

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Use of Mobile Phones and Devices Policy



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1. Introduction and aims

For the purposes of this policy, the definition for mobile phones / devices includes: smart phones, tablets, ipods, digital and non-digital cameras and other such portable devices (that can be used to take images, send messages, and make voice / video calls).

At St Mary's we recognise that mobile phones / devices are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use

- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers

- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to online safety, 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

- Potential for lesson disruption

- Risk of theft, loss, or damage

- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

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2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

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 head teacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every 3 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phones (and devices, including cameras)

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones / devices must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room).

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

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

The 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 (01452 714053) as a point of emergency contact.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones / devices to process personal data (relating to school), or any other confidential school information.

See the Data Protection policy.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents 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 or pupils.

Staff must not communicate with pupils over messaging app or social media

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

3.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones / devices for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Responding to work emails
- Administering / monitoring home learning activities (via Seesaw).
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Emergency evacuations

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In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones / devices 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 / devices to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office. If it is necessary to contact a parent directly then the staff member should ensure their number is not visible (using the appropriate pre-dial code).

3.5 Sanctions

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

4. Use of mobile phones / devices by pupils

Pupils should not bring mobile phones / devices to school. The only circumstances in which it is acceptable to bring a mobile phone to school would be:

- If they are travelling to school by themselves
- If they are not being collected by their parent/carer and will be staying away from home, overnight (e.g. sleepovers, separated parents etc.)

In these cases, parents must request permission (via email / in writing) for the child to bring mobile phone in to school.

If a pupil is given permission to bring their mobile phone in to school, they must hand in the phone to their class teacher at the start of the day. The class teacher will store the phone securely and return it to the pupil when the pupil leaves school. Pupils must not store mobile phones in their bags or access/use their mobile phones within the school buildings or grounds.

4.1 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy then their parent/carer will be notified, their mobile phone confiscated (and returned to the parent/carer directly) and an appropriate sanction issued within the scope of the school behaviour policy.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

5. Use of mobile phones / devices by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, 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 taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event (such as a school fayre), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone / devices use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

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

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

Parents 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 his/her personal mobile during the school day.

6. Loss, theft or damage

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones / devices 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.

7. Monitoring and review

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

- Feedback from parents and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations