

Mobile Phones and Other Mobile Devices Policy



St John's College, Cardiff

MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER MOBILE DEVICES POLICY

This policy applies to all sections of the School:

Sixth Form, Senior School, Junior School,
Infant School & Nursery.

Version: September 2023

Since September 2021, pupils up to and including R16 have not been permitted to bring mobile phones and smart watches to school.

We understand that mobile phones and technology are now a key part of modern life. Most pupils own a mobile phone with access to the internet. However, devices of this kind are increasingly becoming a distraction and one of the main sources of disagreements amongst pupils. We want our pupils to be learning in school and free from distraction whilst also avoiding the range of safeguarding risks that mobile devices present. Here at St John's, we strongly encourage our pupils to develop socially and emotionally. This development is just as important as any academic progress or examination grades. Improving social skills and emotional development can best be done by talking to one another, interacting and developing real connections at break and lunchtime, as opposed to using mobile phones.

Additionally, to ensure that clear lines of communication are maintained between the school and parents, it is important that all messages are relayed through main reception and not via private text messages, especially during the school day. The removal of mobile devices will greatly improve our ability to guarantee the wellbeing of every pupil in our care.

Therefore, the decision has been made to prohibit such devices for pupils within the school except in the following circumstances:

- Medical reason (where technology can assist in the management of a medical condition, as pre-agreed by the school)
- Residential trip (lead teacher's discretion)
- Away fixture (lead teacher's discretion)
- Bus transport or lone pupil walking to and from school (specific parental request required to ensure pupil safety)

To request permission for a mobile device to be brought to school, parents must complete the Google Form sent out at the start of each academic year (late joiners may request a copy of the form from the admin team). Any pupil found in possession of a mobile phone where parental permission has not been requested will have their phone confiscated and it will need to be collected by a parent. Further breaches of this policy will result in sanctions being applied which are proportionate to the disruption caused.

Where permission has been granted for a pupil to bring a mobile phone to school for one of the reasons above, the device must be switched off and handed in at the main reception at the start of every school day. All phones will be kept in a locked cabinet and will be available for collection at the end of each school day or sooner, should this be necessary.

Smart watches should be left at home at all times.

Should a situation arise, other than those listed above, which requires a pupil to bring a device to school, permission must be sought from the Senior Leadership Team via the admin email address (admin@stjohnscollegecardiff.com).

In the case of residential trips and away sports fixtures, the lead teacher will communicate in advance whether mobile phones will be permitted. In the case of residential trips, pupils and parents may be asked to sign an agreement regarding the use of devices.

Supervised use

In the event a teacher wishes to allow pupils to use mobile technology for a specific teaching and learning activity, special arrangements can be made for strictly supervised use of devices. In this instance, mobile phones are handed in at reception as usual but placed in a special container which is delivered to the appropriate lesson and returned to reception afterwards. Approval for this arrangement is always granted by the Director of Digital Learning and Assistant Head, Pastoral.

Sixth Form

Sixth Form students are allowed to bring mobile phones to the Sixth Form Centre at Eastern Business Park, although their use is **strictly prohibited** when attending lessons on the main site. Sixth Form students will have their mobile devices confiscated if they are seen being used on the main school site. It is important that Sixth Form students act as role models to the younger members of the school community.

Sixth Form students are also required to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Devices are **not** to be used for games, personal communication or other recreational uses during the school day.
- Students are expressly forbidden to record images or sound of any other member of the school community without their consent. Students are also warned of the dangers of sending offensive texts and other messages.
- Any incidents of displaying inappropriate material will be dealt with according to the school's Behaviour, Reward and Sanction Policy.
- The School can take no responsibility for any loss or damage to a mobile device that occurs at EBP or on the main site during the school day.
- All communications between students and parents **must** go through school reception or sixth form centre reception.

All pupils and students are reminded of the importance of using technology responsibly, particularly communications devices which allow access to social media and group chat apps.