



Mobile phone and smart device policy

LAST REVIEWED: September 2025

Governor Ratification: not required

Date of next review: September 2028

St. John's Walham Green Church of England Primary School is an exciting Christian school where everyone flourishes. We celebrate difference: learning from each other, we grow into our best selves.

We enjoy the adventure, challenging each other through learning and play. We rejoice with our church and community, building for a better world. Confident in ourselves, we thrive together in care and love.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

St John's School is committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all pupils, staff and members of our school community, irrespective of race, religion/belief, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership. We believe that equal opportunity is at the heart of good educational practice and challenge any form of discrimination. All staff and governors are responsible for ensuring that we implement this policy.

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1. Introduction and aims

At St. John's Walham Green, we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, are an important part of everyday life for some of 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 Head teacher is responsible for monitoring the policy at least every 3 years, 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 for personal reasons, while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to professional activity, 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 personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- 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 0207 7315454

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. Copilot, ChatGPT and Google Bard).

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found in the school's data protection policy and ICT acceptable use policy.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps. Where staff have existing relationships with parents/carers, there must be no communication surrounding school life on social media or 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.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil where there is a suitable school alternative. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this should be done using school equipment whenever possible. On the occasion that a personal mobile phone holds any pupil information, it should be completely deleted from the device at the first opportunity.

It is necessary for staff mobile phones to have access to the school wi-fi network to enable staff to use their phones for professional use.

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 are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Registration of pupils where a school device is not present
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- 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
- Avoid using their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil where an alternative school device is available
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office. In an emergency, staff should withhold their number from the call.

On the occasion that a personal mobile phone holds pupil information, it should be completely deleted from the device at the first opportunity.

Staff will be advised to:

- Keep personal mobile and smart technology devices in a safe and secure place (locked in a locker/drawer) during lesson time.
- Keep personal mobile phones and devices switched off or set to 'silent' or 'do not disturb' modes during lesson times.
- Ensure that Bluetooth or other forms of communication, such as 'airdrop', are hidden or disabled during lesson times.
- Not use personal mobile or smart technology devices during teaching periods, unless permission has been given by SLT
- Ensure that any content brought onto site via personal mobile and smart technology devices is compatible with their professional role and our behaviour expectations.

4.5 Work phones

Staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for school trips and residential visits.

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

4.6 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 in Early Years, Key stage 1 and Lower Key Stage Two are not permitted to bring any mobile phone or smart device to school without the authorisation of the Headteacher (or class teacher in the case of a one-off or occasional requirement).
- Where a mobile phone is brought to school by a younger pupil (Nursery to Y4) regularly, it may only be used as agreed in a co-produced acceptable use plan and/or locked away in class (as is the case for pupils bringing a phone to remain in contact with a parent/carer while in the care of someone else, after school).
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 may bring a mobile phone to school.

- Pupils will not have access their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at break times and at lunchtimes (unless agreed in a co-produced acceptable use plan e.g. for a diabetic pupil who requires a phone to monitor their blood sugar levels).
- Pupils who bring a mobile phone or smart device of any kind to school, must hand it in at the point of registration.
- Pupil mobile phones are then locked away in the classroom. The class teacher or leading adult in the classroom have access to the key.
- Mobile phones and smart devices are returned to pupils at the point of dismissal by the lead adult in the classroom.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's [non-statutory mobile phone guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

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 or other smart devices are not to be brought to school. Where an agreement has been made with the Headteacher for an adaptation to this rule, the smart device will be handed in at registration, as above.
- The school may permit pupils to use a mobile phone in school, due to exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To request such permission, pupils or parents/carers should contact the Headteacher.

Any pupils who are given permission must then co-produce an acceptable use agreement with their parents/carers and the Headteacher.

5.2 Sanctions

- If a staff member suspects that a pupil is in possession of a mobile phone that has not been handed in at registration, they will notify the Headteacher who will carry out a search. Staff have the power to search for items prohibited in their behaviour policy. DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- The Headteacher may search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person) as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- If a mobile phone is found in the possession of a child without prior authorisation, it will be confiscated and returned only to the child's parent or carer after a period of confiscation of up to two weeks as permitted under [sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#))
- The phone will be kept in the safe within the school office and the parent/carers notified of the date of collection. (Headteachers can confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for the length of time they deem proportionate, according to the [DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools](#))

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:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- 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

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 that 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

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

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.

- New families to the school will be signposted to this policy
- Confiscated phones will be stored in the safe in the school office.
- Lost phones should be returned to 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 on 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 the Headteacher, in a timely manner.

9. Appendix : 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. Please keep your mobile phone out of sight of children. If you must use your phone, you may go to the Staff room or School Office
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your 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.

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