

# Mobile phone policy

## St Walburga's Catholic Primary School



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## 1. Introduction and aims

At St Walburga's Catholic Primary School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, 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, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers 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.

## 3. Use of mobile phones by staff

### 3.1 Personal mobile phones

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 or 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'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

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 01202 528811 as a point of emergency contact.

### **3.2 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).

### **3.3 Safeguarding**

Staff must refrain from giving 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. For further information on this, please refer to our Social Networking Policy.

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

### **3.5 Work phones**

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school 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**

Older pupils (Year 4 and above) who walk to or from school unaccompanied may bring a mobile phone to school for use on while travelling.

The phone must be handed in to the class teacher at the start of the school day, and will be stored securely until the end of the day. Pupils must not keep their phones in their lockers or bags.

Pupils must adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

## 4.1 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy, they may forfeit the right to bring their phone into school. Parents will be contacted and may be asked to come into school to collect the phone, depending on the nature of the breach.

School 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 you to search a pupil's phone if you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

## 5. 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 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

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/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 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 4 above.

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 his/her personal mobile during the school day.

## 6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled and are stored securely when not in use.

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.

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 of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers 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



## Mobile phone - Acceptable Use Agreement



**Note to parent/ carer:** The school has agreed to allow your child to bring his/her mobile phone to school because they travel to and/or from school alone.

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.

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

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

1. You must hand your phone in to your class teacher at the start of the school day.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's passwords or access codes with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone.
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be criminal.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment, and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. Don't use bad language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone to view or unpleasant images or other harmful content.
12. 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.

<b>Pupil name:</b>	
<b>Year group/class:</b>	
<b>Parent/carer(s) name(s):</b>	

Parent/carer signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil signature: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
<b>Authorised by:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	