



SIR WILLIAM BORLASE'S  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

# Digital Device Code of Conduct (Draft)

Senior Leader Review Lead : Deputy Headteacher, James Simpson

For Review: October 2021

For review by: PDW /FGB



*Inspire  
Empower  
Shape The Future*

## **1. Introduction**

Students and their parents/carers must read and understand the Digital Device Code of Conduct as a condition upon which permission is given to bring digital devices to school.

The school makes a distinction between personal digital devices such as watches and smartphones and the digital learning devices - a laptop, Chromebook or tablet with integrated keyboard - which all Borlase students are expected to bring to school.

It is well understood that all digital devices can be sources of distraction as well as powerful tools to facilitate learning. The school's learning environment should be a place where students and teachers can make productive use of the benefits of digital devices while minimising their potential for distraction or harm.

## **2. Digital learning devices**

Borlase students are expected to have access to their own wifi-capable device to support learning at school or in the Borlase@Home learning environment necessitated by the shutdown of schools caused by the coronavirus.

This expectation gives teachers the flexibility to make effective use of IT without the need to leave their teaching classroom, facilitating more effective student-student and student-teacher collaboration.

All Borlase students should bring to school a WiFi-capable digital learning device that meets the following specifications:

- is suitably lightweight and robust enough to survive being carried around all day (although we strongly recommend that students bring their device in a protective case)
- is equipped with a genuine keyboard (i.e. tablet devices such as iPads must be accompanied by a folio-type tablet case with in-built keyboard)
- has a battery life sufficient to last the full school day

## **3. Personal digital devices**

### **a. School policy applicable to all students**

Sir William Borlase's Grammar School recognises that communication through personal digital devices is part of everyday life for families, socially, academically and professionally. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that students and staff understand their responsibilities with respect to personal digital devices so that everyone can feel safe at school and outside school.

There is significant evidence that indicates that access to personal digital devices increases the potential for bullying, is a cause of anxiety related to social media, and has a negative impact on achievement. Young people can feel under pressure to use digital devices where they have access to it. Sir William Borlase's Grammar school supports young people's right to be disconnected from social media during school hours. Our school wifi network does not allow access to social media



sites (e.g. Facebook) and students are not expected to be accessing social media sites for personal or social purposes during the school day.

Parents/carers should be aware that if their child takes a personal digital device to school, it is assumed household insurance will provide the required cover in the event of loss, damage or theft. The school will not accept responsibility for costs incurred due to its use.

**It is the responsibility of all students to ensure that they do not use or handle their personal digital device until they have left the school premises. During the course of the school day, personal digital devices should be turned off and kept out of sight either in a securely locked locker, in a zipped or buttoned blazer or jacket pocket or in a bag.**

Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office is the first point of contact or Matron for medical issues and office staff can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way. Passing on messages through school reception also reduces the likelihood of inadvertently disrupting lessons.

Pupils have access at any time of the day to a telephone in reception, with matron or their Key Stage office if they need to contact parents for an emergency or personal reason.

Using personal digital devices to bully or threaten other students is totally unacceptable. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence, it is unacceptable regardless of whether 'consent' was given.

It is forbidden for students to join together to target any student, individual or member of staff; to use their mobile phone to take videos/images in order to denigrate and humiliate an individual. Sharing, sending or uploading images/videos to other students or individuals, or making them publicly available is strictly prohibited. This also includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any student, individual or member of staff without their consent. It is **a criminal offence** to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

It is a **criminal offence** to take sexually explicit photos of others or yourself and send them to others. If a student receives an explicit photograph or is requested to send one they should report this immediately to a member of their Key Stage Team, Matron, the DSL Miss Williams or a member of the senior team, or directly to the police.

It is unacceptable to take a picture of a member of staff without their permission. In the event that this happens the student will be asked and expected to delete those images. Examples might include during the school day, at a school function or going home.

All digital devices are banned from all exams by JCQ. Any student found in possession of a personal digital device during an exam will have their paper disqualified. Such an incident may result in all other exam papers being disqualified. JCQ requirements apply to all internal school assessments / exams. These are JCQ rules and schools must enforce them.



## **b. Exceptions**

The school recognises that some students choose to wear a particular type of personal digital device: a smartwatch such as an Apple Watch. It should be understood that the wearing of such a device is permitted, but *only for the purpose of using it as though it were **not** a smartwatch*. The use of a smartwatch as a mobile phone or messaging device or to access the internet, apps or games is not permitted and would be treated as equivalent to using a smartphone.

The school recognises that some of the tools available in personal digital devices such as cameras and video recording and music libraries may be required in a small number of subjects - e.g. Music for GCSE or A level, the Dance curriculum. Teachers will state in advance when it is permitted for personal digital devices to be used in the classroom environment.

During extra- curricular activities, twilight lessons and after school clubs, personal digital device usage is at the discretion of the teacher leading the activity. They should be out of sight as usual unless the teacher agrees to the student using the personal digital device. Students should *not use cameras* or record themselves or others unless this is a specified learning activity within a specialist lesson.

The policy for usage of personal digital devices during educational activities, for example school trips, will be specifically directed by the staff trip leader. It is usual that for outdoor education experiences students operate without smart technology. For most school trips mobile phones are permitted to be used for emergency communication if requested.

Students must take responsibility to ensure phones are switched off during talks, theatre, concerts etc as they would during any school lesson.

## **c. Specific exceptions for Sixth Form students**

It is important firstly to note that Sixth Formers are *not permitted* to use personal digital devices in public areas around the school during the school day for any purpose, including listening to music; this includes canteen areas, playing fields, corridors and Cloisters at all times. It is very important that they set an example to the lower school in those shared spaces; public usage will result in confiscation.

The school recognises that Sixth Form students, who are developing into young adults, are able to leave the school site during lunch times. It is acceptable for them to access their mobile devices if they leave the school at this point in the school day.

Sixth Form students are permitted to use their phones during non contact periods, break and lunch in the area exclusively used by the Sixth Form: the Mimis cafe area.

Sixth Form students have access to a school phone with their Student Support Team, Matron or Reception if they need to make an emergency call or a call related to study/ university/ work experience etc ; they can use a small sixth form study office to make a call on their mobile phones if needed for these purposes, with staff permission.



Sixth Formers are permitted to have mobile phones on desks in supervised silent study; those students who find listening to music helpful must do so having gained permission from staff and using headphones.

#### **4. Sanctions**

Students who infringe the rules set out in this document will have their personal digital devices confiscated by school staff.

Confiscated personal digital devices will be taken to Reception, labelled with name and date and locked away securely. This will be logged in Reception and monitored by the relevant Head of Key Stage.

For a first and second confiscation in an academic term the student will be issued with 2 SIMS points and a lunchtime detention. The personal digital device can be collected by the pupil and signed out from Reception between 3.30 and 4.00 p.m.

A third confiscation in any academic term (persistent infringement) will result in the phone remaining in reception until parents/carers are able to collect it (between 8.00 a.m. and 8.30 a.m or 3.30 and 4.30 p.m.) and the issuing of a 3 SIM point after school detention.

Parents/carers will be notified so they can collect the phone on a convenient day and the phone will be held securely until they are able to do so.

