

ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE



Personal Electronic Communication Devices Policy

Key Information

Title	Personal Electronic Communication Devices Policy	
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Checked By	Nicole Pecchia, Chair Christian Vision Committee	31.01.2022
Approved By	Full Governing Body	
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In Christ we Flourish

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Statement of intent

St Gregory's Catholic College acknowledges that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life. The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school administrators, teachers, students, parents and carers take carefully thought through and well informed steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at the school. This policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students. Following a consultation undertaken in December 2021 involving parents, carers, students and staff, St Gregory's has established the following points for mobile phone procedure that provides teachers, support staff, students, parents and carers clear expectations and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours. Students and their parents or carers must read and understand the expectations before students are given permission by their parents or carers to bring mobile phones to the school. This policy also applies to students during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities. The procedure covers all students from Year 7 to Year 11.

N.B. This policy applies to mobile phones and any other electrical communication devices (including smart watches)

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2018) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Searching, screening and confiscation'
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- [Online Safety and Social Media Policy](#)
- [Home School Agreement](#)
- [Behaviour for Excellence](#)
- [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Anti-Bullying Policy](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)

2. Key roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for:

- the implementation of the policy and procedures;
- ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds;
- reviewing the policy biennially.

The Headteacher has responsibility for:

- handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's [Complaints Procedures Policy](#);
- the day-to-day implementation and management of the policy.

Students are responsible for adhering to the provisions outlined in this policy.

3. Ownership and responsibility

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to the school to abide by the expectations outlined in this document. The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents and/or carers. Parents and carers should always make themselves aware if their child takes a mobile phone to the school. Parents and carers must recognise the high monetary value and attractiveness of mobile phones and other technology. In allowing their children to bring items of such value into the school and whilst the school will do everything to mitigate against loss, theft or damage, it is the parents/carers that must carry the risk were there to be such an unfortunate occurrence. Other electronic devices, such as smart watches and MP3 players, etc are not allowed in school.

4. Personal electronic devices

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- Mobile phones
- Smart watches
- Handheld entertainment systems, e.g. video games, MP3 players
- Portable internet devices, e.g. tablets
- Wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems, e.g. devices used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording, and information transmitting/receiving/storing.

5. Acceptable Uses

Parents and carers must be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school. Parents and carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the Attendance Office remain a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure students can be reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way. Students are permitted to be in possession of their mobile phone during the school day, however, mobile phones must be turned off and neither seen nor heard. Students who have an agreed medical plan in place can use their mobile phone for a medical emergency. Mobile phones and ear phones/buds should be switched off or to silent (not vibrate) and kept in their bag at all times throughout the school day, all the time the students are on the school site, including social times and between lessons.

6. Unacceptable Uses

Unless express permission is granted by a member of staff, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, access the internet, take photos, videos, listen to music via headphones or use any other application during the school day and other educational activities. It is forbidden for students to use their mobile devices to take videos or recordings and pictures of acts to disparage and humiliate another student or members of staff and then send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website or social media platform for public viewing. This also includes using mobile devices to photograph or film any student without their consent. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

Devices should not be seen and may be confiscated even if not being used. Students must ensure that any ear/headphones brought in to school, are kept in the student's bag and not worn or in their blazer. Mobile phones must not disrupt classroom lessons with ringtones, music or beeping. Whilst students who become ill during the day may wish to use their mobile phones to contact parents or carers during break or lunch, they must use the established procedure via the main office to seek permission to be collected from school if too ill to remain at the school on a particular day. Students are not allowed to use other students' phones or equipment. Under no circumstances will mobile devices be used in changing rooms or toilets. Students must not use their mobile phones to bully and/or threaten other students. This is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

7. Spot checks

A staff member may ask a student to show them what they are doing on their mobile phone or tablet if they reasonably believe that the student is using the device to cause harm. Students are

required to comply with any request to check their mobile phone and are required to comply with any request to disable the screen lock function of their phone and show any staff member what they are doing. All spot checks will be conducted in line with the school policy.

8. Theft, Damage and Safety

Students should mark their mobile phone clearly with their name or other means of identification such as those provided by the Community Police Team and make a note of their IMEI number. Students who bring a mobile phone to the school should leave it in their bag before they arrive. To reduce the risk of theft during school hours, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not 'advertise' they have them.

Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to friends and keeping a note of who they have given them to. This can help protect the student's number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice, text and picture messages. It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords should not be shared. Lost and stolen mobile phones in the UK can be blocked across all networks making them virtually worthless because they cannot be used.

9. Sanctions

If the student is using the mobile phone inappropriately, whether in a lesson or around the school site, the phone will be confiscated for the rest of the school day. The confiscation will be recorded on Class Charts for monitoring purposes. Failure to hand over a mobile device upon request by a member of staff will lead to the student being sanctioned and this action could result in an exclusion from school. Confiscated mobile phones will be placed in a named envelope and the school will ensure that the confiscated equipment is stored in such way that it is returned to the correct person. On this point, there will be no negotiation by students, parents or carers. Students will be allowed to pick up their mobile phone from the Heads of Year Office after 3.10pm or later for repeat offenders. If the student repeats the inappropriate use of their mobile phone in school within the term or academic year each subsequent confiscation will be for an increased period of time. Failure to heed the rules set out in this policy, for example when a phone has been used to harass or bully another student, including the use of social networking sites such as Snapchat, may result in an alleged incident being referred to the police for investigation and be subject to further sanctions as laid out in the [Behaviour for Excellence Policy](#). In such cases, the parent or carer would be notified immediately.

In the case of repeated or serious misuse the phone will only be returned to a parent or carer who will be required to visit the school by appointment to collect the phone. Where a student persistently breaches the expectations, following a clear warning, the Headteacher may require the student's phone to be handed in to the Head of Year at the start of the day and will only be returned at the end of the school day. The Headteacher may also impose an outright ban from bringing a mobile phone to school. This may be a fixed period or permanent ban.

10. Policy review

The Headteacher and Governing Body will review the situation on a regular basis to ensure that the procedure is appropriate and workable.

This policy is reviewed biennially by the Headteacher and the Assistant Headteacher - Pastoral.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to members of staff by the Headteacher and the Assistant Headteacher.

The scheduled review date for this policy is January 2024.

Student Personal Electronic Devices Agreement

Student Personal Electronic Devices Agreement

I, _____, understand that bringing a personal electronic device to school is a privilege that may be taken away if I abuse it. I agree to abide by the policy and understand the consequences if I fail to do so.

Signed by

Student	Date
Parent/Carer	Date
Class Teacher	Date

Parental Personal Electronic Devices Agreement

I, _____, recognise that **St Gregory's Catholic College** bears no responsibility for personal electronic devices lost, damaged or stolen on school property or on journeys to and from school. I agree to the terms of this policy and will discuss the responsibility of owning a personal electronic device with my child (name) _____. I understand that a teacher may confiscate devices used in an unacceptable manner as detailed in the policy.

Signed by

Parent	Date
Class Teacher	Date