

## MOBILE PHONE USE POLICY

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the policies and guidance listed below:

- Acceptable Use of Computers (Boys) Policy
- Online-Safety policy
- Cyberbullying Policy
- Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy
- Emerging Technologies and Use of New Media Policy
- Searching and Confiscations Policy
- Taking, Storing and Using Images of Pupils Policy
- Guidelines for the use of Email
- Department of Education Guidance Mobile Phones in Schools (2026)

### Overview

All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default. Boarding schools and residential schools should prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the teaching day and make suitable arrangements for their pupils to have reasonable access to their phones outside of it. Tonbridge reviews this policy regularly and recognises the impact of overuse of Mobile Phones on boys' wellbeing, yet it also realises that there are benefits to mobile phones for the boys, enabling them to keep in contact with friends, make their way to and from School safely and to have a ready means of contacting their parents outside of regular school hours.

All boys are asked to provide their mobile phone numbers to the School and to update this information when required. Boys take responsibility for their own phones and should not lend them to others.

Boys are responsible for any use to which their phones are put. As personal information is held and accessible on mobile devices, all phones must be secured with suitable security systems, such as biometric activation.

**The School has adopted a graduated permission scale for the use of mobile phones by boys in the School.**

### SIXTH FORM

Boys in the sixth form are allowed to carry their phones on their person either in their bag or a jacket pocket, but are expected to set a good example to younger boys around the School by not using phones during the School day. Boys may only use mobile phones in Sixth Form common rooms in houses, in their own rooms, or the Chan Café, and in lessons when specifically authorised to do so by a teacher.

Phones must be switched off during any formal School occasion. This includes at lunch, in Chapel, in the Library and during lessons, lectures, plays and concerts.

Lower Sixth boarders will hand in their phones to their Housemaster before bedtime each night and are able to collect them in the morning before school.

## **NOVI, SECOND YEAR AND THIRD YEAR**

Boys are not allowed to have their phones on the main School site during the School day. Boys will leave phones in the house during the School day with only limited access at certain times being permitted. This extends to all 'wearable tech', like Apple Watches, which are able to connect to either a mobile phone or Wi-Fi networks; these too are not allowed in School and boys should use a standard digital or analogue watch instead.

### **BOARDERS**

- Boarders will hand in their phones and other devices at bedtime each night that they are in School.
- Boarders will be allowed to have their phones at the following times during the School week:
- **Monday to Friday** - boys can collect their phones after supper and no earlier than 6.00pm. They will hand in their phones during prep and will be allowed them from the end of prep until bedtime.
- **Saturday** –boys can collect their phones after lunch unless they are departing from School earlier due to an away match or if they have been given permission by the Housemaster to leave early for the weekend. Boys carrying their phone on the School site must keep them in their School bags, including at break time and in corridors.
- **Sunday**- boarders will be allowed to have their phones but must hand them in at bedtime as usual.

### **DAY BOYS**

- Day boys will hand their phones into their Housemaster before leaving the House in the morning for School.
- On a **Monday and Friday** phones can be returned to boys after Pursuits in the day Houses.
- On a **Tuesday and Thursday** boys can collect their phones after Games.
- On a **Wednesday** day boys may collect their phones after Wednesday Afternoon Activities, but their phones must remain in their School bags on the School site until after the last lesson of the day.
- **Saturday** – boys will be allowed to have their phones in bags due to fixtures etc. However, phones must remain in School bags, including at break time and in corridors until boys have left the School site after lunch.

### **Away Fixtures**

Day boys, and Boarders returning directly home from a fixture, will be permitted to collect their phones before departure. Where boys have their phones for an away fixture, as with any school activity, the phone must remain in their bag or pocket until the boy leaves the School's care.

### **School Trips**

Some School trips will require boys to have their phones for both communication and safety. Where boys will need a phone, the trip organiser will communicate this to Housemasters, and Matrons, who will allow the boys to collect their phone as appropriate.

Any breach of the rules above may lead to confiscation of the phone for an appropriate length of time:

- Three days on a first offence
- One week for a second offence
- Subsequent breaches acquiring a two-week period of time when they will not be permitted to access to their phone during School hours.
- The use of a fake phone will incur the loss of their real phone for two weeks with the fake phone returned directly to parents at the end of the year or if requested earlier from the parents.

Any member of staff who confiscates a phone should return it to the boy's Housemaster with a brief note of explanation as soon as possible.

Housemasters may determine their own regulations regarding use of phones in the House and these should be communicated to boys and parents as appropriate.

Mobile phones are considered a 'device' under the Acceptable Use of Computers (Boys) Policy. As such, phones must not be used by voice, or text to communicate any abusive, impolite or otherwise inappropriate messages or pictures. It is also forbidden to visit sites, view or download images otherwise prohibited by School policy, or to take or send pictures, video or audio recordings of another person without his or her consent. Any such instances will lead to disciplinary action. Boys (and parents) should understand that these actions, in addition to breaking School rules, can also be breaking the law. In some cases, the School will have a duty to inform the police.