# Our Lady Queen of Peace

## Catholic High School

**Mobile Devices Policy**

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| Date of Policy | Sept 2026 |
| Date of Review | Sept 2027 |

**'In Christ We Grow'**

*Striving for excellence through caring, sharing and achieving'.*

**'I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit' [John 15: 5]**


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Mission Statement

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# Mobile Devices Policy for Students in school

## 1. Statement of intent

Mobile phones, tablets and other personal electronic devices are now widely available and accessible to students. This policy sets out the school's approach to **prohibiting the use of mobile phones and similar smart technology throughout the school day**, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

The school recognises that parents/carers may provide students with mobile phones to support their personal safety when travelling to and from school. However, personal electronic devices present inherent risks, including poor mental health and well-being, distraction from learning, disruption to the school environment, safeguarding concerns and the potential for misuse.

This policy seeks to strike a **clear and proportionate balance** between personal safety and maintaining a calm, safe and supportive learning environment. It establishes clear expectations for students, staff and parents/carers, while allowing for **lawful and reasonable adaptations** where required.

Personal electronic devices covered by this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Mobile phones
- Smart watches
- Personal digital assistants (PDAs)
- Air Pods
- Handheld entertainment systems (e.g. games consoles, music players)
- Portable internet-enabled devices (e.g. tablets, laptops)
- Any wireless or portable technology capable of communication, recording audio/video, capturing images, accessing the internet, or sending/receiving data

## 2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and statutory and non-statutory guidance, including:

- DfE *Mobile phones in schools*
- DfE *Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents*
- DfE *Behaviour in Schools*

- DfE *Keeping children safe in education* (2026)
- DfE *Searching, screening and confiscation at school*
- Education Act 1996
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- DfE *Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff*
- Statutory guidance: Mobile phones in schools, updated 29 June 2026

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Procedures Policy

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### Governing board

The governing board has strategic oversight of the school's approach to mobile phones and personal electronic devices and is responsible for ensuring that the policy is lawful, effective and aligned with national guidance.

The governing board is responsible for:

- Approving the mobile phone and personal electronic devices policy and ensuring it reflects current statutory and non-statutory guidance.
- Ensuring the policy supports the school's duty to promote high standards of behaviour and maintain a calm, safe and supportive learning environment.
- Ensuring that the policy, as written and implemented, does not unlawfully discriminate and complies with duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for reasonable adjustments and adaptations for pupils with SEND or medical needs.
- Overseeing that safeguarding considerations related to mobile phone use are fully embedded and aligned with *Keeping children safe in education*.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy, including its impact on behaviour, learning, safeguarding and pupil wellbeing.
- Seeking assurance that staff are appropriately trained and supported to enforce the policy consistently and lawfully.
- Reviewing the policy at least annually, or sooner where there are changes to guidance or legislation.

### Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The strategic leadership, implementation and day-to-day management of this policy.
- Deciding how best to achieve and sustain a mobile phone-free school environment, taking account of the school's context and community.

- Ensuring the policy is embedded within the Behaviour Policy and applied consistently across the school.
- Communicating the policy clearly and effectively to staff, pupils and parents/carers, including expectations, rationale and consequences.
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate guidance and training to enforce the policy confidently, lawfully and proportionately.
- Overseeing the use of sanctions for breaches of the policy, ensuring these are fair, reasonable and take account of individual circumstances, including age, SEND and agreed exceptions.
- Ensuring that mobile phones and similar devices are identified as prohibited items within the Behaviour Policy and Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.
- Handling complaints relating to this policy in line with the Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Ensuring appropriate safeguarding responses where misuse of a device gives rise to concerns about a pupil's welfare or risk of harm, including liaison with the DSL.
- Ensuring that reasonable adjustments and adaptations are considered and implemented where required to meet statutory duties.

**Staff**

All staff must:

- Apply this policy **consistently, fairly and proportionately** in line with the Behaviour Policy.
- Challenge and address breaches of the policy calmly and professionally.
- Follow the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy where there are reasonable grounds to suspect misuse.
- Report safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy, particularly where misuse of a device indicates a risk of harm, bullying, exploitation or abuse.
- Be alert to online safety concerns and respond appropriately to incidents of cyberbullying or harmful online behaviour.
- Respect pupils' dignity and privacy when enforcing the policy.

