



Mobile Phone Policy

Blessed George Napier Catholic School

Approved by: Mr David Edmed **Date:** 10 July 2023

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1. Introduction and aims

At Blessed George Napier Catholic School, we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

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
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

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.

2.2 Governors

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Governors in line with the normal cycle of policy review.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while engaged in teaching classes and while on duty at break/lunch.

Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as department offices/staff room etc).

Staff should ensure that all devices are secured appropriately, including password protection.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.

Please refer to the school/s Data Protection Policy for further information.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff are not permitted to provide their personal contact details to parents or pupils, including 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 or pupils.

Staff should refer to the school's Staff Code of Professional Conduct for further information in this regard.

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

3.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

Please refer to the school's policy on Trips and Educational Visits.

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

3.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Never seen, never heard: what happens if a phone is seen in school?

Phones should be off and in bags, **not in pockets or in any way visible**. If a phone or earbuds are visible in a pocket, they will be confiscated. This rule applies from the moment students walk in the school gate, and until they leave the site in the afternoon and includes break and lunchtimes.

If a phone or earbuds are confiscated, these will have to be **collected by a parent** from reception between 3.30 pm and 4 pm Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays and between 2.30 pm and 3 pm on Wednesdays. **This may not necessarily be on the same day, but only parents or guardians can collect phones/earbuds.**

The reasons why phones in school should not be seen or heard:

- Phones/earbuds are a distraction. Having a phone near you disrupts thinking and this gets in the way of learning. It interferes with deep thought and so students cannot learn efficiently when near their phone.
- Phones/messages/images can be used to bully others. It is an important part of our work to protect the safety of our pupils. There have been instances where students have filmed incidents which they have subsequently shared without consent.
- It provides students with a screen break. Often, children can spend too long on their phones, and this does not need to be increased whilst they are in school.

The confiscated phones/earbuds will be kept in reception in a locked drawer clearly marked with the pupil's name. **However, any equipment brought into school is brought in at the owner's risk.**

There should not be any reason to confiscate the phone if students follow the school rules. If it is problematic coming to school to collect it, you may wish to ensure your child leaves their phone/earbuds at home or reinforce with them the school rules and what will happen if they do use their phone/earbuds whilst they are in school.

If you need to contact your child urgently during the school day, please phone reception and they will pass the message on. Please ensure that family members know this too, so that students are not contacted on their phones during the school day as they will not be able to receive messages.

Students are able to contact families via student reception.

Pupils must adhere to the school's policy for mobile phone use.

4.1 Sanctions

All staff are expected to actively enforce the school's mobile phone policy and to understand that the consistent application of this policy is the key to effectiveness.

It is noted that as a prohibited item, the school has the power and authority to identify and confiscate unauthorised mobile devices or devices which are used in breach of this policy

and to retain such devices until arrangements are made as outlined for the return of such devices.

A breach of the school's Mobile Phone Policy may be identified as follows:

- Where a student has a clearly visible mobile phone in a situation where it is not permitted and/or
- Where a student has a clearly visible mobile phone attachment, e.g., headphones, in a situation where it is not permitted
- Where a student is openly using a mobile phone on the school site

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:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Up skirting
- 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

Pupils requiring an electronic device to carry out their schoolwork will be provided with the correct equipment for their need that allows them to be supported and the school policy to be upheld.

5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, 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 pupils, unless it's 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, or when working with pupils

Parents, 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 must use the School Office (01295 264216 – office.4600@bgn.oxon.sch.uk) 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 his/her personal mobile during the school day as to do so may result in their child breaching this policy with resulting sanctions applied

6. Loss, theft or damage

Students who are in possession of a mobile phone whilst in school may only do so under the terms of this policy. Students must take appropriate responsibility for their devices and ensure that they take all reasonable steps to ensure security of their mobile phones.

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 pupils are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored securely by the relevant members of staff outlined in this policy and arrangements made to return any devices as stated above.

7. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

This policy is inline with and supported by the guidance issued by the Department for Education for Mobile Phones in Schools, February 2024. The guidance can be found below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools>

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Next Review: July 2024