

NOTRE DAME-BISHOP GIBBONS SCHOOL

Student Cell Phone & Personal Internet-Enabled Device Policy

Grades 6–12

Effective: 2026–2027 School Year

Notre Dame-Bishop Gibbons School is committed to providing an academic environment that promotes student learning, personal responsibility, respectful relationships, and the values of our Catholic school community. Cell phones and other personal internet-enabled devices can create significant distractions from these goals.

Therefore, Notre Dame-Bishop Gibbons School will maintain a **phone-free and personal-device-free environment from student arrival through dismissal.**

Personal Devices Prohibited During the School Day

Students may not have access to personal internet-enabled devices during school days.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Cell phones and smartphones
- Personal tablets
- Personal laptops unless specifically authorized by the school
- Gaming devices
- Personal earbuds or headphones connected to prohibited devices
- Any other personal device capable of accessing the internet, social media, text messaging, messaging applications, or similar communication services

School-issued or school-approved technology used for educational purposes is permitted under the direction of faculty and administration.

Morning Cell Phone Collection

Students who bring a cell phone to school must turn it in **immediately upon arrival each morning**.

Students will place their cell phone in the designated secure **lockbox in their homeroom**. Phones will remain secured and inaccessible to students throughout the entire school day.

Phones will be returned to students at the end of the school day.

Students may not keep a cell phone or other prohibited device in their pocket, backpack, purse, athletic bag, locker, or anywhere else accessible to them during the school day.

Students Arriving Late

Any student arriving after the morning homeroom collection has taken place must report to the **Main Office** and place their cell phone in the designated Main Office lockbox.

A late-arriving student may not proceed to class while keeping a cell phone or prohibited personal device.

Old Phones, "Dummy Phones," and Attempts to Circumvent the Policy

Students are required to turn in the actual cell phone they possess and use.

If a student places an old, inactive, broken, substitute, or "dummy" phone in the lockbox and is later discovered with another phone or prohibited internet-enabled device, the device will be **immediately confiscated and brought to the Main Office**.

The device **will not be returned to the student. A parent or legal guardian must personally come to Notre Dame-Bishop Gibbons School to retrieve it.**

Intentionally turning in a substitute device while keeping another device will be considered an intentional attempt to circumvent school rules and may result in additional disciplinary consequences.

Devices Discovered During the School Day

Any prohibited personal internet-enabled device that is seen, heard, used, or discovered in a student's possession during the school day may be immediately confiscated.

This policy applies throughout the school day, including:

- Homeroom
- Academic classes
- Study halls
- Passing periods
- Lunch
- Assemblies
- Restrooms and locker rooms
- Physical education classes
- School activities conducted during the regular school day

The device does not have to be actively used for a violation to occur. Students are responsible for properly turning in and securing their devices each morning.

A confiscated device will be secured in the Main Office and **must be picked up by a parent or legal guardian.**

Repeated violations may result in additional disciplinary action at the discretion of school administration.

Parent and Student Communication

Parents and guardians who need to contact their child during the school day should contact the **Notre Dame-Bishop Gibbons Main Office at (518) 393-3131.**

The school will ensure that necessary or urgent messages are communicated to students.

Students who need to contact a parent or guardian during the school day should report to or receive permission to contact the Main Office. Students will be provided with an appropriate school-approved method of communication.

Exceptions

The Principal or school administration may authorize an exception when a device is necessary because of:

- A documented medical or health-related need;
- An IEP, Section 504 Plan, or other required accommodation;
- Translation or accessibility needs;

- An emergency;
- A specific educational need approved by a teacher and administration; or
- Another exceptional circumstance approved by the Principal.

Students may not independently determine that an exception applies. Any exception must be approved by the appropriate school personnel.

School-Issued Technology

Notre Dame-Bishop Gibbons recognizes that technology remains an important educational tool.

School-issued or school-approved Chromebooks, laptops, tablets, and other educational technology may be used for legitimate academic purposes as directed by teachers and administration.

The prohibition on personal internet-enabled devices does not prevent the school from using appropriate technology to enhance instruction.

Responsibility for Personal Devices

Students who choose to bring a cell phone or other personal device to school do so at their own risk.

Notre Dame-Bishop Gibbons School is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal electronic devices brought onto school property.

Students are responsible for following all procedures for turning in and retrieving their devices.

Student Expectations

Notre Dame-Bishop Gibbons expects students to demonstrate honesty, responsibility, respect, and cooperation in following this policy.

The expectation is simple:

Upon arrival, phones are turned in and secured. Personal internet-enabled devices remain inaccessible throughout the school day. Phones are returned at dismissal.

