



BLESSED HUGH FARINGDON CATHOLIC SCHOOL MOBILE PHONE POLICY

All that happens in Blessed Hugh Faringdon Catholic School occurs within the context of the school's Mission Statement (in accordance with the Trust Deed for the maintenance and advancement of the Catholic religion).

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Persons Responsible: Headteacher, SLT

Committee: Full Governing Body

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As a Catholic school, founded on, and committed to upholding the teaching of the Church, we believe that Jesus is present in the day-to-day life of our community and that each member of our community has a divine origin and an eternal destiny. In discharging our responsibilities, we are guided by the principles of Catholic social teaching [CST], in which the following core values are constituted: dignity, solidarity, the common good, the option for the poor, the promotion of peace, care for creation, the dignity of work and the value of participation in society. These principles are demonstrated in our core, and wider, curriculum, in our care of students, in our work with the disadvantaged and in the outward-facing approach to our local community, our nation and to the world. As our moral compass, CST guides us in all our school activities, including the formulation, upholding and reviewing of school policies.

As a Catholic school, we regard the following characteristics as central to the human flourishing of everyone – students, staff and Governors – in our community. Our aspirations for our students are that their experience of teaching develops in them a lived belief, an authentic sense of true happiness, a lived sense of family, an experience of care and a vocation for service.

To achieve these aspirations, teaching and learning will privilege the following core virtues for every member of our community.

Grateful for their own gifts, for the gift of other people, and for the blessings of each day; and generous with their gifts, becoming men and women for others.

Attentive to their experience and to their vocation; and discerning about the choices they make and the effects of those choices.

Compassionate towards others, near and far, especially the less fortunate; and loving by their just actions and forgiving words.

Faith-filled in their beliefs and hopeful for the future.

Eloquent and truthful in what they say of themselves, the relations between people, and the world.

Learned, finding God in all things; and wise in the ways they use their learning for the common good.

Curious about everything; and active in their engagement with the world, changing what they can for the better.

Intentional in the way they live and use the resources of the earth, guided by conscience; and prophetic in the example they set to others.

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1. Introduction and aims

At Blessed Hugh Faringdon Catholic School, our policy aims to:

- Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones, where applicable
- Provide clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour (as listed at the end of the policy)

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Risk of theft, loss or damage
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of section 36 of the [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026](#), and the Department for Education (DfE)'s [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy includes [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), which sets out the expectation that all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are required to actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it annually, and holding staff and students accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly, and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

3.2 Governors

Governors will monitor the effective application of the policy and review and ratify any updates annually.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone during the school day, while students are present and/or during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where students are not present (such as the staffroom or offices).

However, there may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time, for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The member of staff must consult with the headteacher to gain permission to have use of their phone during contact time, prior to doing so. The headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01189 574730 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Gemini).

Our Data Protection and GDPR Policy, updated to comply with KCSIE 2026 provides further detail.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or students, including by connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or students. This includes liaising with parents/carers over messaging apps.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson / school trip / activity, this must be done using school equipment.

All staff must follow the requirements set out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Staff Code of Conduct regarding electronic communications with pupils and parents. Staff should be aware that attempts to bypass, disable or undermine the school's filtering and monitoring systems, including through the use of mobile devices, personal hotspots, VPNs, proxy services or AI-enabled applications, may constitute a safeguarding concern and will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Concerns relating to staff use of mobile phones or electronic communication may be managed under the school's Allegations Against Staff and Low-Level Concerns policy

Where concerns arise regarding the use of mobile phones to access inappropriate content, manipulate images using AI, or bypass the school's filtering and monitoring systems, these will be treated as safeguarding

concerns and managed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and managed under the school's Allegations Against Staff and Low Level Concerns policy.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones or a similar device during the school day in front of students for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations

4.5 Work phones

No member of staff is issued with a work phone. Trip Leaders are provided with a school mobile phone for the duration of the trip to contact school, parents, carers, venues and other staff supporting the trip. The phone is not to be used for personal reasons.

4.6 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

5. Use of mobile phones by students

Students must not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason). Exceptions are listed in section 5.2 below.

Phones must be switched off, put away and not used during the school day. Students assigned to the Autism Resource, those spending time in the Learning Support Area, our Pastoral Support Area (Carlos Acutis Centre) or the Focus Room must adhere to the rules and expectations and hand in their phone immediately on entering the area. The phone will be kept safely, and returned when the student is dismissed from the area, as appropriate.

The phone of any student not complying with our expectations will be confiscated and retained safely. If a first offence it will be returned at the end of the school day. If a subsequent offence, it will be kept securely pending collection by a parent/carer.

