



St Bede's

Catholic School
& Sixth Form College

Mobile Phone Policy 2025/2026

Governing Body Approval: Full Governing Body: M Gray (Chair)	
Date:	March 2026
Review Date:	July 2027

Department for Education

Link to DfE Policy: [Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK](#)

Parents/Carers Support

The NSPCC has some helpful support for parents and carers related to children and mobile phones, including information about parental controls for phones, you can follow this link to access their latest advice: [Children, phones and online safety | NSPCC](#)

1. Purpose of the Policy

This policy outlines St Bede's expectations regarding mobile phones and smart devices to ensure a safe, focused, and respectful learning environment. It aims to:

- Protect students and staff from distraction, disruption, safeguarding risks, online harm, and misuse of recording technology.
- Align with **DfE mobile phone statutory guidance (2026)**.
- Reinforce our school values, high standards, and culture of respect.

Throughout this policy, the term **mobile phone** includes smartphones, smart watches, earphones, audio devices, and any device capable of messaging, recording, or internet connectivity.

2. Whole-School Principle

“Mobile phones should not be seen or heard.”

3. Years 7–11: Mobile-Free School Day

St Bede's operates a mobile-phone-free environment for all students in Years 7–11.

This means students **must not** use, check, display, or interact with mobile phones at any point during the school day, including:

- entering the school site
- lessons
- movement between lessons
- break and lunchtime
- indoor or outdoor social spaces
- extracurricular activities during the school day
- queuing, lining up or social time

- *anywhere on the school site*

Permitted to bring, not permitted to use

Students may bring a mobile phone for travel safety only.

However, the device must be:

- switched off before entering the school gates,
- placed immediately into the student's bag (not pockets),
- not seen or heard at any time during the school day.

The school accepts no liability for loss, theft or damage.

4. Bus Tickets – End of Day Procedure

We acknowledge that some students require access to electronic bus tickets for school transport and due to connectivity issues unique to our setting students need to be able to connect and download bus tickets inside the building prior to moving outside to get on scholars' buses.

Therefore:

- No student is allowed mobile phone out in any classroom at any time of the day.
- At the end of Period 5, **once dismissed from classrooms**, students may take out their phone solely to access their bus ticket.
- Phones may **not** be used for any other purpose.
- Students are still on the school site and therefore:
 - o no messaging
 - o no calls
 - o no social media
 - o no photos/videos
 - o no music/airpods

Any use beyond displaying a bus ticket will be treated as a breach of the policy and mobile phone will be confiscated.

5. Confiscation and Sanctions

A phone will be confiscated if it is:

- seen
- heard (including vibrating, notifications, alarms)
- used
- attempted to be used

Confiscations are logged on Arbor.

Sanction Stages (reset each half-term)

First breach:

- Phone confiscated
- Student collects at end of the school day

Second breach:

- Phone confiscated
- **Parent/carer must come onto site to collect**

Third breach:

- Confiscation
- Escalated sanctions, which may include:
 - Senior Leadership detention
 - Behaviour Contract
 - Internal suspension
 - Confiscation for a longer period (proportionate and reasonable)
 - Parent/carer must come onto site to collect

Refusal to hand over a phone = treated as defiance, leading to immediate escalation under the Behaviour Policy.

6. Sixth Form (Years 12–13)

In line with DfE guidance for post-16 settings, limited use is permitted.

Sixth-form students may use phones only in designated Sixth Form spaces, such as:

- Sixth Form Hub
- Sixth Form study areas

Strictly prohibited in:

- corridors
- dining hall
- playground
- main school site shared with Years 7–11
- lessons

Outside designated Sixth Form areas, phones must be silent and out of sight.

7. Recording, Safeguarding & Prohibited Use

It is strictly forbidden to record, photograph, film or take audio recordings of staff or students at any time without explicit staff permission.

Uploading images, videos or audio taken on site to social media or messaging platforms is a serious safeguarding breach and will lead to escalated sanctions.

Where there is reasonable suspicion of harmful or illegal material, the school may search a device and then confiscate the device, in accordance with DfE guidance and the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.

Searching electronic devices

- Electronic devices, including mobile phones, fall within the items that may be searched and examined where necessary under the DfE guidance.
- Staff may examine data or files on a device if they believe there is good reason, such as:
 - a safeguarding concern,
 - suspected harmful behaviour,
 - potential evidence of bullying, harassment, or other serious misconduct.
- Staff must not delete data unless permitted or required by law.

The Department for Education's statutory guidance *Searching, Screening and Confiscation (July 2022)* sets out the powers schools have to search pupils and their possessions. You can read the full document here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1091132/Searching_Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf

8. Reasonable Adjustments

In **exceptional**, clearly defined cases, mobile phone use may be permitted for:

- medical monitoring (e.g., diabetes apps)
- SEND where a device forms part of a support plan
- Young Carers requiring urgent contact arrangements

A written plan will outline what is permitted, when, and under which staff member's staff supervision.

9. Residentials and Off-Site Visits

Use of phones on trips will be determined by staff based on:

- safeguarding needs
- age of pupils
- nature of the visit
- activities and risks involved

Restrictions may vary per trip.

10. Contacting Home

If a student needs to contact home during the school day, they must do so via Reception or their Year Team, not via their phone.

Parents needing to reach their child must also contact the school directly.

11. Education and Prevention

Through PSHE, assemblies and pastoral curriculum, students will learn about:

- online safety
- dangers of distraction
- respectful digital behaviour
- healthy habits and managing screen time
- emotional and social impacts of phone use

12. Use of Mobile Phones by Parents and Visitors On Site

As a mobile-phone-free school, this expectation extends to all parents, carers and visitors while on the premises. To maintain a safe, calm and respectful environment for

our students, we ask that all visitors refrain from using mobile phones anywhere on site, including while waiting in Reception.

Rationale:

- To model our school values and reinforce consistent expectations for students.
- To safeguard children by ensuring that no unauthorised images, recordings or social media posts are made on site.
- To maintain a welcoming, distraction-free atmosphere that prioritises positive interactions and the wellbeing of pupils.
- To support a calm school environment where learning and pastoral care remain the focus at all times.

Visitors who need to make or receive an urgent call should speak to a member of staff, who will direct them to an appropriate area away from students.