







Teacher Tapp Insights #5: Mobile Phones

Ever since mobile phones first entered the classroom, teachers have had to deal with unwanted behaviours regarding the devices. The government guidance since February 2024 recommends prohibiting mobile phone use "throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime." Here's the current screen time snapshot.

Key Statistics from Teacher Tapp

<p>The vast majority of primary schools either "collect phones in" (76%) or "ban phones from school altogether" (14%).</p> 	<p>The number of secondary schools collecting phones in at the start of the day has increased from 3% in 2018 to 11% in 2025.</p>	<p>0% of primary teachers reported a phone disrupting their last lesson.</p> 	<p>70% of primary teachers reported that they would prefer phones to be banned altogether.</p> 
<p>Policies are more varied in secondary schools. The most common approach is having "phones out of sight all day" (56%).</p> 	<p>4 out of 5 teachers agree that phones shouldn't be in lessons.</p> 	<p>86% of primary teachers and 53% of secondary teachers are restricted to using phones only during break and lunch.</p> 	<p>Around half of primary schools have rules restricting parents' mobile phone use at specific times.</p>

No phones here, please

- **Primary Teachers:** 70% of teachers reported that they would prefer that phones were banned altogether.
- **Secondary Teachers:** This sentiment is even stronger in secondary schools, where 82% reported they would prefer that their school would outright ban phones.



TALKING POINT: Do staff feel confident in challenging students using phones? How simple is it for the policy to be followed?

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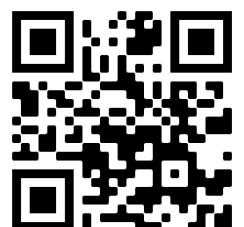
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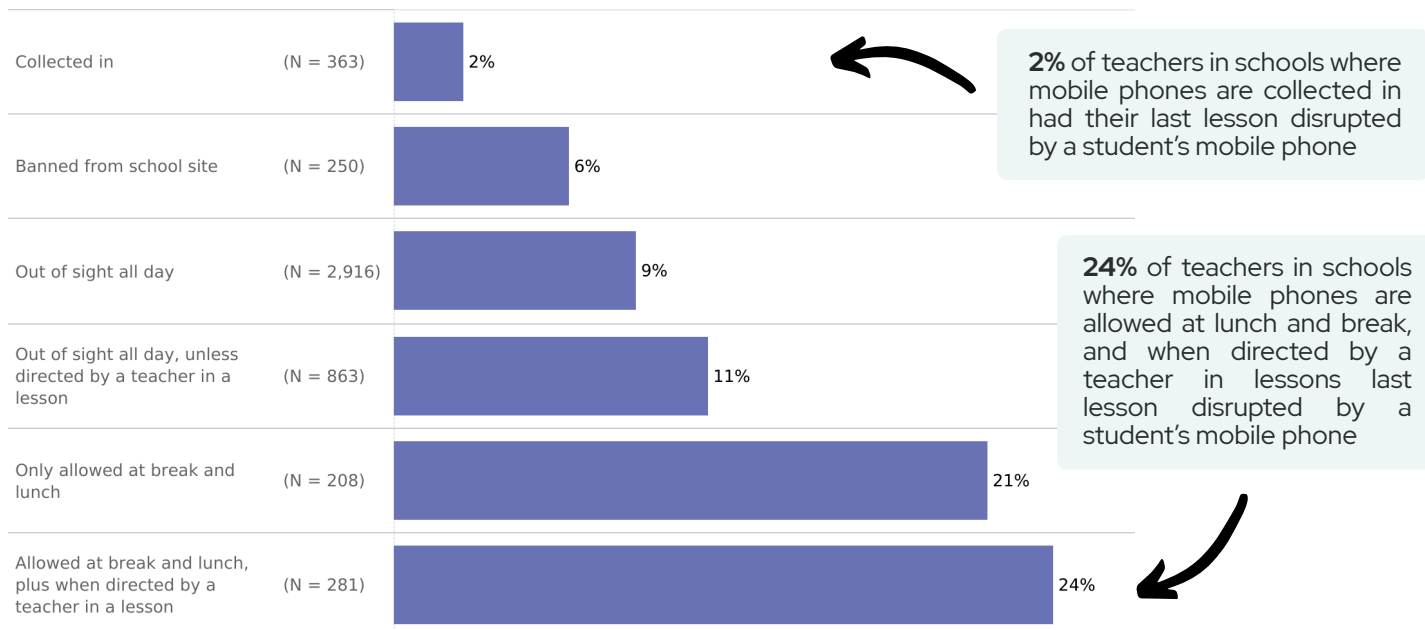
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Mobile phones

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Whether a secondary school student disrupted the last lesson with a mobile phone, by the school's rules regarding mobile phones



Question answered by 4,881 teachers on 27/11/2024 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

What factors do NOT change the rate of disruption

Socio-economic Status: Teachers in schools with high levels of students on free school meals do NOT see more disruptions when compared to teachers in schools with the lowest levels of students on free school meals (5% vs 6%).

Subject Taught: Subject taught also shows little variation, with Art and other subjects (13% disruption) only slightly higher than English (9%).

Teachers and mobile phone use

A large majority of primary teachers (86%) can only use their phones during break and lunch. A small minority (4%) work in schools where phones cannot be taken into the classroom and must be locked away.

Fewer secondary teachers (53%) are restricted to using phones only during break and lunch, and a significant portion (41%) can use their mobiles as they wish. Only 1% of secondary teachers are required to lock away their phones during the day.



TALKING POINT: Are you clear about staff mobile phone use? Do all staff follow the same rules?

The Education Endowment Fund has launched a project with Ambition Institute investigating a nine-day working fortnight's impact on staff retention by giving staff an extra day off every two weeks.

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