Students will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, in Computer Science Lessons, PSHE/RSHE, tutor time and assemblies (as appropriate) to make sure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Students will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

This education will include:

- online relationships and boundaries
- cyberbullying
- sharing of harmful or illegal content
- online scams and exploitation
- AI-generated content and manipulated imagery
- misinformation and disinformation
- the risks associated with livestreaming and anonymous communication platforms
- safe reporting routes where concerns arise

5.1 Use of smartwatches by students

The DfE's statutory [mobile phones guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in its policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

Smartwatches with communication capability are treated as mobile phones and must remain switched off and secured in the same manner as mobile phones throughout the school day.

Where a student does not comply the same process as for unauthorised use of/failure to hand in mobile phones will be followed.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances and for sixth-form students

- Some students will be permitted to possess, or use, a mobile phone/smart device in school

For instance:

- Young carers who need to be contactable
- Students with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood glucose levels
- Sixth-form students for use in designated sixth form areas only. Students have an iPad for use in lessons.

Sixth-form students are allowed access to their mobile phones during the school day, to reflect their increased independence and responsibility, but must not compromise our policy on the use of mobile phones for other students. They must restrict the use of mobile phones to the sixth form areas of the school as above. They must not use them in public areas or any other space occupied by younger year groups.

Misuse of mobile phones or other devices by students in the sixth form will lead to the same sanctions as for younger students.

In the case of permission, due to exceptional circumstances, permission will only be granted where there is documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, students or parents/carers should contact the DSL or Year Leader as appropriate and, for medical needs, provide formal medical evidence on headed paper and signed by the appropriate professional. Where the concern is safeguarding, the team will take and follow advice from Children's Social Care ensuring the student understands expectations and that staff are aware.

Any students who are given permission must then adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

5.3 Sanctions

Where students breach the policy, in addition to phone/SMART watch confiscation, they will be sanctioned in accordance with our Behaviour for Learning Policy taking into account any special or specific circumstance only where relevant.

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs (SEND), disability)
- The students' behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. Any safeguarding concern identified through the misuse of a mobile phone or smart device must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a DDSL and recorded in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Making, possessing, requesting, generating, sharing or threatening to share nudes and semi-nudes, including content that is digitally altered, partially manipulated or wholly generated using artificial intelligence (AI), including deepfake or synthetic imagery.
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

The confiscation, searching and examination of mobile phones and other electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy and the DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance as outlined in our policy.

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents and carers are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of students, unless it's at a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, when working with students or while children are present

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of students, their work, or anything else that could identify a student

Visitors, volunteers and contractors are provided with safeguarding and site expectations on arrival through the school's visitor procedures and received information must be followed at all times whilst on site.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for students using their phones but must refer any proposed sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

Parents/carers must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the school day.

All visitors should immediately report any safeguarding concern, inappropriate content, offensive communication, or misuse of technology involving a child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, DDSL, reception or another member of staff.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Students bringing phones into school, whether following the mobile phone protocol pending the introduction of pouches, or who have access to using their phone during the school day, have full responsibility for the phone during their time on our school site.

Students must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions.

Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while students are travelling to or from school.

Students and parents/carers are informed of this disclaimer through publication of the policy on the school website, induction materials and communications regarding mobile phone expectations

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office and returned to the owner/parent /carer in accordance with our procedures.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to making sure that this policy has a positive impact on students' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and students
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the DfE, the local authority and any other relevant organisations
- Governors will ratify the policy.

Links with Other Policies and procedures

- Behaviour for Learning
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Online Safety
- ICT and Acceptable Use Policy
- Data Protection and GDPR
- Staff Acceptable Use Agreement
- Behaviour for Learning
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation
- Allegations Against Staff and Low-Level Concerns
- Safer Recruitment
- Use of Artificial Intelligence

9. Appendix 1: acceptable use agreement for students allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

[Student acceptable use agreement]

You must obey the following rules if you are allowed to bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone throughout the school day, including lesson times, in between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, unless a teacher specifically allows you to for a specific reason.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other students.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other students.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the school's behaviour policy. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating students or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence. For instance, by making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes (including AI-generated images or 'deepfakes')
9. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a student to bring their phone to school

This must be completed and signed by parents/carers and the student, where we have agreed an exception to our policy for medical or safeguarding reasons.

STUDENT DETAILS	
Student name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow [student name] to bring [their] mobile phone to school because they:
List the appropriate reasons here. We've listed some common reasons below (you can delete as required):

- > Travel to and from school alone
- > Are a young carer
- > Need the phone to support their medical needs
- > Are attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed
- > Attend a before- or after-school activity where a mobile phone is required for the activity, or to contact parents/carers

Students who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its [code of conduct / acceptable use agreement].

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a student does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Student signature: _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	