



Mobile Phone Policy

“Following the example of Jesus, together, we learn, love and respect one another to be the best we can be.”

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Introduction

At St Michael & St John's RC Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. This policy on the use of mobile phones in school and whilst with children, it has been drawn up in the best interests of pupil safety and staff professionalism.

We are committed to ensuring the safety of children in our care. We recognise that mobile phones in the school and centre have a role to play for the purpose of communication, but we are aware that casual or inappropriate use of mobile phones in school could pose a risk to children and adults.

The enhanced functions of many mobile phones are of most concern and are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. Mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

When mobile phones are misused, it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of everyone.

It can be difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile phones is, therefore, limited, regardless of their capabilities.

The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and visitors.

Please note that for the purposes of this policy, the term 'mobile phone' also covers any electronic device with the capacity to be used as a form of communication, either through the device itself or any applications stored on the device. This policy also applies to smart watches, tablets, e-readers, smart glasses, fitness trackers, wearable cameras and any device capable of recording, storing, transmitting or receiving images, video, audio or electronic communications.

Related policies

- Child Protection/Safeguarding policy
- Keeping Children safe in Education
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Educational Visits
- On line Safety Policy
- EYFS Statutory Framework

Use of mobile phones

Pupils:

- Children who walk to and from school without an accompanying adult may carry a mobile phone for safety. In these cases, children may bring a mobile phone to school but must deposit it with the class teacher at the start of the day and collect it at the end of the day. Mobile phones **MUST** be switched off before entering the playground and not switched on at the end of the day until the child has left the playground.

- Parents and carers need to be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to pupils having a mobile phone in terms of personal safety there are also some associated risks such as potential for theft, bullying and inappropriate contact, including grooming by unsuitable persons.
- We would also like to alert parents and carers to the risks that using a mobile phone has while walking to and from school. Children who are concentrating on using their phone can have reduced general safety awareness which may result in road accidents and/or injury if a child is not paying attention to their surroundings.
- Mobile phones must be deposited in a box stored in the school office, managed by the class teacher. Whilst the school will take every reasonable care, it accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure mobile phones are properly insured. It is recommended that pupil's phones are security marked and password protected.
- Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones into any other areas of the school.
- Any mobile phones discovered to have been brought into the school and not handed in to the class teacher will be confiscated immediately. Parents or carers will be asked to collect the mobile phone from the school office.
- Children are not allowed to carry mobile phones on any school trips.
- If a member of the staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone brought into school by a pupil has unsuitable material stored on it, the pupil will be required to hand over the phone immediately to a member of staff and parents or carers will be asked to collect it from a member of the senior leadership team. In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile phone may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the phone will be given to the head teacher (Designated Safeguarding Lead) for further investigation and the parent or carer asked to collect it from them.
- The school will follow DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. School staff will not intentionally access or search a pupil's personal device unless authorised and permitted by relevant legislation and safeguarding procedures.

Use of mobile phones Staff:

- Staff must have their phones on 'silent' or switched off during class time.
- Staff may not use mobile phones or make or receive calls during teaching time/meetings/duties. If there are extreme circumstances (eg. acutely sick relative) the member of staff will have discussed and agreed this with the HT and can then have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- In the event a staff member needs to make a phone call on behalf of school tasks this should be in a private room and away from the children.
- Use of phones must be limited to non-contact time when no children are present.
- Phones must be kept out of sight (eg. drawer, handbag) in classrooms and when staff are with children.
- Camera or video functions on personal mobile phones must not be used by staff to take images of children under any circumstances.

- Staff are not required to make work calls on their own phones, either mobile or landline, however, in exceptional circumstances, if this should be necessary then they are advised to use the prefix 141 before dialling the recipient's number to ensure their own number is protected.
- Staff must never store parents', carers' or children's telephone numbers on their mobile phones and staff must never give their private mobile number to parents, carers or children.
- A personal mobile phone may be taken on school trips in accordance with guidance – see 'The Use of Mobile Phones on Trips' section below.
- Phones will never be used to take photographs or videos of children or to store their personal data.
- Mobile phones should not be visible in any area where EYFS children are within school. If staff see any mobile device being used, they must ask the device to be put away immediately. If mobile phone use is essential, then a second staff member must be present and aware of what is happening.

