

St Benedict's Catholic High School

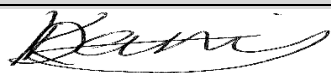
Smart Device/Mobile Phone Policy

Approved by¹

Name: **Kayleigh Daniels**

Position: **Chair of Governors**

Signed:



Date: **September 2026**

Review date²: **September 2027**



St Benedict's
Catholic High
School

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St Benedict's Catholic High School Mobile Phone Policy 2026

St Benedict's Catholic High School is a mobile phone free school.

This policy helps the school to minimise disruption to the learning environment and to tackle cyber bullying, sexting, sharing of indecent images, online grooming and device addiction.

This policy applies to:

- Mobile phones
- Smartwatches
- Headphones/earbuds
- Any device capable of online access, communication, recording, or playing media

Where the text uses the word parent it should be read as inclusive of carers and any person with parental responsibility.

As of September 2026, the government has provided statutory guidance to schools on how to implement a policy that **prohibits the use of mobile phones throughout the school day**, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

The impact of mobile phones on children's mental health and development is well documented. Excessive exposure to social media platforms can increase anxiety, depression and even lead to suicidal ideation. We must stand together to protect our children from these risks, even if it is easier to conform. Children are safer on their journey to and from school if they do not have a mobile phone on their person, as they are less likely to be the victim of a crime.

St Benedict's Catholic High School students ideally must leave their phones, smart watches and electronic devices at home or with their parent.

However, the school recognises the reasonable need in supporting parents in their need to safeguard their children travelling to and from school, but it is also driven by the need to safeguard all students whilst in school and to guard against the inappropriate actions of others via a mobile phone/smart device. It also ensures that students are provided with the opportunity to focus on their learning and develop conversational skills without the interference of a mobile device. As the school recognises the need of parents to be able to contact their child on the way to school and on the way home, we ask parents to recognise and support the need of the school for their child's phone to be off and out of sight whilst in school.

Where parents need to contact their child during the school day, they are directed to the school office, where staff are aware of the school's policy on relaying messages and facilitating contact.

This is essential in establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour ensuring that the school is a calm and safe environment for all pupils and staff.

Sixth Form

Sixth form students may use tablets or laptops during their private study periods as part of their learning. Sixth form students are also permitted to use mobile phones at lunchtime within the library and sixth form study room. (Use of mobile devices is NOT permitted in the Winter Gardens or balcony area)

Extra-Curricular Activities

This policy applies when in school or representing the school during any extra-curricular activities.

During extra-curricular events/fixtures mobile phones can, with the permission of the teacher, be used solely to contact parents/carers for reasons relating to transport regarding the activity.

Use of smart devices/mobile phones on residential visits will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

The role of staff

All staff should consistently enforce the school's policy on the use of mobile phones.

Staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. This will empower staff to better challenge pupils to meet the school expectations and effectively enforce the prohibition of mobile phones throughout the school day. There may be occasions where it is appropriate for a teacher to use a mobile phone or similar device, for instance to take registers, call out, issue homework, issue rewards and sanctions or use multi-factor authentication.

Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

While schools are expected to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day to reduce distraction and disruption, they must comply with their other legal duties such as the duty to make reasonable adjustments where necessary. There may be other exceptional circumstances where schools should consider making adaptations to their policy for specific pupils. This guidance does not provide an exhaustive list of exceptional circumstances, and St Benedict's Catholic High School will assess each case on its own merits.

Schools have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to take such steps as is reasonable to avoid substantial disadvantage to a disabled pupil caused by the school's policies or practices. Allowing a disabled pupil access to their mobile phone during the school day, where it is necessary due to the nature of their disability, may be considered a reasonable adjustment.

Maintained schools have a duty under the Children and Families Act 2014 to have arrangements in place to support pupils with medical conditions. In meeting this duty, the governing body, proprietor or management committee must have regard to the statutory guidance supporting pupils with medical conditions at school. In some circumstances, supporting a pupil with their medical condition can involve the use of a mobile phone. For example, pupils with diabetes might use continuous glucose monitoring with a sensor linked to their mobile phone to monitor blood sugar levels. Where mobile phone use allows pupils to manage their medical condition effectively, it would not be reasonable for a school to prevent this.

Confiscation Procedures

- If a prohibited item is heard or seen or suspected, a search/screen will take place in accordance with the school's behaviour policy/DfE guidance
- If a pupil is found using a device, it will be **confiscated immediately** and taken to the school office for secure storage.
- The device will be confiscated immediately and held in the school until the end of the day. Parent will be informed. The **student may collect their device at 3.30pm (Students will also receive an afterschool 30 minute detention the following day)**

Repeat Offences

- **Second incident:** The device will be confiscated immediately and held in school until the end of the school day. Parent will be informed. **Parent will need to collect the device at 3.30pm(Students will also receive an afterschool 30 minute detention the following day)**
- **Third incident or repeated non-compliance:** The device will be confiscated immediately and held in school until the end of the school day. Parent will be informed. Parent will need to collect device after a meeting with a member of staff. The student's device will be

handed in to the school office each morning for 10 school days. **(Students will also receive an afterschool 30 minute detention the following day)**

- Refusal to hand over a device will be treated as a serious breach of the **School Code of Conduct**.

Responsibilities

- Students who do bring devices onto school premises at their own risk.
- St Benedict's Catholic High School accepts **no responsibility** for loss, theft, or damage to any personal electronic equipment brought into school.
- All staff are authorised to confiscate devices in line with this policy.

Communication

- The policy will be displayed in classrooms and corridors, shared with parents via the school website. The policy will be reinforced regularly with pupils.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school office, rather than students directly, if urgent communication is required during the school day.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team, considering government guidance and the effectiveness of enforcement.

Mobile Devices – Student Rules

To keep our school safe, calm and focused:

Do NOT

- Use or check your phone anywhere on site during the school day.
- Use headphones, earbuds, or smartwatches.
- Record, photograph or message during lessons or around school.
- Refuse to hand over your device if asked by staff.

Do

- Keep your phone **switched off** and in your bag all day.
- Hand your phone in straight away if a teacher asks you to.
- Let your parent contact the school office if they need to reach you.
- Follow the same rules on trips, visits and when representing St Benedict's Catholic High School.

Remember

- Devices are brought into school **at your own risk**.

- The school is **not responsible** for lost, stolen, or damaged phones.
- The rule is simple: **“See it, hear it, use it = lose it.”**