



SJF POLICY 23-24

Mobile Phones in School



ST CLARE

Catholic Multi Academy Trust

VISION & MISSION



Our vision is that every single member of our community will love, learn and grow together.

This is achieved by:

- Celebrating what we are good at
- Challenging ourselves and doing our very best in our work
- Loving and respecting ourselves and each other
- Knowing that we are loved for being just how God made us
- Accepting that everyone is special



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1. Introduction and aims

At St John Fisher Voluntary Catholic Academy we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones and smart watches are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set 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
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

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

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's non-statutory [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 responsible for consistently 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 safeguarding team (Mrs MM Barrett) responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, 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.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

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, 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 such as the staffroom.

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

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

In these instances, mobile phones should be left with the office staff who will locate the staff member immediately.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 0114 2485009 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 Bard).

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. (see acceptable use policy)

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

4.4 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:

- To issue homework, rewards or sanctions
- To use multi-factor authentication (CPOMS)
- 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



- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4.5 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

Pupils will be educated regarding the safe and appropriate use of mobile and smart technology, including mobile phones and personal devices, and will be made aware of behaviour expectations and consequences for policy breaches.

Safe and appropriate use of mobile and smart technology will be taught to pupils as part of an embedded and progressive safeguarding education approach using age-appropriate sites and resources. Further information is contained within our child protection, online safety and relevant specific curriculum policies.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

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 smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

Smart watches that allow emails, phone calls, text messaging or voice messaging are not permitted on site for pupils.

5.2 Exceptions

Personal mobile or smart technology devices are not permitted on site for pupils.

St John fisher will allow children to bring a personal device or mobile phone in extenuating circumstances only, after discussion with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher

- Pupils travelling to school by themselves
- Young carers who need to be contactable
- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar

In this case, devices should be turned off and handed into the school office in the morning where the device will be kept secure. They can then be collected at the end of day.

- If a pupil needs to contact their parents or carers whilst on site, This will be done through the school office.
- Where pupils' personal mobile or smart technology devices are used when learning at home, this will be in accordance with our Acceptable Use Policy and Remote Learning AUP.

Mobile phones in school will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, parents/carers should contact the school office.



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

If pupil's break the acceptable use agreement:

- Mobile phones or smartwatches will be confiscated. (under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- Confiscated items can only be collected by the parent or guardian who signed the acceptable use agreement and permissions for bringing phones to school will be revoked.

5.4

Electronic devices, including mobile phones, can contain files or data which relate to an offence, or which may cause harm to another person. This includes, but is not limited to, abusive messages, images or videos, or evidence relating to suspected criminal behaviour. Where there are any concerns regarding pupils' use of mobile or smart technology or policy breaches, they will be dealt with in accordance with our existing policies, including anti-bullying, child protection, online safety and behaviour.

- If deemed to be necessary and appropriate, searches of personal mobile or smart technology devices may be carried out in accordance with our behaviour policy and the DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' guidance.
- Staff will respond in line with our child protection policy and follow the most appropriate safeguarding response if they find images, data or files on a pupil's electronic device that they reasonably suspect are likely to put a person at risk.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead or DDSL (online) will always be informed of any searching incidents where authorised members of staff have reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of prohibited items, as identified in our behaviour policy.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead or DDSL (Online) will be involved without delay if staff believe a search of a pupil's personal mobile or smart technology device has revealed a safeguarding risk.
- In exceptional circumstances and in accordance with our behaviour policy and the DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' guidance, the headteacher or authorised members of staff may examine or erase data or files if there is a good reason to do so:
 - In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to examine images, data or files, the Headteacher or an authorised member of staff will need to reasonably suspect that the images, data or files on the device has been, or could be used, to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.
 - In determining whether there is a 'good reason' to erase any images, data or files from the device, the member of staff should consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence. In those instances, the data or files should not be deleted, and the device must be handed to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable
- If there is suspicion that data or files on a pupil's personal mobile or smart technology device may be illegal, or may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the device will be



handed over to the police for further investigation

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, 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 Part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

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:

- 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/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, or when working with pupils- phones must be left at the school office or in the staffroom

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.

A copy of this policy is available through the school website and paper copies at the school office.

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

- Use their phones while in attendance of the children- this includes travelling and while working with a group.
- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which 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.

7. Loss, theft or damage

All pupils, staff, Governors, parents and visitors to the school bring mobile equipment at their own risk. St John Fisher Voluntary Academy does not accept any liability for lost or damaged phones.

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must ensure that the phones are appropriately labelled and are stored in the correct box in the 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.

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.

All pupils and parents/carers are aware of the disclaimer above through

- the signed acceptable use policy
- signs up in the school entryway or office

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a secure location/locked cabinet.

Lost phones should be returned to Mrs L. Ramsden/ The school office. 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 of 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, these should be brought to the attention of Mrs MM Barrett in a timely manner.



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

Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement

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

1. Phones must be switched off before you enter the school premises including the school playground (not just put on 'silent').
2. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
3. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you do not know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
4. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
5. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
6. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you are not in school.
7. 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.
8. Don't use your phone to view or share harmful content.
9. 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

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:

- 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 is required for the activity, or 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 revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by the policy.

Parent/carer signature: _____

Pupil signature (where appropriate): _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by:	
Date:	



11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

- 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 Staff Room. Phones should be left here or at the school office
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff

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.

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