

St. Kevin's College



Mobile Phone Pouch Policy

Ratified by the school Board of Management on Feb 09th, 2026

Introduction

At St. Kevin's College, our vision is to create a kind, caring and vibrant learning community which supports the wellbeing along with the academic, spiritual and creative growth of every student, whilst we challenge ourselves to create and maintain high expectations for our staff and students.

In line with the Department of Education and Youth Circular 0045/2025, this policy outlines our school's approach to restricting mobile phone use during the school day. The purpose of this restriction is to promote student wellbeing and to provide a phone-free environment, helping our students to:

- Engage more meaningfully with peers and teachers
- Focus on learning and positive social connection
- Develop balance and self-awareness in a digital world

Our Bí Cineálta (Anti-Bullying) policy reminds us that kindness and respect are at the heart of our school. Limiting mobile phone use supports this policy by creating space for real connection and kindness in our daily interactions.

Objectives

This policy aims to:

- Create a calm, connected and focused learning environment
- Support student wellbeing and reduce stress and distraction
- Encourage in-person friendships and communication
- Support the Code of Positive Behaviour and Bí Cineálta Policy
- Protect the safety, privacy and dignity of every member of our school community

Use of Mobile Phone Pouches

To support this policy, all students will receive one school-issued mobile phone pouch, funded by the Department of Education and Youth.

- The school does not accept responsibility for damage to a phone while it is stored or secured in the pouch. Students must ensure that their phone is switched off before placing it inside the pouch.

- It is the students responsibility to ensure that the pouch is used correctly and carefully at all times.
- Each student is fully responsible for the care, proper use, and safekeeping of their pouch. The pouch remains the property of the school and must be returned in good condition at the end of the school year.
- Any damage, loss, or deliberate interference with a pouch will incur a replacement fee of €20 and may result in a behavioral sanction in line with the school's Code of Behaviour.

Daily Procedure

Students must bring their pouch to school in their schoolbag every day, even if they are not bringing their phone to school. The pouch must include a signed confirmation card or note from a parent or guardian stating, "I confirm that my child does not bring his phone to school." This card is available from the front office and must be signed in person by the parent/guardian.

Upon arrival at the school premises, students must:

1. Go to one of the pouch unlocking stations located at the school
2. Open their locked pouch by tapping the pouch unlocking station
3. Switch off their mobile phone
4. Place their phone inside their pouch and lock the pouch
5. Place their pouch in their bag

During the first class in the morning, students must place their locked pouch on their desk for the duration of the class. Following that, the pouch is the student's responsibility for the remainder of the school day. Regular checks may be undertaken during the school day, and students must present their locked pouch to any member of the school staff when directed to do so. The pouches remain locked throughout the day for all students and they can only be unlocked at the end of the school day using one of the designated unlocking stations.

Sanctions

Failure to comply with the above procedure or this policy will be treated as a serious breach of

the Code of Behaviour.

1. Any student found using or in possession of a mobile phone outside of a locked pouch during school hours will be immediately assigned a detention by the supervising teacher, and a call home will be made from the Year Head. The phone will be confiscated until the end of the day.
2. Refusing to hand over an unpouched phone will result in suspension.
3. If a student is found with a second phone, a suspension will be imposed.
4. If there is a repeat incident of point 1, a suspension will be imposed.
5. Further incidents of non-compliance will be dealt with through suspension, which may be increased in duration.

Late Arrival or Early Departure

Students arriving to school late or being signed out early by a parent/guardian must lock/unlock their pouches at the school office.

Forgotten Pouches

If a student arrives to school without their pouch,

There will be a message/phone call home to get their pouch delivered or they may be sent home to get their pouch and return to school.

Depending on availability and circumstance, a temporary pouch may be assigned to a student for the day. Students will not be permitted to attend class without a mobile phone pouch.

This will be recorded on VShare.

All temporary pouches must be returned to reception at the end of the school day.

Parental Contact

In an urgent circumstance if a parent/guardian needs to contact their son during the school day, they may do so by

- Telephone the school office at: 018371423
- Email: info@stkevinscollege.com

Exemptions

Mobile phones may be required for specific, limited reasons, which must be approved and

managed transparently:

Medical/Wellbeing Needs: If you require your phone for essential medical monitoring (e.g., diabetes blood glucose monitoring, seizure conditions) or specific mental health conditions, you must apply for an exemption. These exemptions allow access only for the specific need, not for general use.

