



Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy

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1 Purpose and Rationale

Cardiff Sixth Form College Cambridge recognises that mobile phones and smart technology form an important part of students' everyday lives. As a sixth form college, we seek to develop responsible, independent young adults who understand how to use technology safely, respectfully and appropriately.

Many of our students are boarders living away from home, often many thousands of miles from their families. Mobile phones provide an essential means of maintaining regular contact with parents and carers, including across different international time zones, and the College recognises the importance of this for students' wellbeing.

At the same time, mobile phones and smart technology can present significant risks to learning, safeguarding, privacy and wellbeing if used inappropriately. This policy establishes clear expectations which balance students' independence with the College's responsibility to provide a safe, respectful and productive learning environment.

The College expects students to demonstrate maturity in their use of technology and to understand that access to personal devices is accompanied by responsibilities towards other members of the College community.

2 Aims

- Promote responsible digital citizenship.
- Protect teaching and learning.
- Safeguard all members of the College community.
- Balance independence with accountability.

3 Scope

Applies to all students and all personal smart technology including smartphones, tablets, smartwatches, earbuds, headphones, smart rings, smart glasses, AI wearables and future internet-enabled devices.

4 Legislative Framework

This policy reflects Keeping Children Safe in Education, Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance, UK GDPR, Independent School Standards and other relevant safeguarding guidance current at the time of approval.

5 Definitions

Smart technology means any device capable of internet access, communication, recording, AI assistance or image capture.

6 Guiding Principles

Technology should enhance education, wellbeing and communication. Students are expected to demonstrate respect, integrity and personal responsibility.

7 Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones and Smart Technology

Cardiff Sixth Form College Cambridge recognises that mobile phones and smart technology play an important role in students' academic, social and personal lives. As a sixth form college, students are expected to demonstrate maturity and responsibility in their use of personal devices.

The College therefore permits the use of mobile phones at appropriate times whilst maintaining clear expectations designed to support learning, wellbeing and safeguarding.

Students are expected to use all personal devices responsibly, respectfully and with consideration for others at all times.

Students must comply with this policy, the College's **ICT Acceptable Use Policy**, the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**, the **Behaviour Policy**, and any reasonable instruction given by a member of staff.

7.1 Permitted Use

Students may use mobile phones and personal smart technology:

- before the College day begins;
- between lessons;
- during morning break and lunchtime;
- during free periods and independent study where this does not disturb others;
- after the College day has finished;
- whilst travelling to and from College;
- within boarding houses in accordance with boarding expectations.

Students should ensure that device use does not prevent them from engaging positively with College life or those around them.

7.2 Classroom Expectations

To maintain an environment conducive to learning:

mobile phones must remain **out of sight** throughout lessons unless expressly authorised by the teacher;

earbuds and headphones must not be worn during lessons unless authorised for a learning activity or as part of an agreed reasonable adjustment;

smartwatches must not be used for messaging, internet access or communication during lessons;

teachers may require students to place devices in a designated location during a lesson where appropriate.

Repeated failure to comply with these expectations may result in confiscation and disciplinary action.

7.3 Boarding Expectations

The College recognises that many students are boarders who live considerable distances from home.

Mobile phones provide an important means of maintaining regular contact with parents, carers and family members, particularly where different international time zones make communication more challenging.

For this reason, the College does **not** routinely collect mobile phones overnight.

Boarding students are expected to demonstrate maturity by managing their own technology use responsibly and ensuring that devices do not negatively affect:

sleep;

academic progress;

wellbeing;

boarding routines;

other members of the boarding community.

Students should be considerate of others, particularly during evening quiet times and after lights out.

Where staff have concerns that excessive mobile phone use is contributing to poor sleep, fatigue, wellbeing concerns or reduced academic engagement, students may be encouraged to

voluntarily hand their phone to boarding staff overnight for a period of time to support healthier routines.

This approach is intended as a supportive wellbeing strategy rather than a disciplinary sanction.

Where concerns persist, boarding staff will work with students, parents and pastoral staff to agree appropriate support.

8 Digital Wellbeing

The College encourages students to develop healthy habits in relation to technology.

Students are encouraged to:

maintain an appropriate balance between online and offline activities;

avoid prolonged screen time before bedtime;

engage fully in College life without unnecessary distraction from devices;

respect face-to-face interactions with staff and fellow students;

seek support if they feel technology or social media is negatively affecting their wellbeing.

Staff may discuss healthy technology habits with students where concerns arise.

9 Classroom Expectations

The College is committed to providing a calm, purposeful and distraction-free learning environment in which all students can achieve their academic potential. Whilst Cardiff Sixth Form College Cambridge recognises that mobile phones and other smart technology are part of everyday life, they must not interfere with teaching, learning or the educational experience of others.