Staff must also:

- Model expected behaviour by not using personal mobile phones or smart devices for non-work-related purposes in front of pupils during the school day.
- Use personal devices only where required for professional, educational, safeguarding or operational purposes (e.g. authentication, emergency contact, approved educational use).
- Never take photographs, videos or audio recordings of pupils on personal devices
- Never share personal contact details or communicate with pupils via personal social media or messaging accounts.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The DSL is responsible for:

- Leading on safeguarding responses where the use or misuse of a mobile phone or personal electronic device indicates that a pupil may be suffering, or may be at risk of, harm.
- Providing advice and guidance to staff on safeguarding issues linked to mobile phone use, including online safety, cyberbullying, sexual harassment, child-on-child abuse and exploitation.
- Managing and responding to incidents involving the creation, possession or sharing of harmful or illegal content, including indecent images of children.

- Initiating and overseeing responses to incidents of upskirting or other forms of image-based abuse, in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Liaising with children's social care, the police and other relevant agencies where concerns meet safeguarding thresholds.
- Ensuring that appropriate records are kept in relation to safeguarding incidents involving mobile phones or personal electronic devices.
- Supporting the headteacher in ensuring that the school's mobile phone policy and related procedures reflect safeguarding requirements and statutory guidance.
- Contributing to staff training and awareness regarding safeguarding risks associated with mobile phones, smart technology and online behaviour.

The DSL may be supported in these duties by a deputy DSL.

**Students**

- Must comply fully with this policy and all related school policies.
- Must not use, access, display or activate a mobile phone or similar device during the school day, including lessons, movement between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime, before or after school on the school site unless an agreed exception applies
- Ensure that any mobile phone brought to school is switched off and kept safe in the Yondr Pouch .
- Follow all instructions given by staff regarding devices & Yondr pouches
- Present their device / Yondr pouch to a member of staff on request where there is a reasonable belief that the policy has been breached.
- Respect the privacy, dignity and safety of others by not taking photographs, videos or audio recordings on school premises.
- Use technology responsibly and lawfully, including outside the school day where behaviour impacts the school community.
- Report concerns about misuse of devices, online harm or cyberbullying to a trusted adult.

**Parents**

- Support the school's approach to maintaining a mobile phone-free school day and uphold the policy expectations.
- Ensure their child understands the rules, rationale and consequences relating to mobile phone use / technological devices and Yondr pouches in school.
- Avoid contacting their child directly via a mobile phone during the school day.
- Direct any necessary communication with students during the school day through the school office.
- Discuss online safety, responsible device use and digital wellbeing at home.
- Ensure that any personal electronic device brought to school is appropriately secured and insured, as the school cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage.

Where a student has an agreed exception, reasonable adjustment or adaptation requiring limited access to a mobile phone or similar device, parents and carers must:

- Work in partnership with the school to agree the terms of use.
- Ensure their child understands that access is strictly limited to the agreed purpose, time and location.

**3. Ownership and responsibility**

- Students are responsible for their own personal property. The school does not accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage to personal electronic devices on school premises, during travel to and from school, or at school events.

- Staff are protected from liability for loss or damage to confiscated devices, provided they act lawfully.
- Students are responsible for replacing or repairing any school property they lose, damage or steal including electronic devices.
- Students and staff are expected to secure devices with a PIN or passcode to protect personal data, images and videos in the event that a device is lost, stolen or accessed by an unknown person.

**4. Acceptable use**

- Where students bring personal electronic devices to school, parents/carers must be aware.
- Devices must **not be used at any point during the school day**, including break and lunchtime, unless an agreed exception applies.
- Phones/devices should be switched off and away before a student enters student services.
- Phones/devices may only be taken out after a student has exited student services / the green gate.
- Yondr pouches will be unlocked on exit from school
- Any agreed exception will:
    - Be documented on CPOMS.
    - Be limited to a specific purpose.
    - Operate only at agreed times and locations.
    - Be subject to review.
- It is expected that parents make appropriate arrangements for students to get home safely from extra-curricular activities. In exceptional circumstances, if a student needs to contact home re: transport in an after school club, they must ask the teacher. Once they have permission, they must go to student services or make contact under the supervision of the teacher once the Yondr pouch is unlocked

**Start of the School Day:**

- The entrance to school will be via the green gate next to the Maths & Geography Department.
- The gate will be opened at 8am. Entry to school before 8am will not be possible.
- There will be no entry to school via Student Services at the start of the school day.
- The gate by Maths / Geography will be locked at 8.30am.
- Students arriving after this time will be recorded as 'late'.

