



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
part of
The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust



Mobile Phone Policy

Owner: Mrs A Hinton (Headteacher)
Approved by: Mrs G Spencer (Chair of Governors)
Date approved: Summer 2026
Next review date: Autumn 2029



Introduction and purpose

- This policy sets out St Joseph's Catholic Primary School's approach to the possession and use of mobile phones and other personal communication devices (including smart watches, tablets and similar devices) by pupils, staff, visitors and contractors while on the school site or during school-led activities.
- It supports the school's mission: "Each one of us has been created by God for a special purpose and is therefore uniquely special," and promotes a calm, focused learning environment that supports safety, wellbeing and inclusive practice.
- It reflects UK statutory guidance and best practice for schools, including Keeping Children Safe in Education, the Department for Education guidance on mobile phones in schools (June 2026), the DfE guidance on communicating mobile phone policies to parents (June 2026), and the school's whole-school behaviour and safeguarding arrangements.
- It also aligns with the school's obligations under data protection law (UK GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018) with regard to images and recordings and supports the school's online safety and safeguarding aims.

Policy aims

- Minimise distraction and disruption to learning and to the social, physical and mental wellbeing of pupils.
- Protect pupils from potential online harms and reduce risks associated with cyberbullying, sharing of inappropriate images, sexting, and unsafe contact.
- Provide a clear, consistent, transparent approach for staff, pupils, parents/carers and visitors.
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are made for pupils who require access to a device for medical reasons, safeguarding or other agreed needs.
- Ensure that the school can communicate with pupils quickly and reliably in line with safeguarding procedures.

Scope

- This policy applies to:
 - All pupils (Reception to Year 6).
 - All staff (teaching and non-teaching), governors, volunteers, contractors, and visitors.
 - School site, school transport where provided by the school or Trust, and all school-led activities (including trips, clubs and remote learning sessions).

Principles

- The school expects that, unless an exception has been agreed, pupils will not bring mobile phones or smart devices onto the school site.



- Where devices are permitted for specific, agreed reasons, they must be handed in and stored safely and inaccessible during the school day.
- Staff use of personal mobile phones during teaching time and in the presence of pupils is restricted to protect professional boundaries and pupil safety.
- Reasonable adjustments will be co-produced with parents and pupils where a pupil has a disability, medical condition, special educational need or specific safeguarding needs.
- Incidents involving mobile phones that may constitute safeguarding concerns will be dealt with under the school's safeguarding and behaviour policies.

Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

- Lead implementation and monitoring of this policy, ensuring consistency and proportionality.
- Decide on permissible exceptions and reasonable adjustments following consultation with parents, governors and relevant professionals. Record agreed adjustments and communicate them clearly.
- Ensure staff, pupils and parents are informed of the policy at admission and when changes are made.
- Ensure secure storage solutions for devices where appropriate (e.g. school office).
- Ensure sanctions for breaches align with the school's behaviour policy and statutory guidance.
- Ensure that safeguarding incidents linked to mobile phones are recorded and referred appropriately.

Governing Body / Trust (The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust)

- Ensure the policy is in place and reviewed regularly as part of the school's policy schedule.
- Provide oversight to ensure the policy is compliant with statutory guidance and that leaders act on safeguarding concerns.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and DDSLs

- Ensure any safeguarding incidents involving mobile phones are investigated, recorded and referred following safeguarding procedures.
- Offer guidance for staff and parents where a phone is suspected to be linked to harm (cyberbullying, sexual exploitation, sharing of indecent images, etc.).

Staff

- Model appropriate professional use of mobile phones during school hours and on school premises (see Staff section below).
- Apply the policy consistently, report breaches and support pupils and families where necessary.



- Teach pupils about safe and responsible use of technology as part of the curriculum and through assemblies and workshops.

Parents and carers

- Support the school by ensuring that pupils do not bring mobile phones to school unless an agreed reason exists.
- Co-produce reasonable adjustments where necessary and follow school procedures for collecting confiscated devices.
- Use school office channels to contact the pupil during the school day; do not contact pupils directly by mobile phone during school hours.

