



# Christ's College Guildford

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[www.christscollege.surrey.sch.uk](http://www.christscollege.surrey.sch.uk)



March 2023

Dear Parent/Carer(s)

## Mobile Phones in School

Along with a number of outstanding schools praised by Ofsted, we looked at the whole area of mobile phones and associated watches being used during the college day.

Mobile phones and other inappropriate mobile devices presented three significant challenges to the operation of a secondary school:

- 1) Firstly, there is an increased opportunity for cyber bullying. Rumours can spread very quickly and a large number of people can get involved in sending unkind text messages to others in their year group. We take the view that, if there is ever a disagreement between two students, they should either inform a teacher, or try to solve the problem with a face-to-face conversation. Indeed, trying to resolve a dispute with a face-to-face conversation is a good Biblical principle. To send unkind messages without a face-to-face conversation is somewhat cowardly and problems can escalate rapidly.
- 2) Secondly, and linked to this, there is a concern that young people are losing the art of conversation. Speaking and listening remains an important skill for the work place. Indeed, because it is so important, the English Language GCSE exam has a spoken language component. Moreover, the latest Ofsted framework requires schools to promote oral communication. Many educators now believe that excessive communication through 'text speak' is not something that will serve children well in their exams and in their lives at work.
- 3) Thirdly, there is a growing view amongst teachers that mobile phones in class can be a distraction from learning. Instead of focusing on solving an equation or understanding a piece of literature, students may be worrying about whether they will receive a text/social media message back in the next few minutes. They may be waiting to hear from their best friend, boyfriend, girlfriend, or mum, and this will be a distraction from learning and making progress. Of course, when phones are on in class it interferes with the school Wi-Fi systems and makes it more difficult to use the College's laptops.

Set against these problems, there is the advantage that a student to contact parents following a college fixture or any other activity outside normal school hours could use a mobile phone. This is particularly important in the winter months when it is dark after college and children have to walk home.

Therefore, and based on all the above, we have implemented a slight amendment to our current college rules for Years 7 to 11. We still **recommend**, "No valuable items (including phones) are brought into college." The reason is that there is always a possibility of damage or loss, and we have no insurance policy to cover this. In this sense, the college would seek to exclude all liability for loss of a valuable item on the grounds that it is our recommendation that no such item is brought into college. However, the college rules have now be strengthened by the clause that "if a phone is seen or heard during the college day, including at break and lunchtimes, it will be confiscated immediately and returned on the Friday of that week at the end of the College day." This includes smart watch's (mobile devices worn on the wrist).

To support the small number of students who need to bring a phone/smart watch into college in order to use it after college, we will provide a lockable storage service. Prior to college starting, a member of staff will be available from 8.10am to check in their phone. They can then collect their phone/smart watch at 3.15pm. If parents need to contact their children during the college day between 8.30am and 3.15pm, they should continue to use the proper channels of communication by phoning the college office. We will ensure that the phones in the office are always staffed for this purpose. If, in the extremely unlikely event that a student has to contact their parents during the school day, they should use the proper channels and go to the college office to make a phone call.

We believe that this arrangement eliminates the possibility of cyber bullying, improves speaking and listening skills, enhances learning and raises exam results and therefore the life chances of our students. Research by the London School of Economics in 2015 discovered that schools which have a policy of banning mobile phones enjoy 6% higher exam results. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via email. Thank you for your support of Christ's College.

Yours sincerely

**Mrs S Hatch**  
Principal