

St. Bede's Catholic School & Byron Sixth Form College



Bishop Chadwick
Catholic Education Trust



Policy Name	Mobile Phone: Acceptable Use Policy (Students)	Policy Period
Approved by	Headteacher	Sep 1, 2025 to Sep 1, 2027

PURPOSE

- The widespread ownership of mobile phones and mobile devices among young people requires that members of staff, students, parents and carers take steps to ensure that mobile phones and devices are used responsibly by students. This Acceptable Use 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.
- St. Bede's Catholic School & Byron Sixth Form College has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones / devices that provides members of staff, students, parents and carers guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.
- Students and their parents or carers must read and understand this Acceptable Use Policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.
- This Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school trips and extra-curricular visits both on school grounds and off-site.

RATIONALE

- The school recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life, but that such technologies need to be used responsibly.
- Personal safety and security: our school accepts that parents / carers give their children mobiles / devices to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There are also understandable concerns about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a

child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently.

RESPONSIBILITY

- It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones / devices in school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.
- The decision to provide a mobile phone for students should be made by parents or carers. It is incumbent upon parents to understand the capabilities of the phone and the potential use / misuse of those capabilities.
- Parents or carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone / device to school, it is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss or damage. **The school cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred due to its use.**
- Parents or carers are reminded that **in cases of emergency, the school office always remains the first point of contact** and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way. Passing on messages through the school reception to Heads of House, tutors and teachers also reduces the likelihood of inadvertently disrupting lessons.

ACCEPTABLE USE FOR PUPILS IN YEARS 7-11

- **Mobile phones / devices must be switched off and kept out of site as soon as students arrive on site.** This includes in lessons, whilst moving between lessons, and at break and lunchtime. It also includes when students are leaving the building at the end of the day. Phones may be switched on when students have exited the main building (please note this does not mean when they have exited the DT or science block – the main building only).
- Parents or carers are requested that in cases of emergency, they contact the school office first so we are aware of any potential issue and may make the necessary arrangements for parents to speak to their children.
- Unless permission is granted from the Head of House or a Senior Leader for an exceptional reason, **mobile phones must not be used on site by students** to make calls, send messages, browse the internet, access social media, check the time or to use any other application.

UNACCEPTABLE USE

- Mobile phones / devices must not disrupt classrooms or corridors with ring tones, music or beeping. They should be turned off and placed **in bags** as soon as students enter the school site for the duration of the day.
- Using mobile phones / devices to bully or embarrass students or staff is unacceptable. Cyberbullying will not be tolerated and may lead to permanent exclusion. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence it is unacceptable regardless of whether 'consent' was given. Please see our **Anti-bullying Policy** and **Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy** for more information.
- Mobile phones / devices are not to be used or taken out in changing rooms or toilets or used in any way that may cause discomfort to their fellow students, staff or visitors to the school.
- Students must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading, racist, homophobic, extremist or pornographic images. The transmission of such images can be deemed a criminal offence. Similarly, 'sexting' or 'sending nudes' – which is the sending of personal sexual imagery – is also a criminal offence. This may result in an alleged incident – of a serious nature – being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent or carer would be notified as soon as is possible. We may need to confiscate the phone and store it securely until it can be collected by the police. Please see our **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** for more information about these procedures.
- It is unacceptable to take a picture, a video or an audio recording of a member of staff without their express permission. In the event that this happens the student will be asked and expected to delete this. Consequences are outlined in our **Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy**.

SANCTIONS

- Students who infringe the rules set out in this document will have their phone confiscated by staff. **A mobile phone that is seen or heard** – even if not being used directly by the student, **will be confiscated** – this policy explicitly states that it must be **turned off on site**. The student must give it to a member of staff if requested. Failure to do so will lead to an internal exclusion in our Base.
- On the first infringement of this policy, the mobile phone would be confiscated by the member of staff and taken to a secure place in the school office. A parent or carer will be able to collect the mobile phone at the end of the school day and a record will be made of the incident and behaviour points given.
- Repeated infringements of the mobile phone code of conduct by a student may result in a fixed term or permanent ban on bringing their mobile phone to school.

EXCEPTIONS

- Students that need to use a phone-based diabetes monitor that sends glucose readings to a smartphone or other mobile device to track their blood sugar levels have permission to use their phones during the school day as part of their medical care plan.

DFE GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS ON PROHIBITING THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL DAY

- This policy is written in line with Department for Education Guidance – February 2024.
- To read the guidance, follow this link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65cf5f2a4239310011b7b916/Mobile_phones_in_schools_guidance.pdf