READING BLUE COAT

RBC Mobile Phone Policy

Policy regarding the use of mobile phones may be found in:

- Student Manual
- Staff Code of Conduct
- E-Safety, Digital Communication, and Student Devices Policy

This document is intended to summarise those policies and bring them together in a single reference point.

The School's approach is guided by Government Guidance, *Mobile Phones in School* (2026), which may be found here.

Phone-free environment

Reading Blue Coat School operates as a phone-free environment. As a default expectation, phones must not be seen or used during school opening hours (08:00-18:00). This expectation applies to all students and staff. The only general exception is that students may use their phones on the driveway, while waiting for transport home.

Years 7-11 – mobile phones prohibited

Students in Years 7-11 are prohibited from having any access to phones at school. This prohibition is administered through means of a locking pouch system. As soon as students approach the barrier to enter the School site, they must open their pouches, switch off their phones, place them within, and lock the pouch. The phone must remain in the pouch for the whole day – students should keep their locked pouches in their bags. There may be spot checks of phone pouches throughout the day, so they should be available (i.e., not kept in a bag-drop). Pouches may be unlocked and phones retrieved at the end of the day (16:10). Students taking part in after school clubs must continue to maintain the phone-free environment and sanctions will continue to apply for students not following the rules. If a student in an after school club unlocks their pouch at the end of the school day (16:10), their phone must be switched off and out of sight during any after school club. It is best practice to keep phones locked in pouches (though recognising that this is not practically feasible in all cases).

Further points to note:

- Students are not expected to own mobile phones; parents should confirm if a child does not have a phone or has not brought it into school.
- The basic sanction for not following the policy (phone out of pouch) is a Friday after school detention; further details may be found in the Student Manual.

- If a student forgets their pouch, they should report to the School Office and hand in their phone for the day – forgetting of the pouch will lead to a minus point.

Sixth Form – phones unseen

Sixth Formers are permitted to have phones in school, but they must respect the phone-free environment. Phones must not been seen around the site, in front of younger students, or in any lesson, activity, assembly, tutorial session, etc.

The only exemption is that Sixth Formers may make use of their phones in common room spaces . Phones should not be a distraction from academic work.

Sixth Formers who breach the mobile phone policy can expect a minus point.

Staff – phones unseen (with exemptions)

Staff should not use mobile phones around the site and/or in the presence of students. Like Sixth Formers, their phones should be 'unseen' and limited to the staff room, private offices, and other locations where students will not see them using phones. Staff members may book a meeting room for calls, for important and time-sensitive reasons (e.g., calling about a medical appointment). Managers should work to enforce this policy with staff if necessary and communicate any concerns about staff not adhering to the policy to SLT.

Some members of staff will have an exemption from the phone free environment, due to a work-related reason for them needing to use a phone. Any request for an exemption should be placed via email with the Deputy Head (Pastoral), who will decide whether the exemption should apply. A meeting may be required to discuss the exemption. Where an exemption is required by a group of staff, the line manager responsible should be the one to request the exemption. Any granted exemptions will be kept in a log by the Deputy Head (Pastoral). To support the phone-free environment, staff are requested to keep requests for exemptions to a minimum, and consider whether their use of a phone would be absolutely necessary.

In the past, the iSAMS phone app has been used routinely for taking registers. This should no longer be used (unless in an exemption agreed as above), and registers should always be taken via a Blue Coat issued device.

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Associated Policies:	• Student Manual • Staff Code of Conduct • E-Safety, Digital Communication, and Student Devices Policy
Agreed by:	

	Pete Thomas (Headmaster)
Agreement date:	September 2026