Pupils

- Follow the rules set out in the policy, hand in devices when required, and not attempt to bypass storage or access devices during the school day.
- Report incidents of cyberbullying, inappropriate content sharing or other concerns to a trusted adult in school.

Visitors and contractors

- Are required to follow school guidance about mobile phone use while on site; contractors must follow site-specific safeguarding and health & safety rules.

Definitions and devices covered

- Mobile phone: any device capable of communication or data capture (voice, text, internet access).
- Smartwatch: wrist-worn device with connectivity features.
- Wearable / internet-enabled device: e.g. fitness trackers, tablets, laptops.
- This policy covers all above and similar devices whether owned by the pupil, staff member, visitor or contractor.

Expectations and procedures for pupils

General rule

- Pupils must not bring mobile phones or internet-enabled devices to school unless there is an agreed exception.
- If a pupil requires a phone to travel to/from school independently (Year 5 & 6 only), the school expects parents to follow the agreed arrangements below.

Arrangements where phones are permitted (examples)

- Independent travel: pupils who walk home alone may bring a phone for safety, but must be switched off before entering the school gate and placed in the storage box upon arrival at school.



- Medical need: where a pupil requires a device to manage a medical condition (e.g., diabetes monitoring), an individual plan will be co-produced, and the device may be stored and managed by a named member of staff.
- Exceptional safeguarding reasons: agreed by Headteacher/DSL and recorded on the pupil's file.

Storage and access

- Where agreed, devices must be:
 - Turned off.
 - Placed in at the storage box which is then locked in the school office and collected at the end of the school day.
- Devices are brought to school at the owner's risk. The school is not responsible for loss, damage or theft unless negligence by the school can be demonstrated.

Confiscation and sanctions

- If a pupil is found with a device without agreement, staff will:
 - Ask for the device and keep it in a secure place (e.g. school office).
 - Record the incident on CPOMS as appropriate.
 - Return the device to a parent/carers at the end of the school day for first/low-level contraventions.
 - For repeated breaches, or for serious misuse (e.g., sharing indecent images, cyberbullying), parents will be required to collect the device, and the incident will be managed under safeguarding and behaviour policies and may result in a fixed-term exclusion in line with behaviour policy.
- Key points:
 - The school will not routinely attempt to access content on personal devices. If there is a safeguarding concern, the school may examine or erase data following the DfE guidance and in consultation with the DSL, parents and relevant authorities (police, LADO) where appropriate.
 - Photos, recordings or images of pupils or staff taken at school without consent will be treated as a safeguarding matter.

Expectations and procedures for staff

- Personal mobile phones and devices:
 - Staff must keep personal phones out of sight and on silent during teaching time and when supervising pupils.
 - Personal phones may be used during non-contact time in staff areas away from pupils.



- Staff must not use personal devices to take photos, video or audio of pupils. School devices (iPads/phones) provided for school use must be used for this purpose where necessary and must be stored and named appropriately.
 - Any use of personal devices for school business must be agreed in advance by the Headteacher.
- Professional boundaries:
 - Staff should not communicate with pupils using personal phone numbers, personal social media accounts or messaging apps. All communication will be via school channels (school email, parent app, phone lines) or agreed safeguarding platforms.
- Reporting and safeguarding:
 - Any safeguarding concerns arising from staff use of a device must be reported immediately to the Headteacher/DSL and handled in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Visitors and volunteers:
 - Volunteers and visitors will be informed of expectations on arrival and will be required to keep phones out of sight and not to take photos of pupils.

Expectations for parents and carers

- Parents should:
 - Not contact pupils by mobile phone during the school day: contact the school office in the event of an emergency.
 - Support the school's approach by ensuring pupils do not bring phones to school unless previously agreed.
 - Co-operate in reasonable adjustments for medical or safeguarding reasons by attending meetings and signing agreements recording the arrangements.
 - Collect confiscated devices from reception where required.
- The school will:
 - Communicate the policy clearly at admission and when changes occur, using multiple channels (newsletters, website, parent workshops).
 - Offer parental guidance on online safety and support (for example in collaboration with W.I.S.E and online safety resources).



