

**MOBILE PHONE POLICY**

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| Local Governing Body Committee | |
| Name: | Signature: |
| Date: September 2020 |  |
| Review Date: Autumn Term 2023 |  |

**Introduction**

At St Bede’s Catholic School & Sixth Form College the welfare and well-being of our students is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

This policy should also be read in relation to the following policies:

* Child Protection Policy
* Staff Code of Conduct
* Educational Visits
* Internet Acceptable Usage Policy
* E-Safety Policy

**Personal Mobiles - Pupils**

We recognise that mobile phones and smart watches are part of everyday life for many young people and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others, therefore:

* The school accepts that parents may decide that their child should carry a mobile phone for use in an emergency. If this decision is taken, both parents and students agree that it will be kept switched off and will not be used during the school day.
* Students found using mobile phones during the school day will have their mobile confiscated and must be collected from Student Support at the end of the school day.
* Where a mobile or smart watch is brought into school, it is entirely at the students’ and parents’ own risk. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of any phone or other electronic device.
* Sixth Form students are permitted to use their mobile phone but only in the designated identified areas. Under no circumstances should calls be made or received during lessons.
* It is forbidden to record photographic images (still or video) or sound recordings of staff or students at any time using a personal device.
* In accordance with the school’s Internet Acceptable Usage Policy and E-Safety Policy, the school reserves the right to search the content of a confiscated device where there is a reasonable suspicion that it may contain undesirable material, including those which promote pornography, violence or bullying.
* The PE changing rooms are locked for security once students have left to go to their sport activity and re-opened when they return. **Mobile phones are not to be used at any time in the changing rooms.**
* Mobile phones or smart watches are not to be used as a teaching aid such as a calculator, internet browser, listen to music, camera, or voice recorder.
* In the event of an unplanned school closure (i.e. snow closure or a heating failure) the text messaging system will be used to send messages to priority 1 parents informing them of the change of circumstances. *It is therefore imperative that parents supply the school with at least one up-to-date mobile number.*
* Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated. However, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their children are using their mobile phones appropriately and not to bully or threaten any other student. In some cases, it can constitute criminal behaviour. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence, it is unacceptable, regardless of whether ‘consent’ was given.
* Mobile phones and smart watches are banned from all examinations. Students MUST ensure that they are switched off and placed somewhere secure (not on their person) before entering the exam hall. For any student found in possession of a mobile phone/smart watch during an examination, a report will be submitted to the JCQ, which may result in having the paper disqualified. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified.

**Personal Mobiles - Teaching Staff & Support Staff:**

* Staff must have their phones or smart watch on ‘silent’ mode or switched off during lesson time.
* Staff may not make or receive calls or text messages during teaching time.
* Use of phones must be conducted only in the staff work room, staffroom or personal office and limited to non-contact time and official breaks when no children are present.
* Phones must be kept out of sight.
* Staff should never give their personal mobile number to a student.
* Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don’t know, and do not share other people’s contact details without their consent.
* Do not share your phone’s passwords or access codes with anyone else.
* It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions of their phone or smart watch i.e. with PIN or biometric details.
* Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. sick relative), then staff should make their line manager aware of this and permission will be granted to have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
* Where a mobile or smart watch is brought into school, it is entirely at your own risk. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of any phone.
* Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones or smart watch, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and / or dictaphones.
* Key members of staff will carry a school-purchased mobile to assist with their day to day role across the school.
* A mobile phone will be carried to each sporting fixture away from school or on an educational visit for contacting parents in the event of an emergency.
* Under no circumstances are staff to take mobile phones into a changing room.

**Personal Mobiles - Cleaning Staff:**

* Staff must have their phones or smart watch on ‘silent’ mode or switched off during working hours.
* Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. sick relative), then staff should make their line manager aware of this and permission will be granted to have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
* Personal phonecalls are not to be made at work unless you have been given permission from your line manager.
* Mobile phones can be used to contact the Premises Team, however there are landlines in most offices that can be used.
* Where a mobile or smart watch is brought into school, it is entirely at your own risk. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of any phone.
* Phones must never be used to take photographs of students or the school or to store their personal data.
* Under no circumstances are staff to take mobile phones into a changing room.
* Staff should never give their personal mobile number to a student.

**Parents & other visitors:**

* We request that parents or visitors do not use mobile phones in the school building or grounds.
* Mobile phones must never be used to take photographs in the school building or grounds.
* Parents should not place images of other students taken at school events on social media sites without the permission from all parents of the students involved.

**Availability of mobile phone number**

By accepting either a Business or Business/Personal Use phone the user will make the mobile phone available during the working day and utilise the phone for business use outside of office hours in the event that a business need arises.

**Security**

Staff who are issued with a mobile phone are responsible for the security of the phone and should take all reasonable steps to ensure its safekeeping. All staff provided with a mobile phone are required to set and use a PIN code and to keep this confidential.

When out of the office, the mobile phone should be kept with the user during working hours and not left unattended (e.g. in a vehicle) at any time.

There are specific staff in school who have the express consent from the Headteacher to use their mobile phones solely to generate pin codes/passcodes to access ICT systems in place.

**Calls from abroad**

Users should be aware that calls from abroad are at a higher cost and should therefore be avoided other than in an emergency. If you are calling an Academy or the Academy Trust, and the call is expected to be lengthy then the office contact should be asked to return the call to avoid these very high costs. Additional security should be considered when taking a business mobile phone abroad.

**On leaving – return of mobile phone**

On leaving the Academy’s employment, any mobile phones, plus associated equipment (e.g. earphones, chargers etc.) issued, must be returned.

**It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. The school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.**

**Exemptions**

Exemptions to this policy can only be approved by the Headteacher and then only in exceptional circumstances.