**Student Arrival**

- Phone is turned off.
- Phone is pouched up under the supervision of a teacher.
- Top of the pouch is closed
- Green button is pushed in to secure

**During the day:**

- Students keep the locked pouch in their bag or blazer pocket.
- If a student arrives at school after 8.30am, they must enter via Student Services and also place their phone in their Yondr pouch or hand in their phone.
- If a student needs to leave early for an appointment, or if they are unwell, Student Services will arrange for their pouch to be unlocked or their phone returned.

**Dismissal at the end of the day**

- The pouch is tapped on the unlocking base on the side with the green circular ring.
- As the pouch is tapped the button should be pushed to release the lock.
- Phone is retrieved and the pouch is closed back up.
- Phone is kept with the student ready for the next school day.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

- What happens if a student forgets their pouch?
- They will hand their phone in at the checking station and it will be returned at the end of the school day.

- What happens if a student says they have not got their phone?
- They will have a bag search and they will be checked with a security wand.

- What happens if they lose their pouch?
- They will have to buy a new one or continue to hand in their phone daily.

- What happens if a student damages their pouch on purpose?
- Parents will be contacted, phone confiscated and a serious sanction which is likely to be a suspension.

- What happens if a student says they have not got their phone but then we find out they have?
- Parents will be contacted, phone confiscated and a serious sanction.

- What about students who don't have a phone or don't bring one?
- Their parents can fill out an exemption form and they will not get searched daily.

- What about students who need their phone for medical reasons?
- School will contact parents about alternative arrangements.

- What happens if a student needs to contact home during the school day?
- They can speak to Student Services at break or lunch time and they will support as necessary.

- What happens if a parent needs to get a message to their child during the school day?
- They can leave a message with Student Services and it will be passed on.

**5. Unacceptable use**

- Where mobile phones or other personal devices are brought to school, they must be used in accordance with the school's mobile phone policy.
- Devices must remain switched off and securely locked in the Yondr Pouch for the entirety of the school day, unless an approved exception applies.
- Students must not attempt to access, use, or remove their device from the Yondr Pouch during the school day without permission.
- Yondr Pouches must not be deliberately damaged, tampered with, or otherwise misused.
- Students must not attempt to unlock, open, interfere with, or damage another student's Yondr Pouch.
- Any lost, damaged, or malfunctioning Yondr Pouch must be reported to a member of staff immediately.
- Students must not lend, swap, or otherwise transfer their Yondr Pouch to another student.

- Any attempt to circumvent the school's phone-free arrangements, including using another device to access prohibited content or communications during the school day, will be treated as a breach of this policy.
- Where an exception applies, the device may only be accessed for the specific purpose and period authorised by the school.
- Breaches of these rules may result in the school's agreed sanctions being applied in accordance with the behaviour policy.

Staff will:

- Model expected behaviour.
- Use personal devices only for professional or safeguarding purposes.
- Never share personal contact details with students.

All users must comply with the Social Media Policy.

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, "upskirting" is a criminal offence. Any such incidents will be reported immediately to the DSL and handled under safeguarding procedures.

## 6. Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

The school will meet its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

- Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary for students with SEND.
- Students will not be prevented from using devices to manage medical conditions (e.g. diabetes monitoring).
- Limited flexibility may be provided for students with specific safeguarding or welfare needs, such as young carers.
- Adaptations and reasonable adjustments must be agreed with the headteacher.

Any adaptation:

- Will be agreed in advance.
- Will specify purpose, times and locations of use.
- Will not constitute unrestricted access.

## 7. Cyberbullying

- All use of technology must comply with the Online Safety Policy.
- Incidents of cyberbullying will be addressed in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy.
- Online safety education will be delivered regularly through Curriculum for Life and wider curriculum provision.

