

Mobile Phone Policy - Secondary Schools

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Date of next review: September 2028

Review History				
Review Date	Reviewer	Approved by	Date Approved	Implemented
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September 2028				
Recent Revisions				
Issue No.	Date	Revisions made		
1	June 2026	New policy		

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1. Introduction and aims

Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust ('the Trust') and its schools recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smart watches, are an important part of everyday life for pupils, parents/carers and staff as well as the wider school community.

This policy applies to the following schools:

- Carmel College
- Our Lady and St Bede Catholic Academy
- St John's Catholic School and Sixth Form
- St Michael's Catholic Academy
- The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form

The aim of this policy is to:

- Ensure the school environment is mobile phone free by default.
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones.
- Provide clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones in school for pupils, staff, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school including:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes.

Throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and other similar devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of section 36 of the [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026](#), and the Department for Education (DfE)'s [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

3. Links to other policies

This policy should be read alongside the following Trust and school policies and procedures:

- Acceptable Use
- Behaviour
- Code of Conduct for Employees

- Data Protection
- Disciplinary - Staff
- Educational Visits
- Online Safety
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education
- Safeguarding
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

4. Roles and responsibilities

Directors:

- Will ensure that this policy is regularly reviewed to ensure it meets relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

Headteacher:

- Will ensure that the policy is implemented across the school.
- Will consider any reasonable requests from parents/carers regarding exceptions to the policy.
- Will ensure that all students, staff, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors are aware of and adhere to this policy.
- Will hold students, staff, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors accountable for implementing this policy.
- Will deal with breaches of this policy in accordance with relevant Trust and school policies and procedures.

Staff:

- Will adhere to this policy during their working day.
- Will actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.
- Will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in school.

Parents/carers and students:

- Will adhere to the policy and discuss any concerns with the school.

Sixth Form Students:

- Will adhere to this policy and only access mobile phones in the designated areas.

5. Use of mobile phones by staff

Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone during the school day, while students are present. Use of personal mobile phones is restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where students are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school.
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members.

The Headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number as a point of emergency contact.

Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Gemini).

Further information and detailed guidance on data protection can be found in the Data Protection Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or students, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or students.

Staff must only communicate with parents/carers and students using Trust approved methods of communication.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In exceptional circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones or a similar device during the school day in front of students for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with Trust policies and procedures.
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student.
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office or using a school mobile phone.

Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use school phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet.
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is always appropriate and professional, in line with our staff code of conduct.

Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. Further information can be found in the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.

6. Use of mobile phones by students

In accordance with the DfE guidance, students must not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

Students will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Students will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

The Trust recognises that parents/carers may feel the need for their children to have access to a mobile phone for communication to home. This helps with safeguarding and child protection especially in the darker winter months. The Trust supports this approach for journeys to and from school.

All students will be required to place their switched off mobile phone in a pouch supplied by the school on entering the site. The pouches will be locked, preventing access to the phone until the end of the school day. Students in breach of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

7. Exceptions for special circumstances and for sixth-form students

The Trust and its schools acknowledge that there may be some students who require access to their phone during the school including young carers who need to be contactable, students with medical conditions that are monitored via their phones and sixth form students.

Permission for students to use their mobile phone in school will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. To request such permission, parents/carers **MUST** contact the school directly and/or complete the form in Appendix 1.

All students who are given permission must then adhere to this policy, Acceptable Use and Behaviour policies.

Sixth-form students are allowed access to their mobile phones during the school day, to reflect their increased independence and responsibility, but must not compromise the policy on the use of mobile phones for other students.

Therefore, they are only permitted to use their mobile phones or smart devices in designated areas and out of sight of younger students. Misuse of mobile phones or other devices by students in the sixth form will lead to sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour policy.

8. Loss, theft or damage

Students must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The Trust nor its schools accept no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while students are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a secure location.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

Appendix 1



Application to allow a student to use the mobile phone during the school day

Student's Name	
Year Group/Class	
Name of Parent/Carer	
Reason to allow student to use mobile phone in school	
Students who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones. The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a student does not abide by the policy.	
Signed:	
Relationship to student	

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Reason to allow use of mobile phone	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Appendix 2 – Template mobile phone information for visitors & contractors



Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where students are present.
- Do not take photos or recordings of students (unless it is your own child), or staff,
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with students or while children are present.

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of the mobile phone policy is available from the school office.