

# **ST BENEDICT'S COLLEGE, RANDALSTOWN**



## **MOBILE PHONE POLICY**

**Effective from: September 2026  
Ratified by: Board of Governors  
Review Date: September 2028**

## **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

St Benedict's College is committed to fostering a safe, respectful and purposeful learning environment rooted in the values of the Catholic ethos and values.

To support high-quality teaching, strong pastoral care and the wellbeing of all pupils, the school operates a **strict prohibition on mobile phones**.

**Mobile phones are not permitted in school and must not be brought onto school premises by pupils.**

## **2. RATIONALE**

This policy has been developed in response to increasing evidence and school experience highlighting the negative impact of mobile phones on safeguarding, learning, and wellbeing.

### **2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection**

The presence of mobile phones in school presents significant safeguarding and wellbeing concerns, including:

- The potential for photography or video recording without consent
- The sharing of images or messages that may cause harm, distress or embarrassment
- Increased opportunities for cyberbullying, online abuse and exploitation

A mobile phone-free environment reduces these risks and aligns with the school's statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

### **2.2 Teaching and Learning**

Mobile phones are a significant distraction and negatively impact classroom practice:

- Reduce pupils' concentration, engagement and focus
- Interrupt learning through notifications and off-task behaviour
- Undermine classroom routines
- Limit opportunities for deep thinking, problem-solving and independent learning

A clear and consistent ban ensures a calm, orderly and focused learning environment conducive to high achievement.

## 2.3 Impact on Pupil Outcomes

There is a direct correlation between mobile phone use and reduced academic performance:

- Lower levels of attention impact progress and attainment
- Disruption affects both individual learners and whole-class teaching
- Vulnerable pupils are disproportionately affected

The removal of mobile phones supports improved learner outcomes and achievement.

## 2.4 Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mobile phone use during the school day can negatively impact pupil wellbeing:

- Increased anxiety linked to social media use
- Negative effects on self-esteem and peer relationships
- Reduced face-to-face interaction and social development
- Potential for exposure to harmful or inappropriate content

A phone-free school day promotes positive relationships, resilience and emotional wellbeing.

## 3. POLICY EXPECTATIONS

### 3.1 Core Rule

- Pupils must **not bring mobile phones into school** under any circumstances

### 3.2 Breach of Policy

If a pupil is found to have brought a mobile phone into school:

- The phone will be **confiscated immediately by a member of staff**
- It will be taken to the **Main School Office** and stored securely
- It will be retained until **3.25pm** on that day

### 3.3 Responsibility

- Pupils who choose to bring a phone into school do so against school rules

- The school **accepts no responsibility** for any loss, theft or damage

#### **4. SANCTIONS AND ESCALATION**

A consistent and staged response will apply:

##### **4.1 First Breach**

- Immediate confiscation of the phone
- Recorded on SIMS
- Phone returned at 3.25pm
- Parent/Carer informed

##### **4.2 Second Breach**

- Immediate confiscation
- Parent/Carer required to collect the phone from school
- Behaviour sanction escalated and recorded formally on SIMS

##### **4.3 Third Breach**

- Immediate confiscation
- Parent/Carer meeting with Pastoral Team required
- Behaviour intervention plan implemented

##### **4.4 Repeated or Persistent Breaches**

- Pupil required to leave phone at home permanently
- Further sanctions applied in line with the Behaviour Policy
- Referral to Senior Leadership Team

#### **5. SERIOUS MISUSE (SAFEGUARDING BREACHES)**

Any misuse of a mobile phone will be treated as a serious breach of school rules and safeguarding procedures, including:

- Taking photographs or video recordings of pupils or staff
- Sharing images or content via social media or messaging platforms
- Cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation
- Use of phones in toilets or changing areas

Such incidents may result in:

- Immediate referral to **Senior Leadership Team**
- Invocation of **Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures**
- Possible involvement of **external agencies (including PSNI)**
- Additional disciplinary action

## **6. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/CARERS**

To ensure safeguarding and consistency:

- Parents/Carers must not contact pupils directly during the school day using mobile phones
- All communication must be made through the school office
- Pupils may contact parents/carers after 3.25pm

## **7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **7.1 Students**

- Must adhere fully to the mobile phone ban
- Must support a positive learning environment

### **7.2 Parents/Carers**

- Must ensure that pupils do not bring phones to school
- Must communicate through appropriate school channels
- Must support the school in reinforcing expectations

### **7.3 Staff**

- Must enforce the policy consistently and fairly

- Must follow confiscation and recording procedures
- Must escalate safeguarding concerns appropriately

#### **7.4 Senior Leadership Team**

- Monitor implementation and consistency
- Review behaviour and safeguarding data
- Ensure alignment with school improvement priorities

### **8. ALIGNMENT WITH ETI FRAMEWORK**

This policy directly supports the priorities outlined in ETI's Empowering Improvement Framework:

#### **8.1 Learner Outcomes**

- Improved concentration and engagement
- Higher levels of attainment and progress
- Reduced disruption to learning

#### **8.2 Quality of Provision**

- Calm and orderly classroom environment
- Effective teaching and learning
- Positive behaviour for learning

#### **8.3 Leadership and Management**

- Clear expectations and consistent enforcement
- Strong safeguarding practices
- Evidence-informed decision-making

### **9. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- Behaviour data (SIMS records)
- Frequency of confiscations
- Feedback from staff and pupils
- Impact on teaching, learning and attainment

The policy will be formally reviewed in September 2028, or earlier if required.