



## St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

### Mobile Phone Policy September 2025

#### 1. Policy Purpose and Rationale

##### 1.1 Introduction

This Mobile Phone Policy sets out the school's approach to the use of mobile phones and similar devices by pupils, staff, visitors and contractors. It aims to create a safe and positive learning environment that supports effective teaching, respects privacy, and upholds the welfare and safeguarding of pupils.

The Department for Education (DfE) advises that "schools should prohibit the use of mobile phones during the school day" to reduce distractions and improve behaviour (Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff, 2022). This policy is designed to support that aim by providing clear expectations.

This policy is also designed to contribute to our safeguarding responsibilities as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2023) and aligns with our Behaviour Policy and Online Safety Policy.

##### 1.2 Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy is underpinned by the following national guidance and statutory requirements:

- DfE, *Behaviour in Schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff*(2022)
- DfE, *Searching, Screening and Confiscation at School* (2022)
- DfE, *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2023)
- The Education Act 2011 – providing powers to search pupils for prohibited items including mobile phones

The school is committed to following these policies in ensuring that mobile phones are managed safely, fairly and consistently for all members of the school community.

#### 2. Scope of the Policy

##### 2.1 Who the Policy Applies To

This policy applies to:

- All pupils enrolled at the school
- All school staff, including teaching and support staff
- Parents and carers of pupils
- Visitors and contractors while on school premises

##### 2.2 Types of Mobile Devices Covered

This policy applies to all mobile phones and devices with similar functions, including:



- Smartphones
- Feature phones
- Smartwatches and wearable technology with communication capability
- Tablets or e-readers connected to the internet
- Any other portable device with recording, messaging, or internet-browsing capabilities

### 3. Principles and Values

#### 3.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection

The misuse of mobile phones can present safeguarding risks, including exposure to inappropriate content, bullying, exploitation, or image sharing. The school has a duty to protect children from harm, and our approach to mobile phones reflects this. The policy contributes to the safeguarding aims set out in KCSIE (2023) by limiting opportunities for child-on-child abuse and inappropriate online activity.

Mobile phone use is strictly prohibited in areas where children may be vulnerable, such as toilets, changing rooms, and other areas where pupils' privacy must be respected.

#### 3.2 Teaching and Learning

Mobile phones are a known source of distraction. To promote academic focus, resilience, and respect within lessons, mobile phones will not be used by pupils during the school day, unless specifically authorised by a teacher for a learning activity.

The DfE states that "pupils' use of mobile phones in schools can have a detrimental impact on learning and lead to increased incidents of poor behaviour" (DfE Behaviour guidance, 2022). This policy supports our aim to foster an environment where teaching and learning can proceed without interruption.

#### 3.3 Equity and Inclusion

The policy is designed to avoid placing any pupil at a disadvantage. By minimising the prominence of mobile phones in school life, we reduce inequality between students who may or may not have access to the latest technology. Exceptions for pupils with special educational needs, disabilities, or medical needs (e.g. use of health apps) will be managed individually with parent, pupil, and staff consultation to ensure equitable decisions are made.

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

#### 4.1 Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for:

- Implementing and reviewing this policy
- Ensuring consistency in how the policy is applied
- Monitoring incidents related to mobile phones and taking appropriate action
- Providing clarity to staff, parents and pupils on the expectations outlined in this policy

#### 4.2 Teaching and Support Staff

All staff are expected to:



- Enforce the policy consistently and fairly
- Challenge inappropriate use of mobile phones
- Model professional mobile phone use during the school day
- Record and report incidents involving misuse as appropriate
- Support pupil understanding of the reasons for the policy

#### 4.3 Pupils

Pupils must:

- Follow expectations regarding mobile phone use and storage during school hours
- Not use a mobile phone on school grounds without permission
- Report safeguarding concerns or bullying related to mobile phone use

#### 4.4 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Support the school in enforcing this policy
- Ensure pupils do not use phones inappropriately before or after school while on school grounds
- Communicate with the school office during the school day rather than contacting pupils directly

### 5. Mobile Phone Usage Expectations

#### 5.1 Pupils

Children are **not** permitted to bring mobile phones to school apart from certain children in Year 5 and Year 6

Children in Year 6 and Year 5 who have been given permission to walk home from school and who bring a mobile phone with them for this purpose must give their mobile phones to their Class Teacher when they arrive in the morning for safe keeping in a locked drawer in the School Office during school hours

Use of mobile phones is not permitted:

- During lessons (unless authorised by the teacher for learning purposes)
- In corridors, toilets, or communal areas
- During break or lunchtime
- On school trips without prior approval

Misuse includes texting, making calls, using social media, taking photographs or videos, or any usage not explicitly authorised by staff.