## 8. Searching students

- Searches will be conducted lawfully, proportionately and in line with the Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.
- Mobile phones and similar devices are classified as prohibited items.
- Authorised staff may search students or possessions where reasonable grounds exist
- Searches will respect students' rights under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

- Staff will seek the co-operation of the student before conducting a search. A wand may be used before conducting a search.
- Ensure the student understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted.
- Give the student the opportunity to ask any questions so that their agreement is informed.
- Have due regard to the DfE's 'Searching, screening and confiscation' guidance.

Staff may examine and delete data on devices where there is reasonable suspicion of harm or serious misconduct, following statutory guidance.

Any illegal material will be reported to the police without delay.

**9. Sanctions**

- Breaches of this policy will be addressed consistently and proportionately in line with the Behaviour Policy.
- Sanctions include confiscation by a member of staff, ClassCharts points and the issue of an after-school detention.
- Failure to hand over the device will be treated as defiance and will result in 'On Call' and the issue of a one hour after school detention.
- More serious disciplinary sanctions such as internal exclusion or a suspension may be issued if a student refuses to hand over the device to senior staff.
- Confiscated devices will usually be returned at the end of the after school detention but may be retained for a longer period as determined by the headteacher.
- Safeguarding concerns arising from misuse will be referred to the DSL.

Confiscated devices will be stored in the year team pastoral office.

## Mobile Devices Policy for Students on Residential Visits

### 1. Purpose

This policy sets out how mobile phones and similar personal devices are managed during residential visits and trips that take place outside the normal school day. The aim is to safeguard pupils, support online safety, and ensure that the educational and social experience of residential visits is not disrupted by inappropriate use of mobile phones.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all pupils participating in residential visits organised by the school, including overnight stays, weekend trips, and extended educational visits. It should be read alongside the school's Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and Online Safety Policy.

### 3. General Principles

- Residential visits are an extension of the school day and school expectations for behaviour apply at all times.
- Mobile phone use should not interfere with learning activities, group participation, rest periods, or pupils' wellbeing.
- The school recognises that mobile phones can play a role in maintaining contact with home and in supporting pupil safety, particularly in residential settings.

### 4. Use of Mobile Phones on Residential Visits

- Pupils may bring a mobile phone on a residential visit unless otherwise stated.
- The use of mobile phones may be restricted or prohibited at certain times, including during educational activities, meals, group sessions, and overnight periods.
- Staff will clearly communicate permitted times for mobile phone use (for example, limited periods in the evening).
- Mobile phones must be switched off and placed in Yondr pouches when not in permitted use periods.
- Mobile phones will be collected in at the start of the night-time curfew secured in Yondr pouches. This is to ensure that students get high quality sleep and to safeguard students.

### 5. Safeguarding and Online Safety

- Pupils must not use mobile phones to access, create, or share content that is inappropriate, harmful, or in breach of the school's Behaviour or Online Safety Policies.
- The taking of photographs or videos of other pupils or staff is not permitted without explicit permission.
- Pupils should be reminded that the same expectations around respectful and safe online behaviour apply during residential visits as they do in school.
- Staff will remain vigilant to risks relating to online safety and will take appropriate action if concerns arise.

### 6. Access to Mobile Phones for Raising Concerns

- Pupils must be able to access their mobile phone where necessary to raise concerns with staff about issues that have occurred online or to seek help.
- This is particularly important for residential stays, where pupils may need a private or immediate means of communication.

- Staff will ensure pupils know how to raise concerns directly with a trusted adult during the visit.

**7. Contact with Parents and Carers**

- The school will provide parents and carers with clear information about expectations for mobile phone use during the residential visit.
- Parents and carers are encouraged to support the policy by limiting direct contact with pupils during the visit to agreed times, unless there is an urgent matter.
- In emergencies, parents and carers should contact the school or the visit leader directly rather than contacting pupils.

**8. Non-Compliance**

- Failure to comply with this policy may result in a pupil's mobile phone / Yondr pouch being temporarily confiscated and held securely by staff for the remainder of the visit or for a specified period.
- Serious or repeated breaches may result in further sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

**9. Review and Communication**

- This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated as required.
- Residential visits provide an opportunity to reinforce messages about online safety and responsible mobile phone use with pupils and parents.
- The policy will be communicated to pupils and parents in advance of each residential visit.

**10. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher, SLT, DSL and governors.

**Next scheduled review:** September 2027