



St Mary's RC Primary School

Mobile Phone, Devices & Smart Watch Policy

Agreed by Governing Board June 2026

Policy will be reviewed by June 2027

This policy provides clear guidance on the use of mobile phones in school by both staff and pupils.

Introduction and Aims

At St Mary's RC Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the working day, and which are most susceptible to misuse - including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

However, as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices.

Please note, where mobile phones are referenced, it is used to include other devices such as iPads/tablets or wearable technology such as smart watches.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Pupil Mobile Phone Summary
- Staff Handbook

Camera Mobile Phones and Wearable Technology such as Smart Phones

Camera mobile phones are becoming increasingly popular, and a built-in digital camera enables users to take high resolution pictures. These can be sent instantly to other mobile phone users or email addresses. They can also be posted on the internet or in chat rooms. There is a potential for camera mobile phones to be misused in schools. They can become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils or/and teachers.

The use of Smart Watches is only permitted in school if mobile phones have been switched off. It is not appropriate to be communicating through a SMART watch during the school day.

Staff Policy

Staff are allowed to bring their phones to school, but they are only permitted to use them in areas such as the staff room, where no children are present. Mobile phones should be switched off during the school day and placed in the staffroom or school offices.

We understand that due to the two-factor authenticator security linked to work accounts, there may be times where some staff are needing to use their mobile phone within school time and on occasion around pupils. This is to be in a

professional manner, away from children where possible and the device to be put back into the staff room/ office when used.

Staff use of mobile phones during their working day should be:

- outside of their contracted hours
- discreet and appropriate eg: not in the presence of pupils

- Mobile phones, devices or wearable technology such as Smart Watches should be switched off left in a safe, locked place during lesson times. The school cannot take responsibility for items that are lost or stolen.
- Staff should **never** contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, they should use the school telephone in the office or staff room.
- Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.
- With regard to camera phones, a member of staff should never use their phone to photograph a pupil or allow themselves to be photographed by pupils.
- This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff, the pupils, the whole school and the Local Authority. Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy is likely to result in the enforcement of the Whistleblowing policy and associated procedures.
- Staff are only allowed to wear smart watches within school if they are not connected to mobile phones and if the camera function is switched off.

Mobile Phones for work related purposes

We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities.

However, staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).
- Personal mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office or if on a residential visit and the communication needs to take place out of school hours, using the school mobile phone away from the children.
- Where parents are accompanying trips, they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children.
- School has one mobile phone that staff can take in the case of emergency (e.g. Grab Bag and emergency evacuation from site), or on school visits. This is located in the office drawers. This is to be signed in and out by the school admin team. Staff can take photos on this phone in line with GDPR regulations and parental permissions, but they need to be uploaded onto the school system immediately after returning to school. They should then be deleted from the device.

Parents, visitors (including contractors) or volunteers

When parents, visitors or volunteers sign into school, they are asked if they have any mobile devices (including SMART watches). They are then asked to either place them in the office or secure them in their vehicles. This is to keep our children as safe as we can.

Adults either in school or accompanying children on school trips should not use their mobile phones or use them to take pictures of pupils unless it is at a public event such as Sports Day, Christmas performances or summer fayre and of their own children.

Adults, visitors or volunteers in school should only use their mobile phone within the confines of the school office or staff room. Personal cameras and mobile phone cameras should not be used to take pictures of children or information about children. Parents who accompany children on a school trip will not be asked by the teacher to take photos as a record of the educational visit, staff will do this instead on a school device. Parents accompanying children on school trips should not use their mobile cameras, tablets or wearable devices to take pictures of children.

Where possible, we would prefer Parents to put their phones away when entering the school grounds.

Pupil Policy

While we acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone or Smart Watch or other types of wearable technology to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision, St Mary's RC Primary School **discourages** pupils bringing mobile phones to school due to the potential issues raised above. The same applies to iPads or other tablets.

We recognise that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks. This access means some children, while at our setting sexually harass, bully, and control others, via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually and view and share pornography and other harmful content.

We will require parents to fill in a permission slip to allow children to bring mobile phones to school (for the purposes of safety whilst travelling to and from school or moving between different parental homes).

Children's mobile phones must be taken directly to the school office where they will be stored securely during the school day, the phone must be switched off and will remain off. Children are only permitted to switch on their phones at the school gate as they leave.

When a child needs to bring a phone into school, a permission slip (Appendix 1) must be signed by the parent and the phone must be left in the school office at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day. Devices should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own. Devices should be turned off before handing in. Parents are advised that St Mary's RC Primary School accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones and other smart devices which are brought into school or school grounds.

The school has the right to confiscate or search a mobile phone. In the unlikely event of needing to do this, we will endeavour to contact a parent or carer. As part of this agreement, your child should agree to unlock the phone if required by a member of staff.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone, the phone will be confiscated from the pupil, handed to a member of the office team who will record the name of the pupil and attach it to the phone. The mobile phone will be stored in the school office. The pupil may collect the phone at the end of the school day. A letter will be sent home to parents requesting that a permission slip be returned the next day.

If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone, tablet or smart watch of either other pupils or teachers, the device will be confiscated, and this will be regarded as a serious offence.

If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the device will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a senior teacher.

Should a pupil be found to be using their phone or devices inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege. We ask that parents talk to their children about the appropriate use of text messages and images as they can often be used to bully pupils. Should parents need to contact pupils during the school day, this should be done via the usual school procedure of contacting the school office via phone or email.

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Mobile Phone, Devices and Smart Watch Policy Parental Consent Form

Dear Parent/Carer,

In accordance with our Mobile phone, Devices and Smart Watches policy, if your child **needs** to bring in a mobile phone or Smart Watch to school on a regular basis, please could you sign the form below to give your permission for your child to do this and remind them of our school policy.

- Your child must bring their device to the school office first thing in the morning before they go their classroom. **It must be switched off**
- The school bears no responsibility for the loss or damage to a mobile phone, tablet or Smart Watch
- Your child's phone should be appropriately marked so that they can recognise it
- Should your child be found using their phone, device or smart watch inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring them into school. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Claire Halstead

Executive Head teacher

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PARENTAL CONSENT

I/we give permission for our child (name)

..... in Year

to bring their mobile phone into school.

Please name the type of
device.....

We have read the policy and understand its implications.

Signed

Name (please use capitals)

.....Date.....

PLEASE RETURN PERMISSION SLIP TO ST MARY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL OFFICE.