



BIRKENHEAD SCHOOL

“Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD) Policy

The “Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)” approach provides an additional resource within the curriculum. School recognises the benefits to learning from offering students the opportunity to use tablets, laptops and other ICT devices in school to support learners and their learning. By using any such device in school, students agree to be bound by the additional school rules and requirements set out in this policy.

Students are not permitted to connect to any external wireless service, mobile data connection, hotspot, VPN, proxy service or other method intended to bypass the School filtering and monitoring arrangements whilst using a personal ICT device in School.

The use of a personal ICT device is not to be a distraction in any way to teachers or students. Personal devices must not disrupt class or Private Study areas. Playing games, accessing social networks or other non-school academic related activities are not permitted during lessons or in any area other than the Common Rooms, for Sixth Form.

Students bring their personal ICT devices to use at School at their own risk. Students are expected to act responsibly with regards to their own device, keeping it up to date via regular anti-virus and operating system updates and as secure as possible. It is their duty to be responsible for the upkeep and protection of their devices.

The School is in no way responsible for:

- Personal devices that are broken whilst at school or during school-sponsored activities.
- Any data lost on personal devices.
- Personal devices that are lost or stolen at school or during school-sponsored activities.
- Maintenance or upkeep of any device (keeping it charged, installing updates or upgrades, fixing any software or hardware issues).

Parents should ensure they have adequate insurance cover in place to cover the cost of repair/replacement of a personal ICT device in the event of loss/damage to the device.

Please note that the School has in the past taken serious disciplinary action (e.g. exclusion) in response to offences which originated outside of the School’s IT facilities but which impinged on the School or affected members of the School community. This would include, for example, the use of social media in a manner which could harm the reputation of the School or could cause harm to others.



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Mobile Phone Policy

Birkenhead School is a mobile phone-free school for all students in Years 7 to 11. Students in Years 7 to 11 who bring a mobile phone to school must hand it to their Form Tutor during morning registration. Students arriving after registration must hand their mobile phone to The Lodge immediately upon arrival.

Mobile phones will be securely stored and returned at the end of the school day. Students must not retain a phone on their person, access mobile phone functions, or use another student's device during the school day.

In Sixth Form, students may have their phones and may use them in designated Sixth Form Common Spaces at the discretion of the Head of Sixth Form.

Contravention of this policy may result in confiscation of devices, behavioural sanctions, safeguarding intervention, parent meetings, suspension or other disciplinary action. Mobile phones will not be returned to a student and will require parental collection.

Searching and Screening Electronic Devices

Authorised staff may search and examine electronic devices where there is good reason to believe that school rules have been broken, harm may have been caused, or safeguarding concerns exist. School staff have the specific power under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended) to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images or files on students' electronic devices.

When deciding whether there is a good reason to examine or erase data or files on an electronic device, staff must reasonably suspect that the data or file in question has been, or could be, used to:

- Cause harm, and/or
- Disrupt teaching, and/or
- Break any of the school rules

If inappropriate material is found on the device, it is up to the staff member in conjunction with the DSL or other member of the senior leadership team to decide whether they should:

- Delete that material, or
- Retain it as evidence (of a criminal offence or a breach of school discipline), and/or
- Report it to the police*

* Staff may also confiscate devices for evidence to hand to the police, if a student discloses that they are being abused and that this abuse includes an online element.

Any searching of students will be carried out in line with:



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- The DfE's latest guidance on [screening, searching and confiscation](#)
- UKCIS guidance on [sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)

Any complaints about searching for or deleting inappropriate images or files on students' electronic devices will be dealt with through the school complaints procedure.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and its advice for schools on:

- [Teaching online safety in schools](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying](#) and [cyber-bullying: advice for Headmasters and school staff](#)
- [Relationships and sex education](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation](#)

It also refers to the DfE's guidance on [protecting children from radicalisation](#).

It reflects existing legislation, including but not limited to the [Education Act 1996](#) (as amended), the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) and the [Equality Act 2010](#). In addition, it reflects the [Education Act 2011](#), which has given teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by, if necessary, searching for and deleting inappropriate images or files on students' electronic devices where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

Online Safety in School

When using devices in school, these must be connected to the School's wi-fi. The wi-fi is monitored for any harmful searches by a filtering system called Smoothwall. Harmful sites are blocked, and searches made by students which may indicate a safety concern are flagged to the network manager, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and dealt with appropriately. The School's approach addresses Content, Contact, Conduct and Commerce risks. Students should understand that internet activity may be filtered and monitored for safeguarding purposes.

Students must not use AI tools to create misleading, harmful, bullying, discriminatory, impersonation or sexually explicit content. AI-generated sexual imagery, deepfakes or manipulated harmful content will be treated as serious safeguarding and disciplinary matters.

Reporting Online Safety Concerns

Students must immediately report cyberbullying, grooming concerns, harmful content, extremist material, exploitation, requests for images, attempts to bypass filtering systems, AI-generated harmful content or any activity that places themselves or others at risk.

Safe Usage Advice for Students:

- Be careful to whom you give your mobile phone number and never post it on websites.



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- Never return a call or text message to a number you do not know.
- Never reply to texts saying you have won prizes. These are usually based around premium rate numbers and may cost you a small fortune.
- If you are using text chat, make sure your username does not give away your real name.
- If you receive abusive text messages, keep them. You do not have to read them. When the time comes to take action, these messages can be used as evidence.
- If you receive abusive text or chat messages, ask for help from your Form Tutor, Head of Year, the School Nurse, a parent or any trusted adult. You can also contact your mobile phone provider.
- Remember, by forwarding a text, email, photo, video, etc. you may be making a problem worse. You could be unwittingly involving yourself in bullying. You may even be breaking the law. It is illegal to share explicit images or send any explicit images (including those of yourself).

Reviewed: DSL, August 2026

To be reviewed: August 2027