Mobile phones must remain switched to silent mode and kept completely out of sight throughout all lessons unless a member of staff has expressly authorised their use for a specific educational purpose.

The following expectations apply in every classroom:

Mobile phones must not be visible on desks, in students' hands or in clothing during lessons unless permission has been given by the teacher.

Earbuds, headphones and similar listening devices must not be worn or used during lessons unless authorised by the teacher or required as part of an agreed reasonable adjustment.

Smartwatches must not be used to send or receive messages, access the internet, make calls or receive notifications during lessons.

Students must not use personal devices to complete work unless specifically instructed to do so by the teacher.

Students must not charge personal devices during lessons without permission.

Teachers have the professional authority to determine how personal devices are managed within their classrooms in order to maintain an effective learning environment. This may include requiring students to:

place mobile phones or other devices in a designated storage area for the duration of the lesson;

turn devices off completely;

remove earbuds or headphones before entering the classroom;

place smartwatches into examination or lesson mode where appropriate.

Students are expected to comply immediately and respectfully with any reasonable instruction given by a member of staff regarding the use or storage of personal devices.

Failure to follow staff instructions will be treated as a behavioural matter as well as a breach of this policy. Students who refuse to comply may be subject to sanctions in accordance with the College Behaviour Policy.

Sanctions may include:

a verbal reminder;

confiscation of the device until the end of the lesson or College day;

a behaviour sanction in accordance with the Behaviour Policy;

referral to the Head of House or senior member of staff;

parental contact where concerns become persistent;

further disciplinary action where refusal to follow staff instructions becomes repeated or serious.

Students should recognise that these expectations are not intended to prevent the appropriate use of technology but to ensure that all lessons remain focused, respectful and free from unnecessary distraction.

The College fully supports staff in implementing these expectations consistently. Staff should feel confident in exercising professional judgement to manage technology within their classrooms, and students should understand that compliance with staff instructions is an expected part of respectful behaviour and the professional learning culture of the College.

10 Around the College

Cardiff Sixth Form College Cambridge recognises that students will wish to use their mobile phones and other personal smart devices outside of lessons. Students are therefore permitted to use personal devices during breaktimes, lunchtime, between lessons, free periods, independent study (where appropriate), before and after the College day, and whilst travelling to and from College.

Students are expected to use their devices responsibly and in a manner that reflects the values and expectations of the College community.

Whilst using mobile phones or other smart technology around the College, students must:

demonstrate courtesy and respect towards others at all times;

remain aware of their surroundings and avoid becoming distracted when moving around the College;

avoid using devices in a way that causes disruption, inconvenience or discomfort to others;

ensure that conversations, video calls and media are not played loudly in communal areas and use headphones only where appropriate;

remove headphones or earbuds when speaking with members of staff or when requested to do so;

respect the learning environment by keeping noise levels to a minimum in study spaces, the Library and other designated quiet areas;

be mindful that excessive use of mobile devices can reduce engagement with the wider College community and opportunities to build positive relationships with peers.

Students are encouraged to balance their use of technology with active participation in College life, including enrichment activities, social interaction and face-to-face communication.

The College expects students to demonstrate increasing independence in managing their own technology use and to recognise when it is appropriate to put devices away in order to engage fully with learning, pastoral activities and the wider College experience.

The use of mobile phones or other smart technology must never:

compromise the privacy or dignity of another person;
interfere with safeguarding arrangements;
contribute to bullying, harassment or intimidation;
disrupt College activities, meetings, assemblies or events;
impede the movement or safety of others around the campus.

Students should also be aware that members of the public, visitors, parents and prospective families regularly visit the College. Students are therefore expected to present themselves in a professional manner and to use technology in a way that reflects positively on both themselves and the College community.

Where a member of staff considers that a student's use of a mobile phone or smart device is inappropriate, distracting or inconsistent with the expectations of this policy, students are expected to comply immediately with any reasonable instruction given. Failure to do so may result in the device being confiscated and further sanctions being applied in accordance with the College Behaviour Policy.

11 Boarding

Boarders may use mobile devices within boarding accommodation in accordance with boarding routines. Staff recognise the importance of maintaining contact with families, particularly where international time differences exist.

12 Examinations and Assessments

Personal devices must not be brought into examinations except where explicitly permitted under examination regulations.

13 AI and Emerging Technologies

Cardiff Sixth Form College Cambridge recognises that Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies have the potential to enhance learning, creativity and productivity when used responsibly and ethically. The College encourages students to develop the skills required to use these technologies appropriately in preparation for higher education and future employment.

Students may use AI tools where this has been authorised by a member of staff and where such use supports learning in an appropriate and academically honest manner.

