag
- This applies from the moment students cross onto the school site.

Sanctions

If a student is found using or carrying a brick phone incorrectly:

- The student will receive a one-hour, same-day detention finishing at 4pm
- The phone will be confiscated and stored securely
- It will be returned at 4pm

If a student is found using or carrying a Smart phone:

- The student will receive a one-hour, same-day detention finishing at 4pm
- The phone will be confiscated and stored securely
- The phone will be kept until the end of the half term when a parent/carer can arrange to collect the device.

Further information, including FAQs, can be found overleaf. We will also be hosting an information evening in partnership with *Smartphone Free Childhood* on **Tuesday 23 June, from 6.30pm to 7.30pm**. This event will provide an opportunity to hear expert perspectives on smartphone use, as well as to learn more about the school's approach, which I will outline in detail. [Parenting in a digital world: Smart-phone free childhood information evening – Fill in form](#)

Thank you for your support as we work together to ensure a safe and successful start to secondary school.

Yours sincerely,

Leon Lima
Principal

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Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the school introducing a smartphone-free approach?

Our priority is safeguarding and wellbeing. Evidence shows that smartphones increase risks linked to online harm, distraction, theft, and safeguarding incidents—particularly during journeys to and from school. Schools with similar policies report significant improvements in pupil safety and behaviour.

How will my child stay safe without a smartphone?

Children are statistically far more at risk from online harm than from strangers in public spaces. A basic “brick phone” still allows calls and texts if needed, without exposure to apps, social media, or the internet.

Can I track my child without a smartphone?

Tracking devices (such as AirTags or Tiles) can provide reassurance, but they are not always reliable and do not prevent incidents. Developing independence is an important part of secondary school, and we encourage families to balance reassurance with building confidence.

What if my child needs to contact me during the day?

Students can contact parents through the school office if needed. Likewise, we will always contact you directly if there is any concern about your child.

Why not allow smartphones but keep them in lockers or pouches?

Lockers and pouches do not address many of the key risks:

- Exposure to harmful content still happens before and after school
- Safeguarding risks during journeys remain
- Devices can still be misused outside controlled times

A consistent approach is simpler, clearer, and more effective.

What about safety on the journey to and from school?

Many safeguarding incidents occur on school transport or journeys. Removing smartphones helps:

- Reduce online risks
- Improve situational awareness (e.g. road safety)
- Make pupils less of a target for theft

More Bus have reinstated bus cards to support smartphone-free travel.

Won't my child be at risk without a phone?

There is no evidence that smartphones make children safer. In fact:

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- Children are significantly more likely to experience harm online than in public spaces
- Smartphones increase exposure to grooming, exploitation, and peer-related risks

What about children whose parents don't want them to have smartphones?

This policy supports those families. Allowing smartphones in school can expose all pupils to harmful content through others' devices, even if they don't own one themselves.

What type of phone is allowed?

Students may bring a simple "brick phone" that:

- Can call and text only
- Has no internet access
- Has no camera (recommended where possible)

We can provide examples of suitable models to help parents.

What about cost?

Basic phones are relatively inexpensive, and low-cost SIM-only plans are widely available. Families may wish to sell existing smartphones to offset costs. Support may be available for some families—please contact the school if needed.

Will this help prevent theft?

Yes. Schools that have introduced this approach report fewer incidents of phone theft. When it becomes known that pupils do not carry smartphones, they are less likely to be targeted.

How will this benefit my child?

Students benefit through:

- Improved focus and wellbeing
- Reduced exposure to online harm
- Greater independence and resilience
- A safer environment both in and out of school

How will my child complete their homework?

- All the online platforms we use are web-based as well as accessed through apps
- We are not saying that children can't use Smartphones at home, parents decide what happens in the home, where we decide what takes place at the Academies.

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