

Dominican College



Mobile Phone & Technology Policy

This policy covers the use of Mobile Phones, iPOD's MP3/4 Players, Smartwatches or any other internet enabled device.

Introduction

In Dominican College the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to allow pupils to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice by establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse while recognising that mobile phones are effective communication tools. It is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the school day and which are most susceptible to misuse.

Related Policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

Dominican College recognises that parents/guardians may wish our pupils to have mobile phones for use in case of emergency. However, there are potential disadvantages to the use of mobile phones in school:

- They are valuable items and can be lost or stolen
- Mobile phones can be used to communicate inappropriate material
- They can contribute to pupils displaying bullying behaviour through text messages, phone calls or recordings, causing distress to others.

Ethos

As a Catholic school, the Christian ethos of Dominican College permeates the life of the school. The safeguarding and Protection of our pupils is of paramount importance. We aim to create a safe, stable and harmonious atmosphere within which the values of truth, freedom, trust and responsibility are honoured. This policy supports our work in creating an environment where we appreciate the fundamental dignity of each person and aim to promote respect for self, for others and the wider community. As a school we therefore feel it is important to outline appropriate procedures for the use of mobile phones in order to maintain a safe and secure working environment.

Policy Aims

- To provide guidance on the appropriate use of mobile phones
- To protect pupils and staff from the potential risks from the misuse of mobile phones.

Procedures

- Pupils are **not permitted** to use a mobile phone on school premises after their arrival in school and before the end of period 6.
- Pupils are **not permitted** to use a mobile phone inside the school building at any time.
- Any pupils who brings a mobile phone to school must ensure that it is switched off and kept out of sight throughout the school day.
- Pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones to contact parents during the school day. Any contact should be made via the school reception.
- Should a parent/guardian wish to contact a pupil, this must also be done via the School Reception.
- Any pupil who does not adhere to the above rules will have their phone placed at Reception for safe keeping. Parents will be contacted and asked to sign for and collect the mobile phone at their convenience.

Photos/Videos/Audio Recordings - For the purpose of Child Protection/Safe Guarding:

- Pupils are **not permitted** to take photographs images (including video images) or make audio recordings in school at any time unless given express permission to do so by a teacher and only then using equipment provided by the school.
- Any images taken on the school premises without permission must be deleted/destroyed in the presence of senior staff before the camera/phone is taken off school premises.
- Pupils found to have taken photographic images (including video images) or audio recordings in school for any reason without permission may be subject to a suspension.

Social Networking – For the purpose of Child Protection/Safe Guarding:

- Pupils are not permitted to engage with or access any social networking site whilst on school premises using mobile technology.
- Pupils should not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude threatening or inappropriate postings about the school or anyone (e.g. other pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, visitors etc) connected to the school.

Note that “postings” refer to ALL types of content on social media sites including (but not exclusively) text, photographs and video.

Note:

- If a member of staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone has unsuitable material stored on it pupils will be required to hand over the phone to a member of staff.
- The member of staff will be required to contact a member of the Safeguarding Team.
- The school accepts no responsibility for loss, damage or theft of mobile phones or devices.

Examinations

In accordance with instructions issued by JCQ, (*Joint Council for Qualifications*) the possession of a mobile phone or other unauthorised device is not permitted in an external examination. In Dominican College, this also applies to internal examinations.

*This policy was reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and ratified by the Board of Governors in January 2020.
This policy will be reviewed in January 2023.*