



**St Catherine's
School & College**

*Specialists in Speech, Language and
Communication Needs*

**St Catherine's Student School and
College Mobile Phone Procedure
September 2024**

Document Information

Title: Student Mobile Phone Procedure

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Please note where the procedure refers to school this also encompasses St Catherine's College.

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1. Introduction and aims

At St Catherine's we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones are an important part of everyday life for our students. We recognise their importance to students in terms of social connection, communication and independence.

This policy aims to:

- Promote and set out an example of safe and appropriate phone use for our students
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones by our students
- Support the school's other policies, particularly those related to positive behaviour, anti-bullying, safeguarding and child protection

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 learning disruption
- Risk of theft, loss or damage
- Potential for bullying and exploitation

2. Roles and responsibilities

Staff

All staff at St Catherine's (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) are responsible for upholding and implementing this policy. All staff must alert a member of the Senior Leadership Team if they are aware of a breach of this policy.

Governors

This policy will be reviewed and monitored by the governing body in line with the normal cycle of policy review.

3. Use of mobile phones by students

St Catherine's understands that many parents wish their child to have a mobile phone in their possession as they make their way to and from school for reasons of contactability and functionality.

As such, our day and residential students who bring their mobile phones to any of our sites are subject to the following stipulations:

- That the use of their personal mobile phones during escort and taxi travel to our sites is appropriate
- That the phone is logged on the database of authorised student phone devices (see Appendix 1). This includes mobile phones that are used for medical purposes
- Once on the main school site, mobile phones with Qustodio installed (other than those authorised for medical use) are switched off and are kept out of sight. This includes at break, lunch and transition time. Alternatively, they can be kept in the secure mobile phone box during the school day.
- Students must also ensure any attachments related to the mobile device. E.g. headphones are also removed
- Students are not permitted to use their personal mobile phones to listen to music during learning time. The use of this as an authorised support strategy will be supported through other means
- Students are not permitted to use their phones to take pictures or videos of themselves or other students or staff on the school premises

Students in the sixth form college

As the older students in the school community, we understand that our sixth form students may use their mobile devices to a greater degree to assist their learning, self-organisation and independence skills.

As such, our sixth form students are permitted to bring a mobile phone to college with them each day subject to the following stipulations:

- The phone must be registered with the college and logged on the database of authorised phone devices, including those that are used for medical purposes
- On entry to the college site, students must put their mobile phones and any attached devices away and either switched off or on silent mode
- Year 2 and 3 students are permitted to use their mobile phones during break and lunch times, supervised by staff and whilst adhering to the college rules. Year 1 students are not permitted to use their mobile phones and will be supported to access this privilege as part of their transition to our college

- Students are not permitted to use their mobile phones during learning times other than when it forms part of the work within their personalised therapy sessions
- Students are not permitted to use their phones to take pictures or videos of themselves or other students or staff on the college premises

4. Keeping students safe

At St Catherine's we support our students through a robust integrated provision to ensure they are educated in how to keep themselves safe online. We understand the vulnerability of our students and therefore our enhanced responsibility to educate them to understand how to use their mobile device safely and how to report if there are incidences whereby they are not safe; all whilst balancing this with our drive to support their independence, communication and life skills.

To ensure students are kept safe on our sites at all times, we use the Qustodio app as our control and wellbeing solution. This enables us to balance screen time and risk and support through:

- Keeping them safe
- Creating balance
- Getting visibility
- Supporting them to learn and manage risks

By using Qustodio we are able to offer reassurance and support during the school day and in residential time through creating a safe space for your child to explore, communicate and play online.

Once installed, the Qustodio app enables us to:

- Block inappropriate apps, games and websites
- Allow our students to view user-friendly sites and automatically block potentially harmful ones to prevent exposure to mature content, gambling and other threats such as exploitation and cyber crime
- Receive alerts when students try to access blocked contents, as well as alerts when they may be at risk
- This increases our ability to educate and support them through our integrated approach and communicate clearly with parents and carers
- Monitor the amount of time students are on their mobile phones and monitor the websites accessed

At St Catherine's, we stipulate that any student that brings their personal mobile phone on site has the Qustodio app installed on their phone. Students who do not have this installed will not be permitted to have their phone on our sites. This excludes students who specifically require their personal mobile phones for medical reasons.

Students are also permitted to store their phones in the secure mobile device box located in the designated safeguarding leads office during the school day.

Parents and carers will therefore be requested to complete a consent form for this to be installed (appendix 1).

Students who are over 18, who do not consent to having the app installed on their phone are permitted to use their phone if they complete a disclaimer to take responsibility for safe phone use (appendix 2).

5. Loss, theft and damage

St Catherine's is not responsible for any loss, theft or damage to student's phones during travel to and from school and during the school day.

6. Breaches to this policy

All staff at St Catherine's are expected to reinforce this policy and the consistent application of this policy is key to ensuring it is effective and that our students are kept safe. Where students do not adhere to this policy and their safety and/or wellbeing, or that of someone else's is compromised, then, in discussion with parents, students may have their access limited and in extreme cases removed to ensure they are kept safe whilst supportive measures are put in place.

7. Monitoring and review

St Catherine's is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on our students' education, behaviour and welfare and will be monitored regularly to include feedback from parents, carers and students.

E-safety education and mobile phone use is monitored by our governing body in line with our safeguarding monitoring.

Links to other policies:

Positive behaviour management policy

Safeguarding policy

Child Protection policy

Anti-bullying policy

Online Safety policy

8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Request for student to bring an authorised mobile phone to school and Qustodio app installation consent

This form should be completed and returned to: principal@stcatherines.org.uk

Student name:	
Date of birth:	
Parent (s)/carer(s) name:	
Make of mobile phone (Apple, Samsung etc):	
Model of mobile phone:	
Mobile phone required for medical reasons - Y/N (if yes, please state)	

I understand that students who are permitted to bring a registered and authorised mobile phone to school/college must abide by our policy on the use of mobile phones.

I understand that the school/college reserves the right to revoke this permission in cases where students do not abide by the policy.

Signed:

Date:

Yes, I give permission for my child to have the Qustodio app installed on their phone.

No, I do not give permission for my child to have the Qustodio app installed on their phone.

My child will not be bringing a mobile phone to school/college.

Delete as appropriate.

Signed:

Date:

I have discussed this with my child and they agree to follow the rules around mobile phones.

Student signed:

Date:

Appendix 2:

St Catherine's College mobile phone contact – Over 18s

I understand that I must follow the St Catherine's College mobile phone rules even though I do not consent to having the approved app on my phone.

I will make sure I do not access social media on my phone or any adult content such as explicit language or images containing nudity. I understand that what I am allowed to access may change and I agree to do what the staff at the college tell me to do.

I agree to a member of staff checking my phone / content periodically to help support my learning and appropriate risk taking.

I understand that if I break these rules I will not be allowed to have access to my phone during the college day.

Signed:

Print Name:

Date: