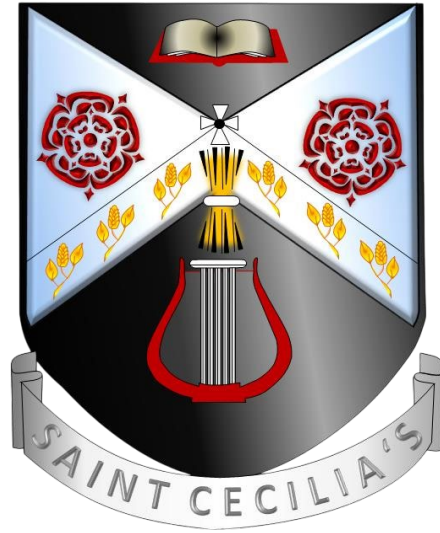




Mobile Phone Policy

Date: September 2026

Date of Review: September 2027

St Cecilia's RC High School

1. Introduction

At St Cecilia's RC High School, we aim to provide an environment that is calm, safe and free from distraction so that all pupils can learn and thrive. Research shows that excessive mobile phone use can distract from learning, negatively affect wellbeing and expose pupils to online risks during the school day. The school recognises that some pupils may need to carry a mobile phone when travelling to and from school; however, phones are not required during the school day and will therefore be securely stored until dismissal. In line with Department for Education guidance that schools should be mobile phone-free by default, St Cecilia's operates a mobile phone-free school day supported by a secure Mobile Phone Hotel system.

2. Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance

- Education Act 1996
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Behaviour in Schools Guidance (DfE)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance (DfE)
- Mobile Phones in Schools Guidance (DfE 2026)
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

3. Scope

This policy applies to all pupils in Years 7-11 during the school day and while pupils remain under the school's supervision.

It applies to the following devices: mobile phones, smart watches, tablets, any personal electronic device capable of communication, recording or internet access.

4. Expectations for Pupils

Pupils who choose to bring a mobile phone or other communication-enabled device to school must ensure it is switched off and handed into the school's Mobile Phone Hotel system at the start of the school day.

Mobile phones and other covered devices must not be seen, heard or used during the school day unless an authorised exemption has been agreed.

Pupils are expected to comply with this policy and with any reasonable instruction given by staff relating to the storage, surrender or confiscation of devices.

5. Mobile Phone Hotel System

Where pupils bring a mobile phone to school, it must be switched off and placed in the school's secure Mobile Phone Hotel system at the start of the day. Phones will be stored securely and returned to pupils under staff supervision at the end of the school day. The Headteacher will determine the operational arrangements for the collection, storage and return of devices. These arrangements may be adapted for educational visits, examinations, sporting fixtures, emergencies or other exceptional circumstances.

6. Searching, Screening and Confiscation

St Cecilia's RC High School has a duty to maintain a safe, orderly and distraction-free learning environment. Staff will challenge any breach of this Mobile Phone Policy.

In accordance with the Department for Education's *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* guidance, the school may use handheld metal detector wands to screen pupils for mobile phones or other prohibited items. Screening may be undertaken as part of routine compliance checks or where there is reason to believe that a pupil has not complied with this policy.

Screening will:

- be carried out by authorised members of staff;
- be conducted respectfully, proportionately and in a manner that preserves the pupil's dignity;
- normally take place in the presence of another member of staff, where reasonably practicable; and
- be undertaken in accordance with current Department for Education guidance.

Where screening indicates that a pupil may be carrying a mobile phone or other item in breach of this policy, authorised staff may require the pupil to surrender the item or may exercise their statutory powers to search and confiscate in accordance with the Education Act 1996, the Education and Inspections Act 2006, and current Department for Education guidance.

Refusal to cooperate with screening or any lawful request made under this policy may be treated as a breach of the school's Behaviour Policy and may result in further sanctions.

7. Confiscation and sanctions

Any pupil found in possession of a mobile phone during the school day without an approved exemption will be in breach of this policy and will receive sanctions in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Authorised staff may confiscate mobile phones and related devices where pupils fail to comply with this policy.

Where appropriate, confiscated phones may be retained until they are collected by a parent/carer.

Where there are safeguarding concerns or where permitted by law, authorised staff may examine or erase data from a confiscated device in accordance with DfE guidance and the school's safeguarding procedures.

Repeated or deliberate breaches of this policy may result in escalating sanctions in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

The unauthorised use of mobile phones to photograph, film, record or share images of pupils or staff may be treated as a serious behaviour and safeguarding matter and may result in school sanctions, referrals to external agencies or police involvement where appropriate.

8. Reasonable Adjustments

Adjustments may be made for medical, safeguarding or SEND-related needs. Any exception must be agreed in advance and reviewed regularly.

9. Staff Responsibilities

Staff are responsible for implementing this policy consistently. Form Tutors, Heads of Year, senior leaders and support staff will undertake responsibilities in accordance with the school's operational procedures.

10. Parental Support

Parents/carers are expected to support the school's mobile phone-free approach and reinforce expectations at home to ensure that pupils understand and comply with the requirements of this policy.

Parents/carers should discuss with their child whether it is necessary to bring a mobile phone to school. In line with Department for Education guidance that schools should be mobile phone-free by default, families should be aware that any phone brought onto the school site will be handed into the Mobile Phone Hotel system and will not be accessible during the school day, except where an agreed exemption applies. By choosing to bring a

mobile phone onto the school site, pupils and parents/carers accept the requirements of this policy, including the arrangements for secure storage during the school day.

Parents/carers who need to contact their child during the school day should do so through the school office. Pupils who need to contact home during the school day will be supported to do so through authorised members of staff.

11. Liability

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that mobile phones handed into the Mobile Phone Hotel system are stored securely. However, mobile phones and other electronic devices are brought onto the school site at the owner's own risk.

The school does not provide insurance cover for pupils' personal devices and parents/carers are encouraged to ensure that appropriate personal insurance arrangements are in place.

In the unlikely event of loss or damage, the school will investigate the circumstances and review relevant evidence, including CCTV where appropriate. Any liability will be determined in accordance with the school's legal responsibilities and insurance arrangements.

12. Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed annually with monitoring of behaviour, safeguarding and operational effectiveness.