



# **Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy**

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## Document Quality Control

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### Document Reviews/Updates

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## Cardiff Sixth Form College Cambridge

### Mobile Phones and Smart Technology Policy

#### 1. Purpose and Rationale

Cardiff Sixth Form College Cambridge recognises that mobile phones and smart technologies (including smartphones, smartwatches, tablets and internet-enabled devices) are an integral part of modern life and play a significant role in communication, learning and personal organisation.

However, the College also recognises that **students have unrestricted access to the internet via personal devices**, including through **4G, 5G and VPNs**, which can bypass College filtering and monitoring systems. This presents safeguarding risks, particularly in relation to child-on-child abuse, online harassment, exposure to harmful content, and the creation or sharing of indecent images.

This policy sets out clear expectations for **safe, respectful and lawful use of mobile phones and smart technology** and supports the College's statutory safeguarding responsibilities under *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students
- All personal mobile phones and smart technologies
- Use on College premises, in boarding accommodation, during College activities, and off-site where behaviour impacts safeguarding, welfare or the reputation of the College

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, ICT Acceptable Use Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, PSHE and RSE Policies, and the Good Behaviour and Sanctions Policy.

## 3. Key Safeguarding Principles

- Mobile phones and smart technologies can be used positively but **must never be used to harm, intimidate, exploit or abuse others**
- Online behaviour is subject to the same expectations and standards as face-to-face behaviour
- Safeguarding concerns may arise **even when behaviour occurs off-site or outside College hours**
- The College has a duty to act where student behaviour poses a risk to themselves or others

## 4. Risks Associated with Mobile and Smart Technology

The College recognises the following key risks:

- **Unrestricted internet access** via mobile data and VPNs
- **Cyberbullying, harassment and intimidation**
- **Image-based abuse**, including the creation, possession or sharing of indecent images
- **Exposure to pornography**, including violent or extreme material
- **Online grooming, coercion or exploitation**
- **Sharing of harmful, extremist or hateful content**
- **Recording or photographing others without consent**
- **Misuse of generative AI**, including deepfakes or impersonation

## 5. Expectations for Student Use

Students must:

- Use mobile phones and smart technologies **safely, respectfully and lawfully**
- Respect the privacy, dignity and consent of others
- Follow all College safeguarding and behaviour policies
- Comply with reasonable instructions from staff regarding device use
- Report concerns about harmful or abusive online behaviour

Students must **not**:

- Use devices to bully, harass, threaten or humiliate others
- Create, possess, request or share indecent images or videos of anyone under 18
- Access, view, store or distribute pornography or other harmful content
- Record audio, images or video of others without consent
- Use VPNs or other methods to deliberately bypass safeguards for harmful purposes
- Use technology to impersonate others or create deceptive content

## 6. Child-on-Child Abuse and Indecent Images

The College is clear that:

- **Sharing nudes or semi-nudes of under-18s is illegal**, even where there is perceived consent
- Such behaviour is treated as a **safeguarding concern first**, not solely a disciplinary matter
- Incidents will be managed in line with national guidance on *Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes*

Support will be provided to those affected, and appropriate action taken to reduce risk and prevent further harm.

## 7. Use During the College Day and in Boarding

- Mobile phone use may be restricted during lessons, assessments or specific College activities
- Boarding students must follow additional guidance set out in the Boarding Handbook
- Staff may require devices to be handed in temporarily where safeguarding, wellbeing or behaviour concerns arise

## 8. Monitoring, Searching and Confiscation

- The College may search, confiscate or retain devices where there is a safeguarding concern or breach of policy, in line with statutory guidance
- Devices may be examined where there is reason to believe they contain harmful or illegal material
- Parents/carers may be informed where appropriate
- Serious concerns may be referred to external agencies, including the Police or Children's Services

## 9. Reporting Concerns

Students are encouraged to report concerns about mobile phone or online behaviour to:

- Any trusted member of staff
- Houseparents or Head of Houses
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL's

Reporting concerns is always the right thing to do and helps keep the College community safe.

## **10. Sanctions**

Breaches of this policy may result in:

- Safeguarding intervention
- Temporary or permanent restriction of device use
- Behavioural sanctions under the Good Behaviour and Sanctions Policy
- Referral to external agencies where behaviour may be illegal

Sanctions will be proportionate and take account of safeguarding, welfare and individual circumstances.

## **11. Education and Support**

The College provides ongoing education through PSHE, RSE, assemblies and pastoral provision on:

- Safe use of mobile technology
- Digital footprints and online reputation
- Consent, respect and healthy relationships online
- Sextortion, pornography and image-based abuse

Students are also signposted to external support, including:

- [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
- [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

## **12. Review**

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, guidance or emerging risks.

*This policy reflects the College's commitment to safeguarding, wellbeing and responsible digital citizenship.*