



St John's
School Billericay

Mobile Phones in School Policy

Date: September 2026

Those Responsible: Mr A Angeli - Headteacher
Mrs A Fleming - Deputy Headteacher
Mrs E Morgan - Senior School Lead
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To be reviewed: August 2027

Mobile phones in school policy

We understand that pupils and parents may wish for their child to bring a mobile phone to school, perhaps for safety reasons when travelling to and from school, or perhaps so that a parent can contact their child to arrange collection.

However, at St. John's, we strive to maintain high standards of behaviour and to ensure that the school is a calm and safe environment for all pupils and staff. As part of this approach, we prohibit the use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video) throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes, lunchtime and at after school clubs.

Procedures for pupils

It is not permissible for pupils in the Kindergarten or Junior School to bring a mobile phone to school. Occasionally, in Lower 3, as part of the transition to secondary education, some parents decide that their child is ready to travel to school independently. In these cases, parents should inform the Head of the Juniors in advance. Once approved, the mobile phone policy applies to these pupils.

For pupils in the Senior School, we acknowledge that most pupils will bring a mobile phone to school, and as such, permission to bring a phone to school is not required.

Upon walking through the school gates from 8:00am, or earlier if arriving before this time, pupils must put their phones into a pocket or into their bag. If pupils are attending breakfast club, they should put their phone onto the table near to the member of staff. At the end of breakfast club, pupils should collect their phone and return the device to their pocket or bag.

Each school day begins with a form time from 8:30am. Upon arrival at form time, the pupils must hand their mobile phone to their form teacher. Each school day finishes with a form time. After the final registration of the school day, the mobile phones are returned to the pupils.

Communicating the mobile policy to pupils and parents

Communicating the school's mobile phone policy to all members of the community is an important way of building and maintaining the school's culture and makes expectations transparent to all.

We ensure that all staff, pupils and parents are familiar with the policy, how it is implemented and any sanctions for breaching it.

The role of staff

All staff should consistently enforce the school's policy on the use of mobile phones.

Expectations for pupils

All pupils have been informed of the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and are reminded of the policy, and the consequences and sanctions for not following it, at the start of each school year and again, where appropriate, at regular intervals.

Pupils are taught about the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure they understand the decision being taken by their school to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and can negatively impact mental health.

Pupils are taught the benefits of having a mobile phone-free environment and are encouraged to see such an environment as desirable and valuable. We hope that this will help to create intrinsic motivation to support the school culture.

The role of parents

Parents have an important role in supporting the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones. The school's policy and rationale for prohibiting mobile phones is explained to parents at information evenings, and through the policy documents. Where parents need to contact their child during the school day, they are encouraged to phone or email the school office, where staff can assist with relaying messages and facilitating contact.

The use of sanctions

Please see our Behaviour policy for further details about sanctions.

There are a range of sanctions that can be applied for breaching the mobile phone policy and these include confiscation and detentions.

In line with the guidance from the Department for Education, schools should feel confident to use their power to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty where their mobile phone policy is clearly breached, for instance where a mobile phone is used by a pupil or is heard ringing in a pupil's bag. Staff should consider whether the confiscation is proportionate and consider any special circumstances relevant to the case.

In line with our Safeguarding policy, we will always consider whether the misbehaviour gives cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or may be at risk of, harm. Where this may be the case, we will follow our Safeguarding policy, and the designated

safeguarding lead (or deputy) will be involved. They will consider if pastoral support, an early intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

Searching pupils

Headteachers, or staff they authorise, have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item or any item identified in the school rules as an item that may be searched for. In line with our Behaviour policy, mobile phones and similar devices as something that may be searched.

Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

We acknowledge that there may be exceptional circumstances where we may need to make adaptations to this policy for specific pupils.

For some GCSE Art lessons, pupils are required to photograph their work for their portfolio. In these cases, the teacher will allow phone use, always under direct supervision, and with the phone on airplane mode to ensure that connectivity is not possible.

Schools have a duty under the [Equality Act 2010](#) to take such steps as is reasonable to avoid substantial disadvantage to a disabled pupil caused by the school's policies or practices. Allowing a disabled pupil access to their mobile phone during the school day, where it is necessary due to the nature of their disability, may, in some cases, be considered a reasonable adjustment.

In some circumstances, supporting a pupil with their medical condition can involve the use of a mobile phone. For example, pupils with diabetes might use continuous glucose monitoring with a sensor linked to their mobile phone to monitor blood sugar levels. Where mobile phone use allows pupils to manage their medical condition effectively, it would not be reasonable for a school to prevent this.

Allowing flexibility for individual pupils does not mean that these pupils should be exempt from all restrictions on the use of their mobile phone. Schools should develop practices which enable pupils to use their mobile phone for a specific purpose at specific times and locations, for example in a Pastoral Lead's office.

We ensure that pupils can access their mobile phone where necessary when raising concerns with teachers about issues which have occurred online. This would be under the supervision of a member of staff.

The use of mobile phones on school trips

It is essential that pupils' educational experience on a school trip is not disrupted by the presence of mobile phones and we therefore apply the same policy to pupils on day trips.

For some GCSE Art trips, pupils are required to photograph exhibits for use in their portfolios. In these cases, the teacher will allow phone use, always under direct supervision, and with airplane mode enabled but only for this purpose, and not for the journey.

In some cases, a day trip may lead to an extension of the school day, with pupil returning to school in the early evening. In these cases, the school office is closed, and it is not possible to share updated arrival times with parents in order to facilitate collection of their child. In these cases, pupils will be allowed to use their phones to communicate an arrival time to their parent. This will take place under the supervision of a member of staff. Where trips involve travelling on public transport, the organiser of the trip will consider whether pupils will keep their phones with them for safety, however, it is likely that the use of the phone will still be subject to some restrictions.

For residential trips, the use of mobile phones will form part of the overall risk assessment. Typically, pupils will not have access to their mobile phone during the day, but will be allowed access to their phone at some point during the evening, in order to facilitate communication with home. In all cases, the approach to mobile phone use will be shared with parents in advance, and will form part of the risk assessment for the school trip.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

We have a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) scheme to facilitate the use of laptops or tablets for learning. Mobile phones are not permissible as 'own devices' and the BYOD policy does not apply to mobile phones, only laptops and tablets. Such devices should be used in accordance with the school's BYOD policy, the E-Safety (Filtering and Monitoring) policy and the Acceptable use of IT policy.

Linked policies and documents

- BYOD policy
- E-Safety (Filtering and Monitoring) policy
- Acceptable use of IT policy.
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Senior School Rules