Trips, wraparound care and extra-curricular activities

- The basic school rules apply for all school-led activities.
- For off-site visits: staff will set clear expectations on whether devices are permitted (for example, for contact during travel) and how they will be stored and used.
- External providers using the school site must comply with this policy and the school's safeguarding procedures.

Use of school devices and photography

- School-owned devices must be used in line with the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).
- Parental consent for school photography will be obtained at admission and periodically refreshed. For any new uses (e.g. social media), additional consent will be sought.
- Images will be stored on secure school systems and managed under data protection guidance.

Data protection and privacy

- The school respects the privacy of pupils and staff and will follow data protection law when handling images, recordings or data from devices.
- If the school needs to inspect a device for safeguarding reasons, it will do so under the guidance of the DSL, and only where necessary. If police involvement is required, the school will follow police advice regarding evidence preservation.

Safeguarding incidents, illegal activity and police involvement

- If a device is suspected to contain illegal material (e.g., indecent images, extremist content) or to be the source of a serious safeguarding incident:
 - The DSL will be informed immediately.
 - The device will be placed in a secure location and, if necessary, referred to the police.
 - The school will follow local authority and Trust safeguarding procedures and involve parents/carers unless doing so would place the pupil at increased risk.
 - The school will preserve evidence (do not reset devices, erase messages or tamper with content).

Reasonable adjustments and individual agreements

- The school will co-produce reasonable adjustments with parents and pupils where needed (medical need, SEND, safeguarding).
- Any individual agreement must be:



- Written, dated and signed by the Headteacher, parent/carers and pupil (where appropriate).
- Stored on the pupil file and reviewed termly or when circumstances change.
- Examples of reasonable adjustments:
 - A pupil with diabetes having an agreed device accessible for glucose monitoring, with clear staff responsibilities.
 - A pupil travelling home unaccompanied being allowed a simple phone handed in at reception.

Communication, training and implementation

- Consultation: when the policy is introduced or amended the school will consult with parents, pupils, staff and governors and publish the policy on the school website.
- Notification: parents and pupils will be informed in writing about the policy, expectations and consequences.
- Trial period: where implementing a new approach, the school may run trial days/weeks to support compliance and gather feedback (recommended by DfE guidance).
- Training:
 - Staff receive training on the policy, professional boundaries, and on recognising risks linked to mobile phone use (safeguarding training refreshed termly).
 - Parents will be offered guidance and workshops on online safety and managing devices at home (in partnership with W.I.S.E where appropriate).
- Curriculum: Online safety lessons and PSHE (age-appropriate) will be used to teach pupils about responsible, safe device use.
- Reinforcement: regular reminders in assemblies, newsletters and parent communications will reinforce expectations.

Monitoring, evaluation and sanctions

- The Headteacher and SLT will monitor the implementation and impact of the policy and report to governors annually.
- Records:
 - Incidents involving mobile phones will be recorded on the school CPOMS system.
 - Data will be used to identify trends (e.g. repeated misuse), to take proportionate actions and to inform improvements to practice.



- Sanctions:
 - First-time minor breaches: device confiscated and returned to parent at end of day; recorded.
 - Repeated breaches: parent meeting, longer confiscation, possible fixed-term sanction, and behaviour targets as per behaviour policy.
 - Serious misuse: follow safeguarding procedures; possible police involvement and exclusion in line with statutory guidance.

Equality impact

The school will ensure reasonable adjustments for those with protected characteristics and ensure consistent application of policy so that pupils with SEND, medical needs or other vulnerabilities are not disadvantaged.

Review

- This policy will be reviewed in line with statutory guidance changes or if incidents/trends indicate the need for revision.
- The review will include consultation with pupils, parents, staff and governors and provide opportunity for reasonable adjustments to be re-assessed.

Links and resources

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)
- DfE: Mobile phones in schools (June 2026)
- DfE: Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents (June 2026)
- NSPCC online safety resources
- W.I.S.E (Wellbeing in School Education) — local partnership support for parent workshops and pupil wellbeing