Students must not use AI or other emerging technologies to:

gain an unfair academic advantage or compromise the integrity of assessments;

generate or submit work as their own where this is not permitted;

fabricate information, references, data or research;

impersonate another individual or misrepresent their identity;

create, manipulate or distribute images, audio or video intended to deceive, harass, intimidate or harm others;

generate inappropriate, offensive or unlawful content.

The use of AI in assessments, coursework and independent study must always comply with the expectations set by individual teachers and examination boards.

All students are expected to follow the College's **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy**, which provides detailed guidance on the acceptable, ethical and responsible use of AI technologies within the College. This Mobile Phone and Smart Technology Policy should be read alongside the AI Policy, and any misuse of AI may result in academic, behavioural and/or safeguarding consequences where appropriate.

As AI technologies continue to evolve, the College will review its guidance regularly to ensure students are equipped to use these tools safely, responsibly and in accordance with the College's values and expectations.

14 Recording, Photography, Privacy and Smart Technology

Cardiff Sixth Form College Cambridge is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful and professional environment in which the privacy and dignity of every member of the College community is protected.

The unauthorised recording, photographing or filming of others has the potential to compromise safeguarding, damage relationships, invade privacy and undermine trust within the College community. Students are therefore expected to act responsibly and obtain permission before capturing or sharing images, audio or video recordings.

Students must not:

photograph, film or audio record any student, member of staff, visitor or contractor without their knowledge and explicit permission;

secretly or covertly record conversations or activities on College premises;

livestream from any area of the College without prior authorisation;

share, publish or upload photographs, recordings or videos taken on College premises without appropriate consent;

use any recording or imaging technology to embarrass, intimidate, harass, bully or otherwise cause distress to another person;

create, edit or distribute manipulated or AI-generated images, audio or video that misrepresent, impersonate or cause harm to another individual.

Students should be particularly mindful that the College is both a place of learning and, for many students, their home. Respect for the privacy of others within boarding accommodation is essential. Recording or photographing individuals within boarding houses, bedrooms or other private spaces without permission is considered a serious breach of this policy and may also constitute a safeguarding concern.

The College recognises that advances in wearable technology present additional safeguarding and privacy risks. Accordingly, **smart glasses** and any other wearable technology capable of recording, photographing, livestreaming or covertly capturing audio or visual content are **not permitted anywhere on College premises** unless explicitly authorised by the Principal for a specific educational or accessibility purpose.

Where a member of staff reasonably believes that a student is using a device in breach of this policy, they may instruct the student to stop using the device and/or surrender it in accordance with the College's procedures. Students are expected to comply immediately with any reasonable instruction given by a member of staff.

Any misuse of recording technology will be treated seriously and may result in:

confiscation of the device;

behaviour sanctions in accordance with the Behaviour Policy;

safeguarding intervention where appropriate;

parental contact;

referral to external agencies, including the Police, where the behaviour may constitute a criminal offence.

This section should be read alongside the College's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, ICT Acceptable Use Policy, Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy, Behaviour Policy, and Data Protection Policy**

15 Social Media

Cardiff Sixth Form College Cambridge recognises that social media plays an important role in communication, collaboration and maintaining relationships. As a sixth form college, the vast majority of students are aged **16 or over** and are expected to demonstrate maturity, good judgement and personal responsibility in their use of social media and other online platforms.

The College expects all students to use social media safely, respectfully and lawfully, recognising that online behaviour can have a significant impact on individuals, the wider College community and their own future educational and professional opportunities.

A small number of students may join the College at the age of **15**. These students are expected to comply with all current UK legislation and age-related restrictions relating to social media platforms and digital services. Students must not create, access or use social media accounts where this would breach the minimum age requirements or other legal obligations applicable within the United Kingdom.

Students must not use social media or online platforms to:

bully, harass, intimidate or threaten another person;

discriminate against or abuse others;

share confidential or personal information relating to the College or members of its community;

post content that is offensive, discriminatory, defamatory or likely to bring the College into disrepute;

impersonate another individual or create false or misleading online profiles;

share photographs, videos or recordings taken on College premises without appropriate permission;

encourage or participate in behaviour that compromises the safety, wellbeing or privacy of others.

The College reserves the right to investigate online behaviour that takes place outside College where there is reason to believe it:

affects the safety or wellbeing of a student or member of staff;

constitutes bullying, harassment or safeguarding concerns;

disrupts the orderly running of the College;

damages the reputation of the College or members of its community; or

may amount to criminal or unlawful behaviour.

Students should be aware that content shared online can remain accessible indefinitely and may have implications for university applications, employment opportunities and their future digital reputation. They are therefore encouraged to consider carefully the permanence and potential consequences of anything they choose to post, share or comment on.

This section should be read alongside the College's ICT Acceptable Use Policy, Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and Behaviour Policy.

16 Safeguarding

The safeguarding of children and young people is the College's highest priority. The misuse of mobile phones, smart technology and online platforms has the potential to place students at risk of harm and will always be taken seriously.

