



The Sacred Heart Language College

Mobile Phone Policy

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1. Introduction and aims

At The Sacred Heart Language College, our policy aims to:

- Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones, where applicable
- Provide clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the college'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 college, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices such as Smart Watches and tablets.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of section 36 of the [Children's Wellbeing and Colleges Act 2026](#), and the Department for Education (DfE)'s [mobile phone guidance](#) and [behaviour guidance](#). Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are required to actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the college, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every 2 years, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the college day. All schools and colleges should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only.

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the college) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone during the college day, while students are present and during any contact time. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the college where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's college
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, college staff can use the college office number 020 8863 9922 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential college information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Gemini).

More detailed guidance can be found in our Data Protection and ICT Acceptable Use policies.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers 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/carers or pupils.

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

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones or a similar device during the college day in front of pupils for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

The College has a mobile phone specifically for use by staff, while on trips – day trips or residential visits. If, for any reason that mobile phone is not available for use or not working, 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 that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. Instead, the college app can be downloaded which links in to the college telephone system. If necessary, contact must be made via the college office

4.5 Work phones

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

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

Staff must:

- Only use college 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

4.6 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the college's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that the use of mobile phones is prohibited throughout the college day.

Pupils must not use their mobile phones during the college day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

The Sacred Heart Language College has not banned mobile phones from the College premises altogether. Instead, each student who wishes to bring a mobile phone with them, to use on the way to and from college, must purchase a secure pouch to store the phone in during the college day.

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in college and more broadly, to ensure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the college day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Pupils will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's statutory [mobile phones guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the college chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

The Sacred Heart Language College policy is that smartwatches should be stored in the secure pouch in the same way as mobile phones. We do not allow smartwatches to be worn during the college day.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

Some pupils, such as those with diabetes, will be permitted to possess, or use, a mobile phone/smart device in college.

The college may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in college, due to exceptional circumstances. Permission will only be granted where there is a documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs McGarvey.

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the college's ICT Acceptable Use Agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

5.3 Sanctions

- Breaches of this policy will result in a 7-day confiscation of the mobile phone. Schools and colleges are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/91> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/94>
- At the end of the 7-day confiscation period, a parent or guardian must come to the College office between 3.10 and 3.30 pm to collect the mobile phone.
- College staff also have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation> The DfE guidance allows staff to search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so such. For example, having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images or if it is being/has been used to commit and offence or cause harm to another person.

A pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). This will include speaking with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy, who will consider if pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care, is appropriate

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The college 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)
- Upskirting
- 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

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the college site during the college day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's at a public event (such as a college 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, when working with pupils or while children are present

Parents/carers, 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 college.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising college trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the college's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

Parents/carers must use the college office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the college day. They must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the college day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to college must ensure that their phones are appropriately labelled, ready to be stored away securely in their phone pouch when not in use during the college day.

Pupils must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The college accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on college premises or transport, during college visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from college.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the college office in a locked room.

Lost phones should be returned to the college office. The college will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of Miss Walsh, Headteacher, in a timely manner.

9. Appendix 1: Code of Conduct for pupils allowed to bring their phones to college due to exceptional circumstances

Pupil Code of Conduct

You must keep to the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to college:

1. You may not use your mobile phone throughout the college day, including lesson times, in between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, unless a teacher specifically allows you to for a specific reason.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of college staff or other pupils.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the college's [behaviour policy]. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence. For instance, by 'sexting'.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in college.
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the college's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the college's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.
14. The college accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on college premises or transport, during college visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from college.

10. Appendix 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our college

Our college is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the college grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the Meeting Room or the Staffroom in the Sacred Heart building.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff and always obtain permission.
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

The college accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the college grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the college office.

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11. Appendix 3: QR Code for the purchase of a secure mobile phone pouch

N.B.

It is important you enter the student's name in the notes field when using the QR code. Without a name, we will not be able to reconcile the payment and allocate a pouch.