#### 5.2 Staff

Staff should not use personal mobile phones in view of pupils, except in emergencies. Phones must not be used to photograph or record pupils unless a school-issued device is used with appropriate consents.



Personal phones should not be used to communicate with pupils or to store pupil data. Any breach may be dealt with under the school's Code of Conduct.

### 5.3 Visitors and Contractors

Visitors and contractors must not use mobile phones on site in areas where children are present, without explicit permission. Signage will remind visitors of the school's mobile phone expectations. All visitors must report violations to their host or the main office.

## 6. Confiscation, Search and Sanctions

### 6.1 Power to Search and Confiscate

Under Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Section 2 of the Education Act 2011, staff have the authority to confiscate mobile phones where they are used contrary to school rules.

A pupil's phone may be searched if there is reasonable suspicion that it contains inappropriate material, including:

- Pornographic content
- Evidence of bullying or harassment
- Content that may incite violence or hate

Searches will be conducted by authorised staff in accordance with DfE *Searching, Screening and Confiscation at School* (2022). Parents will be informed if the search reveals serious concerns or breaches of safeguarding.

### 6.2 Sanctions and Consequences

Sanctions for unauthorised use may include:

- Confiscation until the end of the school day
- Requirement for a parent to collect the device
- Internal sanctions, including detention
- Possible exclusion in severe or repeated cases

All sanctions will be applied following the school's Behaviour Policy and anti-bullying strategies.

## 7. Mobile Phones and Safeguarding

### 7.1 Use of Cameras and Recording Functions

Pupils, staff and visitors are strictly prohibited from using mobile phones to:

- Photograph or record pupils or staff without consent
- Share content via social media while on site

Such misuse will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and relevant legislation, including reporting to external agencies where appropriate.



## 7.2 Cyberbullying and Online Behaviour

Cyberbullying is the use of electronic technologies to harass, intimidate, or embarrass others. It may include sending threatening messages, sharing inappropriate images, or posting harmful content online.

The school will act on any incidents of cyberbullying that affect the wellbeing of our school community, whether they occur on or off school premises. Pupils are urged to report concerns to a trusted adult immediately.

Incidents will be logged and managed under the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies.

## 8. Use of Mobile Phones in Emergencies

### 8.1 Emergency Contact Procedures

In an emergency, parents must contact the school office. Pupils are not to use mobile phones to contact home during the school day. Staff will support pupils with contacting home in legitimate emergency situations.

Where necessary, the school will contact parents directly using the details listed on pupils' emergency contact records.

### 8.2 Exceptional Circumstances

Where a pupil has a medical requirement or identified need that necessitates the use of a mobile phone or wearable technology (e.g. diabetes management apps), the parent must submit a request in writing.

A risk assessment and permission agreement will be completed, managed by the SENCO or safeguarding lead in consultation with the parent.

## 9. Review and Monitoring

### 9.1 Monitoring Use

The Senior Leadership Team will monitor:

- Incidents involving mobile phone misuse
- Safeguarding concerns linked to devices
- Behavioural data related to phone use

This monitoring informs regular policy reviews, staff training needs, and adjustments to implementation.

### 9.2 Policy Review Cycle

This policy will be formally reviewed every two years, or more frequently if statutory guidance changes.

The review process will include consultation with governors, staff, pupils and parents. Stakeholder feedback will be actively sought to ensure the policy remains relevant, fair, and effective.

## 10. Communication and Accessibility

### 10.1 Policy Awareness

This policy will be:

- Published on the school website
- Shared with staff during induction and INSET training



- Issued to families at the start of each academic year
- Discussed with pupils through assemblies and form time

Clear signage and consistent staff enforcement will reinforce expectations.

### 10.2 Policy Implementation Support

Staff will receive annual training to ensure full understanding of this policy, their rights with regard to searching/confiscating devices, and how to manage incidents.

Parents will be supported with information on why mobile phone restrictions benefit learning and wellbeing. Pupils will be taught about safe and responsible mobile phone use through the PSHE and computing curriculum.

This policy will be reviewed in July 2026