

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Mobile Phone and Smart Devices Policy



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1. SCHOOL MISSION

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, our Mission is:

**TO LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS
BY
LEARNING TOGETHER
LOVING OURSELVES
LOVING EACH OTHER
LOVING ALL PEOPLE
LOVING LIFE ITSELF
AND
CONSTANTLY STRIVING FOR
EXCELLENCE
WORTHY OF OUR GOD GIVEN GIFTS.**

2. POLICY STATEMENT

At St. Mary's, we are committed to providing a safe, focused and supportive learning environment where all pupils can thrive. Our school culture is caring, respectful and rooted in our Christian values, with Jesus at the centre of all we do.

This mobile phone policy aims to minimise distractions, support learning, promote positive social interaction, and safeguard the wellbeing of all members of our school community.

Positive behaviour, online safety and responsible use of technology are everybody's responsibility. By working together, we can ensure that St. Mary's remains a safe, respectful and nurturing environment for all pupils and staff.

3. POLICY SCOPE

This policy is a guide to all staff, including teachers, governors, and non-teaching staff. This policy meets the requirements of section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, and the Department for Education (DfE)'s mobile phone guidance and behaviour guidance. Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy is Keeping Children Safe in Education.

4. POLICY AIMS

At St Mary's, our policy aims to:

- Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones, where applicable
- Provide clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers

- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes

Please note, throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices or technology including smart watches.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are required to actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every year, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

6. USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND SMART DEVICES BY STAFF

6.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone during the school day, while children are present or in child-accessible spaces. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom). This includes through use of smart watches and other personal internet-enabled devices.

Staff should leave their mobile phone at home, in the car, in the school office, in their bag or in the staff room.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

- In the event of a medical appointment or phone call from a doctor

The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 0121 464 2141 as a point of emergency contact.

6.2 Use of Smart Watches by Staff

Smart watches that are not camera enabled may be worn in school and should be kept on 'airplane mode' (disabling wireless communication capabilities).

6.3 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Gemini).

6.4 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson / school trip / activity, this must be done using school equipment.

6.5 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones or a similar device during the school day in front of pupils for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations or situations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct

- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

6.6 School Mobile Phone

The school has a mobile phone to be used for work purposes only.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use the school mobile phone, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use school mobile phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving messages or other communications, or using the internet.
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

6.7 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

7. USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND SMART DEVICES BY PUPILS

At St Mary's, there is an expectation that the school will be a mobile phone-free environment by default.

Pupils do not normally bring mobile phones to school but it is acknowledged that Year 6 pupils may wish to bring a device to school, particularly when they are able to walk home in the Summer Term. With that in mind, the school is adopting the approach that all pupil mobile phones must be handed in to the school office for safe storage during the school day. Once handed in, pupil mobile phones cannot be accessed again until the end of the school day e.g.: 3:30pm (or earlier by arrangement/agreement with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher).

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones and encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

7.1 School Trips and Residential

Pupil mobile phones are not permitted on school trips or residential.

7.2 Use of Mobile Phones to Support Medical Needs

If there are pupils with specific medical needs and mobile phones are used to support their care e.g.: a diabetic pupil who uses continuous glucose monitoring systems that connect to

a smart device, the use of the mobile phone in that instance will be considered on a case by case basis by the Headteacher and/or Deputy Headteacher.

7.3 Use of Smart Watches by Pupils

Smartwatches (wristwatches with smart technology in them) are not permitted to be worn by pupil in school, whether they are connected to a mobile phone or not.

7.4 Sanctions

If a pupil is found in possession of a mobile phone on school premises, where appropriate, the appropriate sanction will apply under the school's behaviour and relationship policy.

Staff do have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation, providing there is a good reason to do so. A search will only be undertaken with the express permission of the Headteacher and/or Deputy Headteacher.

8. USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND SMART DEVICES BY PARENTS/CARERS, VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means not using their mobile phone in the school building, when working with pupils or while children are present. Specifically, this includes no photography or recording of school concerts, performances, workshops or events when on the school site.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at the school office or attend an event at school.

Parents/carers must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the school day.

8.1 Work Experience Students

Work experience students will be asked to hand their mobile phones into the school office on arrival and can retrieve them when they leave the building. These volunteers will also be asked to turn their smart watches on 'airplane mode' (disabling wireless communication capabilities) and these devices must be non-camera enabled.

8.2 School Trips and Residential Visits

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers

- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil

9. LOSS, THEFT OR DAMAGE

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that their phones are brought immediately to the school office before going to their classrooms. Their phones will be stored in a locked cupboard during the school day. Pupils must also secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions.

Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

Any lost phones should be handed to the school office who will attempt to contact the owner.

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority and any other relevant organisations