Approved Academic Use for Teaching & Learning

Mobile phones may be used in exceptional circumstances for SEC-related coursework within the Senior Cycle Curriculum, under the guidance of a teacher, with the approval of the Senior Leadership Team.

After School Activities/trips/tours etc.

This policy applies for the duration of the school day 8.40am – 3.25pm including morning break and lunchtime. It also applies if a student is in before or after school activities on site.

Procedures for the management of mobile phone use during the various after school activities and trips/tours etc. are outlined further below. While these procedures will uphold the spirit of the policy in relation to the non-use of mobile phones, they will take account of the possible need for a parent/guardian to make contact with their son after school hours when the school office is closed or during the school day if their son is taking part in an out-of-school activity.

Lunchtime

Students will not have access to their phones for making payments at lunchtime. Please ensure your child has cash or a physical debit card if they plan to purchase food at a school shop or on off-campus trips.

Conclusion

Our Mobile Phone Policy supports our shared goal of helping every student reach their full potential — academically, socially, and personally — in a caring and faith-filled environment. By embracing this phone-free approach, we foster respect, kindness, and genuine connection.

Mobile Phone Procedures for Extra-Curricular Activities, Matches, and Trips

(Aligned with the St. Kevin's College Acceptable Use Policy)

To uphold the principles of our **Mobile Phone Policy** while accommodating the practicalities of school trips, matches, and extracurricular activities, the following procedures apply:

General Guidelines

- Students participating in extracurricular activities or school trips must adhere to the phone pouch policy unless otherwise indicated below.
- Teachers/coaches should use their professional discretion when deciding if and when to

unlock pouches, ensuring phone use remains appropriate and limited and in line with our Acceptable Use Policy, Code of Positive Behaviour and BÍ Cineálta policy..

- Students returning to the school building after any activity must have their phones locked in their pouches before re-joining lessons.
- Handheld unlockers are available from the main office upon request from SLT and must be signed out and returned after use.

Scenarios

Scenario 1 – Away Matches / Off-Site Activities (e.g. Bus to Naas for Hurling Match)

- Students bring their locked pouches with them on the bus.
- The supervising teacher collects a handheld unlocker from the office before departure.
- The teacher may unlock pouches at their discretion, for example, after the match or before the return journey.
- Phones must be relocked before students return to school/re-joining lessons.

Scenario 2 – Home Matches (e.g. Football in Johnstown Park)

- Students bring locked pouches down to the dressing room in the gym.
- The supervising teacher collects an unlocker and may unlock pouches when the games is over and students are returning straight home.
- Phones must be relocked before any students re-enter the school building.

Scenario 3 – Major School Events or Trips (e.g. Basketball All-Ireland Final, Day Trips, Competitions)

- Students bring locked pouches on the trip.

- The teacher collects a handheld unlocker and determines the appropriate time and setting for unlocking pouches if and when required (e.g. post-event or at lunchtime).
- Upon return to school, all phones must be relocked in their pouches before re-entry.

Scenario 4 – Activities or Matches Outside School Hours (e.g. School is closed)

- No pouches are required for weekend or out-of-hours events.
- Students are expected to use phones responsibly in line with the school’s Acceptable Use Policy, Code of Positive Behaviour and Bí Cineálta policy.

Scenario 5 – Students Meeting a Teacher Off-Site (e.g. Direct Travel to Venue)

- Pouches must be brought to all student off site trips.
- Students must insert their phones into the pouches when the teacher instructs them to do so.
- Upon re-entry to school, phones must be placed in locked pouches.
- The supervising teacher may request a handheld unlocker to facilitate this process
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Key Reminder

The 8.40 a.m. class remains central to the success of this policy.

Any student who begins the day in school is expected to have their phone locked in the pouch as per the morning procedure, regardless of later participation in a trip or match.

St. Kevin’s College *Bí Cineálta* – Be Kind. Be Present. Be Your Best Self.

Signed _____

Date:

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____

Date:

Principal

