



# Beths Grammar School

## Mobile Phone Policy 2024

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## **1. Introduction and aims**

At Beths we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our students, parents, and staff, as well as the wider school community. Our policy is based on the following principles:

- The mobile phone is a powerful learning tool if used well
- The role of the school is to teach students how to use modern technology properly

Our policy aims to:

-Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use

-Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for students, staff, parents and volunteers This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Rewards Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Online Safety policies
- IT Acceptable Use Policy (Students and Staff)
- Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

### **2.1 Staff**

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, 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 every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and students accountable for its implementation.

## **3. Use of mobile phones by staff**

### **3.1 Personal mobile phones**

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) should not be using mobile phone for personal communication during the school day unless on a break. In this circumstance then they should only be using phones in a staff only area.

There is no obligation for staff to use personal phones for work purposes however some might choose to use them to make their work more effective.

Typical examples of this are:

- Modelling how to access learning on mobile phones for students
- Spell checking and grammar checking when marking work or supporting students
- Communicating with other staff on duty or when working on a collaborative team activity
- Sharing CPD ideas with your team
- Logistical support in running an effective department or team
- Communicating with team members in an urgent situation
- Supporting effective safeguarding
- Checking work emails

Any use of private mobile phones for work business is subject to the same high standards for staff conduct as other methods of communication and working practice. Any use of mobile phones for team purposes must be always inclusive and professional. Abusive or bullying comments should not be made about colleagues, students or parents using social media within our staff community.

### **3.2 Data protection**

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information. Refer to the school's Data Protection and IT Acceptable Use policies.

### **3.3 Safeguarding**

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or students, 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 or students.

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

### **3.4 Work phones**

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

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

Staff must:

- Only use 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 always appropriate and professional, in line with our staff code of conduct.

### 3.5 Sanctions

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

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

### **4. Code of Conduct for using mobile phones by students. It also applies to any other mobile devices and earphones.**

Students are allowed to bring their mobile phones/devices in school. However, the school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones/devices that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while students are travelling to and from school.

Mobile phones and earphones must be **out of sight, on-site.**

Key Stage Three students cannot use their mobile phones and/or earphones in lessons, except for rare exceptions in **music and drama**. Mobile phones may be used in these subjects as directed by the teacher.

Key Stage Four and Five students can use mobile phones and/or earphones can be used as directed by teachers.

When students are not directed to use mobile phones and/or earphones, they should be put away, in bags. They should not be visible e.g. on desks, or laps.

Students must charge their electronic devices at home and not in school due to insurance, fire, health and safety regulations.

Phones and/or earphones must be **out of sight, on-site** during transition and recreational times in all areas apart from the sixth form building by sixth form students only.

Staff reserve the right to monitor phone use and search any phone being used by students within the school.

#### **4.1 Sanctions**

If a student is in breach of the code of conduct (also see appendix 1) within this policy:

-The mobile phone and/or earphones will be confiscated; **no warning will be given**. The electronic device will be handed into the main office, a record will be made, including the reason for confiscation and the student can collect the device at the end of the school day. If staff are unable to deliver the device to the school office, they can email on call. The staff member that confiscated the phone must log this on SIMS.

-For two confiscations within a half term, the parent/carer will be notified and will have to collect the device. If a student then acquires an additional, third confiscation during the same term, the student will have to hand their device to their head of year, and/or assistant head of year at the beginning of the school day and they may collect it, at the end of the school day.

If a parent/carer requests that phone/earphone be returned to their son/daughter at the end of the school day, the school will then accommodate this request.

-If the student refuses to hand their mobile phone over after the teacher has repeatedly requested that they hand their phone over, this is classed as persistent defiance, and consequences align with our behaviour policy. That member of staff must log the incident as Level 5.

Please note that schools are permitted to confiscate phones/earphones from students under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the DfE reinforced this again, in 2024.

Additionally, please note that staff have the power to search students' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows school's staff to search a student's phone if you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

On this note:

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- 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 based on someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs, gender, disability or sexual orientation

#### **5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers, and visitors**

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

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of students 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, or when working with students

Parents, 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 school.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

Use their phone to make contact with other parents

Take photos or recordings of students, their work, or anything else which could identify a student

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for students using their phones, as set out in Section 4 above.

Parents must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day, unless it is an emergency.

When using social media to communicate, abusive or bullying comments should not be made about other parents, students or teachers using social media within our school community. Any concerns or

issues which need addressing must be directed to the school via the main school office, form tutor or head of year rather than seeking address via social media.

#### **6. Loss, theft, or damage**

Students bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled/ identified and are stored securely when not in use. Phones must not be left lying about unattended during lunch time or PE lessons.

Students must secure their 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 school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while students are travelling to and from school.

Any phones found on the school premises should be returned to a member of staff operating the main reception.

#### **7. Monitoring and review**

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of students' education, behaviour, and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will consider:

- Feedback from parents and students
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority, or other relevant organisations

## **8. Appendix 1: [Code of conduct]**

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

You must follow the Code of Conduct in using mobile phones in school.

1. You may not use your mobile phone and/or earphones during lessons, except for rare exceptions in music and drama. (Years 7-9)
2. You may not use your mobile phone during lessons unless the teacher specifically allows you to. (Years 10-13).
3. You must not use your mobile phone and/or earphones when transitioning between lessons and moving around the school.
4. During recreational (directed study) periods, only sixth form students can use their mobile phones/earphones in the sixth form building.
5. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or turn over, a phone. No warning will be given. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
6. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other students.
7. You must not take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other students without their consent.
8. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
9. Do not share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
10. Do not use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating students or staff via:
  - a. Email
  - b. Text/messaging app
  - c. Social media
11. Do not use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by sharing indecent images.
12. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
13. Do not use vulgar, obscene, prejudicial or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
14. Do not use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
15. 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 these appropriately, or turn them 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.

16. Do not give out your number or friends' numbers to people you do not know, especially on Social Media apps or Chat Rooms.
17. If you get texts which upset you, do not reply, but keep a record and tell an adult. In serious cases you can report it to the police.
18. If you receive a rude or embarrassing image or text about someone do not forward it on to others.
19. Distributing sexual images of other young people is harassment and illegal. If you receive something like this, tell an adult immediately.
20. Beths Grammar School takes no responsibility for the loss or damage of mobile phones.

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