Parents, carers and visitors

- Notices are displayed around school advising visitors, parents and carers that mobile phones are not to be used.
- We ask all parents not to use mobile phones in the school.. This includes all uses including, texting and photographing.
- Visitors and supply staff are not allowed to use mobile phones in classrooms/general areas and phones must be kept in their bags. Mobile phones can be used in the staff room.
- If a visitor, parent or carer is seen using their mobile phone, they will be asked politely to turn it off/desist from using it/remove it from children's view.
- It is recognised that many parents and carers use their mobile phone as a camera/video device to record their child at special performances e.g. class assemblies, concerts, etc. On these occasions the use of a phone is permitted for photographing/videoing only; images should only be taken by parents and carers if they include their own child and that the use of these images is for their own personal use and must not be uploaded for any internet use including Facebook or any other social networking sites or used in any form of publication unless they are solely of their own child.
- Parents and carers should be aware that sharing photographs or videos that include other children may compromise those children's privacy and safeguarding. Any publication of images on social media or online platforms should be undertaken responsibly and with consideration of data protection and safeguarding requirements.

We very much appreciate our parents' support in implementing this policy in order to keep your children/ our pupils safe.

EYFS

In the EYFS, personal mobile phones and devices must be stored securely and out of sight at all times. Personal devices must not be used in areas where children are present except in exceptional circumstances authorised by the Headteacher or senior leader.

School Trips

Carrying mobile phones on trips can help to ensure safety for all members of the school or centre party. However, it is important that the following guidance is adhered to in order to keep children safe and protect staff and volunteers from accusations of inappropriate use:

- The party leader should carry the school mobile phone for use in contacting other staff members or volunteers on the trip, contacting school.
- Members of staff and volunteers may carry their own, personal mobile phones within the following guidelines:
- Personal phones should only be used to contact staff members or volunteers on the trip. If possible, these calls should be made away from children.
- Personal phones should not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of a trip. This means that personal calls or texts should not be made or accepted. On residential trips this will apply while the member of staff or volunteer is on duty. Staff and volunteers should ensure that next of kin are provided with the school mobile number so that in an emergency the campus is contacted and will make contact with the relevant person through the party leader.
- If it becomes necessary for a member of staff or volunteer to make a personal call or text, then the party leader or another member of staff should be informed and take responsibility for the pupils in the group while the call or text is made away from sight and sound of any pupils.
- Personal mobile phones must not be used under any circumstances to take photographs or videos of pupils. Volunteers are acting role models for the duration of the trip and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including their own child, using a mobile phone or any other mobile device, e.g. camera or tablet, without the express permission of the party leader. Volunteers may be asked to take photographs of their group using a school or centre device – this must be passed back to the party leader at the end of the trip.
- The party leader may ask volunteers to provide them with their mobile phone number for the duration of the trip so that they can be contacted in case of emergency. The party leader undertakes to ensure that these numbers are not held on any mobile device or in any written form after the end of the trip.
- It is advised that if the party leader is using his or her own mobile phone, then if they need to contact anyone during the trip they do so by pre-dialling 141 (some mobile providers use a different prefix – staff are advised to check this with their provider) before the number so that their own number remains protected.

Walkie-Talkie Units

- Walkie-talkie units are used routinely throughout the lunchtime period as part of our schools' safeguarding measures. The units are primarily used to support staff on duty at lunchtimes or staff in wider school areas alone e.g. Forest School or PE on the field. However, they may also be used in the event of emergencies such as fire, violent or aggressive incidents, urgent medical care etc.

Using the units

- All staff receive training on using the handsets and information which can be given over the airwaves. This training is completed as part of the induction process. All staff are reminded that: NO CONVERSATION IS PRIVATE
- First Names only are used to be broadcast over the airwaves. Full names are never to be used or any other 'personally identifiable information' such as addresses, phone numbers etc. Information must be as brief as possible.

- The units are for brief communication.
- The units are only to be used for professional use within the school.
- All staff must press the plain black side button and wait for a few seconds prior to sending a message. (Channel 1 used)
- All units are checked prior to use to ensure a clear line.

Locations & Maintenance of the units

- There are 6 walkie-talkie units in school. The charging units are located in the main office and the units must be returned to the school office after use and placed in the charging units.
- These can be used for PE/Playground duties and must be signed out and back in at lunchtime – one of these units should be left in the office with a staff member or with SLT.
- The bursar is responsible for charging the walkie talkies.
- Batteries should last all day and unit should be charged overnight.
- The units should not be taken off school grounds.

Emergency Duty List

- At least one member of staff need to be 'on call' to support on-duty staff. This would normally include one member of Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Reporting of Incidents

- Any incidents/concerns involving mobile phones with children should be recorded on CPOMs and the Designated Safeguarding Lead informed (Head Teacher).

This policy should be read in conjunction with our school e safety policy and the DFE guidance - Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Monitoring and breaches

Any breach of this policy by staff, volunteers, contractors or visitors will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action, referral to external agencies, removal from site, or termination of agreements as appropriate.

Safeguarding concerns arising from misuse of mobile technology will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.