



# PADGATE ACADEMY

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Principal: Mr A McMillan Bsc (Hons)

Ref: AMC/MSI

18<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

## Phone-Free School Policy – September 2026

I am writing to inform you of an important development in our approach to supporting the learning, wellbeing and safety of all students. From September 2026, a phone-free policy will be in place throughout the school week.

### Why we are making this change

This decision follows national guidance and the clear direction of travel in education. The Department for Education (DfE) states that schools should be “mobile phone-free environments by default” (DfE Mobile Phones in Schools Guidance, January 2026). There are also proposals within the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill which are likely to strengthen these expectations further.

### Research consistently shows that reducing phone use during the school day can:

- Improve focus and academic outcomes
- Reduce distractions in lessons
- Support positive behaviour and relationships
- Improve wellbeing and reduce online risks

Our aim is simple: to create a calm, focused and supportive environment where every student can thrive.

### What this will mean in practice from September 2026

Students may still bring a mobile phone to school if parents wish. However, phones are brought into school at the family’s own risk. The school cannot accept responsibility for loss, damage or theft. Phones must not be used during the school day.

### Start of the day (registration)

- Students must switch off their phone and hand it to their form tutor
- Each phone will be placed in a secure, numbered lock box.

### Storage during the day

- Lock boxes will be collected and stored securely for the duration of the school day in a room under CCTV surveillance.



### **End of the day**

- Phones will be returned to students in form rooms during a short dismissal registration period.
- School start and finish times will not change.

### **Late arrivals**

- Students arriving after registration will hand their phone in on arrival at school
- Phones will be stored securely

### **Early departure (e.g. appointments)**

- Students who need to leave site during the school day (for example, for a medical appointment) will collect their phone from reception when signing out.

### **Detentions**

- Students attending detention will receive their phone at the end of the detention.

### **Medical needs**

We recognise that some students may need access to a mobile phone for specific medical needs. Where this applies, we will work closely with families to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place.

### **Expectations and consequences**

- Students who refuse to hand in their phone will receive consequences in line with the behaviour policy.
- If a student claims not to have a phone but is later found with one, it will be confiscated.
- Confiscated phones must be collected from Reception by a parent or carer between 3:30pm and 4:00pm.

### **Communication during the day**

If you need to contact your child urgently during the school day, please contact reception.

### **Working together**

We recognise that this is a significant change. Our priority is to protect learning time, support wellbeing, and create a safe and positive environment for all students and we will work closely with families to ensure a smooth and successful implementation.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Adam McMillan  
Principal