

Mobile phone policy

St Mark's Catholic Primary School



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"With Jesus, live life to the full"
cf. John 10:10

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1. Introduction and aims

At St. Mark's we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, 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 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

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

2.2 Governors

A link Governor is involved in monitoring and reviewing this policy with the Headteacher.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phones (including smart phones/watches)

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/during contact time. Mobile phones/watches should be switched off/on silent in bags or cupboards. 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 staff room). **Only, on duty SLT are permitted to have use of a mobile phone where necessary/appropriate.**

There may be circumstances in which it's 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

Upon request, the headteacher will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01473 601748 as a point of emergency contact.

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 use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which 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.

3.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- 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 which could identify a pupil
- Where possible refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office
- Under extenuating circumstances Teaching Staff will ensure that their caller ID is hidden when contacting parents/carers

3.5 Work phones

In some circumstance staff may be required to use school mobile phones for work purposes.

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

Staff must:

- Only use 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.

3.6 Sanctions

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

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

4. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils are not permitted to use phones at school under any circumstances, however, there are instances where children may need to bring a mobile phone to school e.g.

- If they are travelling to or from school by themselves

- If they are not staying at home that evening e.g. with a friend or family member

If children need to bring a mobile phone to school, it must be handed into the school office as soon as they arrive, and collected when they leave via main reception.

Pupils must adhere to the school's Acceptable Use Agreement (see Online Safety Policy) and complete Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school (see appendix 1).

4.1 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy.

- The phones will be confiscated (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#))
- Parents will be asked to collect the phone
- Sanctions will be decided upon with regard to the school's Behaviour Policy
- Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows school staff to search a pupil's phone if the school has reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

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
- 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 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 without permission
- 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 use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

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.

When signing in on arrival to the school, parents, volunteers and visitors must agree to and adhere to the Visitor Statement of Confidentiality & Use of mobile phones in our school statement displayed at Reception. (see appendix 2)

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, and are handed in and collected from mobile phone box/tray at the staffed school gate which will be stored in the school office during the school day.

Pupils must secure their 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.

We will make sure pupils and parents are aware of the disclaimer above:

- Put signs up in the school entryway or office
- Include disclaimers in your permission forms for bringing a phone to school
- Provide a copy of this policy on our school website

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office. Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

7. 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 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

8. Appendix 1: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

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

The school has agreed to allow the above pupil to bring his/her mobile phone to school because he/she:

- Is travelling to or from school by themselves
- Is not staying at home that evening e.g. with a friend or family member
- Is a young carer

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and Acceptable Use Agreement

The school reserves the right revoke permission if pupils don't abide by the policy.

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.

Parent signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	

9. Appendix 2:

Visitor Statement of Confidentiality & Use of mobile phones in our school

All visitors and volunteers are required to review the following statement relating to confidentiality. By signing in today you agree to abide by this statement.

I recognise that, during the course of my visit today, at certain times I may have access to a range of personal information.

I agree to only discuss information relating to St Mark's school and its stakeholders on a 'need to know' basis and I agree not to post or share information online through any means, including all areas of social media (for example Facebook, X, BlueSky or Instagram) which relates to any individual stakeholders or brings the school into disrepute.

I agree to

- keep my mobile phone/smart watch on silent ~~vibrate while on the school grounds~~ and place in the classroom cupboards
- not to use my phone where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the school office

I will not

- take photos or recordings of pupils or staff
- use my phone in lessons, or when working with pupils

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.

Should I have any questions or concerns regarding this I understand that I should speak to the school office/headteacher.

