



St. Joseph's Catholic Academy



Mobile Phone & Smart Devices Policy (students)

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Bishop Chadwick
Catholic Education Trust

Policy details

Approved by:	Local Governing Committee
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1. Introduction and Aims

At St Joseph's Catholic Academy, we recognise that mobile phones and smart tech devices are part of everyday life for some of our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

In this policy references to smart devices refers to mobile phones and any other technology with internet enabled features or apps and other functionality such as the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks, the ability to record audio and/or video or the ability to stream services. This may include but not be limited to smartphones, tablet devices, smart watches, media players, portable gaming consoles, smart glasses and tracking devices.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils
- Support the school and trust's other policies, especially those related to safeguarding, behaviour, ICT and code of conduct for all adults.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones and smart devices in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

2. Use of Mobile Phones and Other Devices by Pupils

For students in key stage 3 and 4 (Years 7-11), mobile phones must be switched off as soon as children come through the school gates and placed in bags. While in school, mobile phones must not be seen by a member of staff. Where students don't have a bag, the phone must be handed in to a member of staff on entering the school building.

In certain circumstances, for instances for the monitoring of a medical condition, a pupil may require access to their mobile phone or other smart device while on the school site. This should be agreed by school leaders and form part of the pupil's Health Care Plan. In these circumstances the pupil should not access their mobile phone and/or smart device while on the school site unless it is directly related to their medical condition or other agreed circumstance.

Key stage 5 students (Years 12-13) must only use their phone while seated in D block Sixth Form areas.

2.1 Exams

Ofqual (the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) maintains a strict ban on mobile phones and all communication devices (including smartwatches, wearable technology, and tablets) inside exam halls. Possession of such a device, regardless of whether it is switched on or used, is considered **malpractice** and can

result in severe penalties. We mirror these rules for all internal examinations. Using a mobile phone in an exam for a medical reason, such as monitoring blood sugar levels is allowed, but approval should be granted from the exams officer and school leadership.

2.2 School Trips

To promote safeguarding, pupils will only be able to use mobile phones and/or smart devices (including AirTags or similar devices) on school trips or residential visits, when given authorisation from the visit leader or headteacher.

2.3 Consequences

Any mobile phones seen in school will be confiscated and a 'same day' detention issued to the student. Repeated instances of mobile phone use will lead to escalated sanctions, including parents/careers collecting confiscated devices.

See the schools' behaviour regulation policy for more information on consequences.

Confiscated mobile phones will be logged and stored securely in the school safe. Devices will be returned to students at the end of the day unless escalated sanctions are applied.

Staff, visitors and volunteers will not ask pupils to share content on mobile phones or smart devices, or attempt to access content on confiscated mobile phones and/or smart devices. Where there is a safeguarding concern around content on mobile phone or smart devices, Designated Safeguarding Officers or staff authorised to act on behalf of the DSL will act accordingly and in line with the school's safeguarding policy.

2.4 Agreed Use of Mobile Phones and Smart Devices by Students

In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for students to use a personal mobile phone or smart device during the school day. Any such use must be agreed in advance by the school and supported by appropriate evidence or documentation where required.

Examples of circumstances where an exception may be granted include, but are not limited to:

- Use required for a medical condition, as identified within an individual healthcare plan or risk assessment.
- Use of assistive technology or reasonable adjustments to support a disability or additional need, for example a hearing impairment.

Where permission has been granted, students must:

- Use their mobile phone or smart device only for the specific agreed purpose and in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement.

- Keep the device out of sight and not in use at all other times unless expressly permitted.
- Not use their mobile phone or smart device to take photographs, make audio or video recordings, or otherwise capture images of students, staff, visitors, or school activities.
- Not use their mobile phone or smart device to access social media, messaging services, or other applications unrelated to the agreed purpose.
- Follow any additional conditions set out in their individual risk assessment, healthcare plan, or support plan.

Failure to comply with these expectations may result in the withdrawal of permission to use the device and the application of the school's behaviour procedures.

Permission for a student to use a mobile phone or smart device as an exception to the school's normal expectations will be reviewed periodically and may be withdrawn if it is no longer required or if the agreed conditions are not followed.

3. Loss, Theft or Damage

Pupils must secure their mobile phones and/or smart devices as much as possible, including using biometrics, passwords or pin codes to prevent access to the devices functions.

The school/trust accepts no responsibility for mobile phones and smart devices that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.



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