Safeguarding concerns relating to the use of personal devices or smart technology may include, but are not limited to:

cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation;

online grooming and exploitation;

sexortion;

the creation, possession or sharing of indecent images or videos;

image-based abuse;

the use of artificial intelligence to create manipulated or harmful content, including deepfakes;

exposure to extremist, hateful or harmful material;

coercive or controlling online behaviour;

unauthorised recording or sharing of images, audio or video;

any online behaviour that places a student or another member of the College community at risk of harm.

Any concerns regarding the misuse of mobile phones, smart technology or online activity will be responded to promptly and proportionately, with the welfare of those involved remaining the primary consideration.

Where appropriate, the College may involve parents or carers, external agencies and the Police in accordance with statutory guidance and the nature of the concern.

All safeguarding concerns arising from the use of mobile phones or smart technology will be managed in accordance with the College's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**, together

with any associated safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance. Staff must report any safeguarding concerns immediately in line with the College's safeguarding reporting procedures.

17 Searching and Confiscation

Authorised staff may confiscate and, where lawful and necessary, search devices where safeguarding, welfare or behaviour concerns exist.

18 Sanctions

Failure to comply with this policy, including the misuse of mobile phones or smart technology or the failure to follow a reasonable instruction from a member of staff regarding the use of personal devices, will be treated as a breach of College expectations.

Where a member of staff identifies that this policy has been breached, they may take appropriate immediate action, including requiring a student to cease using a device or surrender it temporarily in accordance with College procedures.

Any breach of this policy will be managed in accordance with the College's **Behaviour Policy**, which sets out the College's approach to behaviour management and disciplinary procedures.

Responses will always be proportionate, taking account of the nature and seriousness of the incident, the student's previous conduct, any safeguarding considerations and the individual circumstances of those involved.

Depending on the circumstances, responses may include:

a reminder of College expectations;

temporary confiscation of a device;

behaviour sanctions in accordance with the **Behaviour Policy**;

restorative conversations or educational interventions;

safeguarding intervention where appropriate;

parental contact;

temporary restrictions on the use of personal devices in College where appropriate;

suspension or other disciplinary action for serious or persistent breaches;

referral to external agencies, including the Police, where behaviour may constitute a criminal offence or present a safeguarding risk.

Where the misuse of mobile phones or smart technology gives rise to safeguarding concerns, these will be managed in accordance with the College's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**, in addition to any behavioural response.

19 Education

Cardiff Sixth Form College Cambridge is committed to educating students so that they develop the knowledge, understanding and judgement required to use mobile phones, smart technology and digital platforms safely, responsibly and ethically.

The College recognises that preparing students for higher education, employment and adult life includes developing the skills to navigate an increasingly digital world with confidence, integrity and resilience.

Education relating to the safe and responsible use of technology is delivered through a range of pastoral and academic opportunities, such as;

PSHE and Personal Development programmes;

tutor and Head of House sessions;

assemblies;

boarding programmes and pastoral activities;

guest speakers and external workshops;

online safety campaigns;

curriculum opportunities where appropriate.

Students will receive age-appropriate education on a range of topics, including:

online safety and personal security;

responsible use of mobile phones and smart technology;

digital citizenship and responsible online behaviour;

maintaining a positive digital footprint and online reputation;

privacy, consent and respect in digital spaces;

healthy relationships, both online and offline;

cyberbullying, online harassment and bystander responsibilities;

misinformation, disinformation and critical evaluation of online content;

scams, phishing, fraud and online financial safety;

sextortion, image-based abuse and the legal implications of sharing indecent images;

the ethical, responsible and appropriate use of Artificial Intelligence (AI);

maintaining a healthy balance between technology use, academic study, sleep and wellbeing.

The College recognises that technology and online risks continue to evolve. Education and guidance will therefore be regularly reviewed to reflect emerging technologies, changes in legislation and new safeguarding risks.

Where concerns arise regarding an individual student's use of mobile phones or smart technology, the College will seek to adopt a supportive and educative approach wherever appropriate. This may include pastoral support, restorative conversations, targeted education, parental engagement or referrals to specialist support services where required.

This policy should be read alongside the College's **ICT Acceptable Use Policy, Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy, and Behaviour Policy**

20 Roles and Responsibilities

Students, staff, parents, boarding staff and leaders all share responsibility for promoting safe and responsible technology use.

21 Monitoring and Review

The Vice Principal (Pastoral and Boarding) will monitor implementation through safeguarding records, behaviour trends and student voice.

Appendix A

Examples of devices covered: smartphones, tablets, laptops (outside authorised learning), smartwatches, earbuds, headphones, smart rings, smart glasses, AI wearables, portable gaming devices with communication capability and future connected technologies.