

St. Benedict's Catholic School

Mobile phone policy

1. Introduction

We recognise that mobile phones and digital devices are an integral part of young peoples' culture and way of life and can have considerable value, particularly in relation to personal security and safety. We understand that for safety reasons most pupils will carry a mobile phone in order to contact parents/guardians before or after school. However, the increasing sophistication of mobile technology presents a number of issues for schools:

- The high value of many smart phones
- The integration of cameras into phones and WiFi capability leading to potential Child Protection and Data protection issues
- The potential to use the mobile phone e.g. for texting whilst on silent mode
- Cyber-bullying

We recognise that such technology will play an increasing part in education in the future, but that we need rules and guidelines to help develop good learning habits and prevent disruption. We aim to educate pupils in the responsible use of technology.

The use of mobile phones by pupils in school and on the school site is strictly forbidden.

Pupils are permitted to bring mobile phones to school, but they must not use them in school and should be switched off and kept out of sight at all times during the school day, including break and lunchtimes. Phones must not be seen or heard.

Note: The term 'mobile phone' in this policy includes MP3 and MP4 players, iPods, e-readers and any similar portable electronic devices.

2. Rules and responsible use

- During the school day, mobile phones must be switched off and stored in the pupil's locker or bag. However, where appropriate, an individual member of staff may give permission for the use of a phone for a specific educational purpose. This means that phones may not be used, for example, for making calls, checking the time, texting, as a calculator or as a camera.
- Urgent telephone contact with and from parents/carers must be via the school Reception, rather than trying to contact a student directly on their mobile phone.
- In the case of exceptional circumstances when a mobile phone may need to be used students must speak to senior staff and get permission in advance.
- We reserve the right to check a phone if it is suspected that there may be inappropriate material or unauthorised photographs or recordings on it.

- Pupils are allowed to use their phone to contact home relating to safety/transport or for personal reasons following an after-school activity such as drama rehearsal, music or sporting activity. In this instance, staff should allow pupils to use their phone on the school site where appropriate.
- Personal music players, iPods and similar devices - Students are allowed to bring these items to school under exactly the same conditions as mobile phones. They must not be seen or used at all on the school premises, and they are subject to the same confiscation procedures as mobile phones, including collection only by a parent/carer on a second or subsequent occasion. Again, no liability will be accepted by the school for loss or damage, however caused.

3. Sanctions

What Happens If I Don't?

- Any pupil found to be using a mobile phone during the school day will be asked to turn it off. It will then be confiscated by the member of staff and stored securely in the Main Office. On the first offence, the phone will be given back at the end of the school day with a reminder of the rules.
- A second confiscation will mean that the phone must be collected by a parent/carer – and the student will be in after-school detention.
- Parents/carers are reminded not to ask us to make an exception to this rule for their child, even if collection is inconvenient. It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they do not break the rules and have their mobile phone confiscated.
- Should a subsequent infringement occur, parents will be contacted: the student will either be asked to hand their phone in to reception at the start of every school day or the parents agree to the phone being left at home for a fixed period of time.

4. Sixth form

Year 12 and 13 students may use their phones in the Sixth Form common room, Work room and Sixth Form block, as long as this is not in a manner that is disruptive to others or to the normal routine of the school.

5. Use of mobile phones on school trips

These guidelines also apply to the use of mobile phones during school trips, travelling to and from school trips, extra-curricular activities or other off-site supervised activities. Students should keep their phones switched off and in their bags. They may only be used if permission is given by the member of staff in charge of the trip. Usual school sanctions will apply if a phone is used without permission during these times.

6. Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by the school and discussed with the appropriate sub-committee of the Governing Body.

The policy was agreed: March 2017

Review date: March 2018