Our goal is not simply to remove cell phones from classrooms. Our goal is to create a school environment where students are more present with their teachers, classmates, academics, faith, and school community.

Parent/Guardian and Student Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the Notre Dame-Bishop Gibbons School Student Cell Phone & Personal Internet-Enabled Device Policy. I understand the procedures for securing devices and the consequences for violating or attempting to circumvent this policy.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Notre Dame-Bishop Gibbons

ZERO-TOLERANCE VAPING POLICY

Grades 6-12 | Health • Responsibility • Respect • Accountability

ZERO TOLERANCE MEANS ZERO WARNINGS. Every confirmed violation results in a documented consequence. It does not require automatic dismissal for every first offense.

Purpose and Standard

As a Catholic school, we are committed to protecting student health, encouraging responsible choices, and maintaining a safe learning environment. Students may not possess, use, purchase, sell, distribute, share, or attempt to conceal any prohibited vaping product. A student does not need to be actively vaping for a possession violation to occur.

Prohibited Items and Conduct

- Vapes, e-cigarettes, electronic smoking devices, pods, cartridges, liquids, chargers, and related paraphernalia.
- Nicotine, THC/cannabis, synthetic cannabinoid, or other controlled-substance devices or products; nicotine pouches and similar products.
- Holding, storing, or carrying an item for another person. A claim that an item belongs to someone else does not eliminate a possession violation.
- Selling, giving, sharing, supplying, soliciting, or arranging the transfer of a prohibited item.

Where and When the Policy Applies

This policy applies in school buildings and restrooms; on school grounds and in parking areas; on school transportation; and at field trips, retreats, athletics, dances, and all school-sponsored activities, from arrival through departure. New York law also prohibits vaping on school grounds and within 100 feet of school entrances, exits, and outdoor areas, subject to statutory exceptions.

Response to a Suspected or Confirmed Violation

Prohibited items will be confiscated and secured by administration. A parent/guardian will be notified. The school may investigate consistent with its handbook and applicable law. Confiscated items will not be returned to a student and will be discarded safely, or transferred to law enforcement as appropriate. Mere presence near another student who is vaping is not, by itself, proof of possession or use; decisions will be based on available evidence.

Required Consequences

Violation	Minimum School Response
First confirmed offense	Confiscation; immediate parent contact; 1-2 days of in-school or out-of-school suspension; mandatory vaping/nicotine education; parent-student conference; signed contract.
Second confirmed offense	Confiscation; parent contact; Removal from Institution
Sale, distribution, THC, or controlled substance	Immediate removal pending investigation; parent conference; possible law-enforcement notification; and potential long-term suspension or dismissal under the handbook and applicable law.

Administrative Safeguards

Administration may adjust the listed consequence when required by student safety, documented disability-related needs, age, severity, reliable evidence, prior discipline, or applicable law. Any adjustment must be documented and must still include accountability, parent notification, and an educational or restorative response. Emergency medication and approved medical devices are not prohibited; students must follow school medication procedures.

STUDENT/PARENT VAPING AGREEMENT

Acknowledgment and Commitment | Grades 6-12

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ Homeroom: _____

Student Commitment

I understand that Notre Dame-Bishop Gbbons has a zero-tolerance vaping policy. Zero tolerance means there are no informal warnings: every confirmed violation will result in a documented consequence. I agree that I will not possess, use, purchase, sell, distribute, share, store, hold for another person, or conceal any prohibited vaping or nicotine product at school or during a school-sponsored activity.

- I understand that saying an item belongs to someone else does not eliminate a possession violation.
- I will not enter or remain in an area for the purpose of helping another student vape, hide a device, or avoid detection.
- If I am pressured to hold, use, or share a prohibited item, I will refuse and seek help from a trusted adult.
- I understand that selling or distributing a product, or possessing a THC/controlled-substance device, is treated as a major offense.
- I understand that consequences may include suspension, loss of privileges, required education or counseling, and review of my continued enrollment.

Parent/Guardian Commitment

I have reviewed the policy and consequence schedule with my child. I understand that I will be contacted after every confirmed violation and may be required to attend a conference before my child returns. I agree to support the school's health, safety, and accountability expectations and to participate in recommended education or intervention steps.

Acknowledgment

By signing below, we confirm that we received, read, and understand the Zero-Tolerance Vaping Policy. We understand that signing acknowledges the policy; it does not limit the school's authority under its handbook, enrollment agreement, or applicable law.

_____ Student signature	_____ Date
_____ Parent/guardian signature	_____ Date
_____ Parent/guardian printed name	_____ Best phone number
_____ Administrator/witness	_____ Date received

If a Violation Occurs

Date of incident: _____	Offense number: 1st / 2nd / 3rd / Major
Parent contacted: _____	Conference date: _____