

Mobile phone policy 2026-2027

St Mary's C of E Primary



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1. Introduction and aims

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

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

This policy also refers to all mobile phones and smart or wearable technology, including: smart watches, smart glasses (e.g. Meta Ray-Ban or similar devices) , tablets and any device capable of audio recording, video recording, image capture or live streaming.

2. Relevant guidance

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](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 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 is responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it annually 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.

3.2 Governors/Local School Board

This policy will be shared with the LSB members on the Governor Hub and shared at the first LSB meeting for them to note the policy.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default: anything other than this should be by exception only.

4.1 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 / during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present including the staffroom, the kitchen in the afterschool club room, the school office, after school club at break time/lunch time when there are no children present, the school office when no children are present, the learning mentor's room when no children are present and the SLT room when there are no children present.

Staff may use phones in their classrooms before, and after, the school day so long as children are not present in the classrooms.

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

Staff will be expected to take the private/emergency call in one of the above listed areas.

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 : 0114 2344461 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 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).

Please also see the data protection policy or ICT acceptable use policy.

4.3 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.

This also includes any messaging apps such as Class Dojo. Staff must not give out their private contact details to parents/carers or pupils. Please also refer to our ICT acceptable use and online safety policies.

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 by using the class iPad.

4.4 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:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits. Staff should take the school mobile phone to communicate to parents when on a residential or send communications via the school office. Emergency contact with school when on a school trip.

If a staff member uses their personal mobile phone; in these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct and not directly with the children present.
- If used in a first aid emergency when a phone call needs to be made to the emergency services, on the school ground. Children/remaining class must always be removed safely from the situation with a qualified staff member.
- 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

4.5 Work phones

School has a mobile phone which can be taken by teaching staff on trips and residential.

Staff must:

- Only use school phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails 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

4.6 Sanctions

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

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

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

The DfE's mobile phone guidance says that the use of mobile phones is prohibited throughout the school day.

Pupils must not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

- If a child brings in a mobile phone, because they walk home alone, for example, they must not use the phone at all on the school premises and hand their phone in straight to the office upon arrival.
- At the end of the school day, children can collect their phones from the school office. The phones must not be switched on until the pupil is off the school playground. If this is not followed, a ban from bringing in a mobile phone may be put in place.
- Breakfast Club Staff - Staff collect mobile phones on arrival and put them directly in the school office
- If a pupil is diabetic and uses continuous glucose monitoring systems that connect to a smart device this will be recorded on their health care plan.

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Pupils will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's statutory [mobile phones guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

- Pupils may not wear smartwatches with the internet, messaging or camera features during the school day. This is because they may cause distraction, risk photo privacy and make it hard for teachers to monitor fair use.

5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances:

Some pupils will be permitted to possess, or use, a mobile phone/smart device in school
For instance:

- Young carers who need to be contactable
- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood glucose levels

The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. Permission will only be granted where there is a documented safeguarding or medical necessity. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the headteacher@JBurgess@sma.dsat.education

Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's [code of conduct / acceptable use agreement] for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

5.3 Sanctions

- Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. If a phone is confiscated, a parent or responsible adult for the child can collect the phone from the school office on the same day as the confiscation has taken place. Headteachers can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the [DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools](#))
- Staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows you to search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs (SEN), disability)
- The pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). This will include speaking with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy, who will consider if pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care, is appropriate

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

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

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 taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's at a public event (such as a school fair), 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 when they visit school for example in Fab Finishes, assemblies, sports day, when working with pupils or while children are present

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school. Parents will be asked to take any phone calls in the regulation room or go outside the school to take any calls.

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

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

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.

If a parent needs to use their phone during a school trip they are asked to do this away from all of the children and let the supervising adult know that they need to use their phone for a communication.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that their phones are appropriately labelled, ready to be stored away securely in the drawer of the school office.

Pupils must 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.

All schools continue with:

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.

As a school; we have signs to say that we are a no mobile phone school. We will:

- Put signs up in the school entrance
- Put a notice on any assembly power point reminding parents not to use their mobile phone during the performance and then to not take a photograph of any one other than their child unless permission is granted from another parent.
- Include a disclaimer in our home-school agreement
- Provide a copy of your policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents/carers

If an item has to be confiscated the confiscated item phone will be stored in the school office, in the mobile phone drawer, until the confiscated item is collected by the responsible adult. A member of the SLT, or the school office, will place the confiscated device in the office drawer. A recoding sheet will be in place, in the drawer, so that two members of staff can sign to say a confiscated item has been placed in the drawer, and then signed again to say the item has been removed when the collecting adult collects the item.

Schools that confiscate phones from pupils become responsible for the phone and can be held responsible for loss, theft or damage. Adapt the statement above to explain where and how confiscated phones will be stored and who is responsible for them.

All schools continue with:

Any lost phones should be returned to the school office staff. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. 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

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, please bring to the attention of the headteacher.

This policy will be shared on Governor Hub for the LSB members to note.

9. Appendix 1: [Code of conduct / acceptable use agreement] for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

[Pupil Code of conduct / acceptable use agreement]

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You must hand your phone in to the school office, straight away in the morning. Phones should be switched off on Cundy Street or Burgoyne Road.
2. The office will store the phones in the office drawer. At the end of the day, please collect your phone. Please don't switch it on until you have left the school yard and are on Burgoyne Road or Cundy Street.
3. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils.
4. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
5. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
6. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the school's [behaviour policy]. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
7. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence. For instance, by 'sexting'.
8. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
9. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
10. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
11. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

Use this form if you don't normally allow pupils to bring their phones to school, but are granting an exception. It should be signed by parents/carers.

PUPIL DETAILS	
Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	

The school has agreed to allow _____] to bring [their] mobile phone to school because they:

List the appropriate reasons here. We've listed some common reasons below (you can delete as required):

- Travel to and from school alone
- Are a young carer
- Need the phone to support their medical needs
- Attend a before or after-school activity where a mobile phone might be needed to contact parents/carers

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its [code of conduct / acceptable use agreement].

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature : _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the school office where you can use the KS1 yard if there are no children present to use your phone. If you are upstairs, for example, in the hall and you need to step out to use your phone in an emergency – you may use the Learning Mentor room and will be escorted by a member of staff, or the reintegration room on the ground floor or the SLT room if there are no children present
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present while you are visiting for an assembly, presentation or Fab Finish etc...

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office. Please ask the office if you would like a printed copy.

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