



*'Let Your Light Shine'*  
(Matthew 5.v16)

# Mobile phone policy

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## 1. Introduction and aims

At St. Stephen's CE 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, safeguarding 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 year, 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. 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 or in the classroom at break times and lunch times when children are not present).

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 01388 746426 as a point of emergency contact.

At St Stephen's CE Primary School staff use the 'Whatsapp' application as an effective communication tool between staff members. This allows staff to pass on important messages regarding pupils eg: homework arrangements, pupil appointments, pupil accidents and injuries, messages from parents etc. Staff are therefore allowed to have their mobile phones on their person during the school day with the following conditions applied:

- Phones must be kept out of sight of children whenever they are present
- Phones must be locked with a passcode or facial recognition to avoid unauthorised access
- Whatsapp messages must only be checked when children are not present in the room eg: prior to pupils entering school, break time, lunch time and at the end of the school day to check for any special home time arrangements for pupils
- Staff who are responsible for delivering first aid at break times have permission to use Whatsapp on their phones to record accidents in the medical events group as this is the most effective way of communicating first aid incidents

*"WhatsApp is one of the safest and most secure apps to use, end-to-end encryption is used when you chat with another person using WhatsApp Messenger. End-to-end encryption ensures only you and the person you're communicating with can read or listen to what is sent, and nobody in between, not even WhatsApp."*

*Whatsapp.com*

As an added layer of security, when communicating information about pupils, only first names are to be used

### 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).

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

### 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.

Staff must 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 must be done using school equipment.

Staff may be required to use their mobile phone to access certain programmes which require Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) such as Office 365 and CPOMS. Permission is allowed for this and phones should then be stored out of sight of children once finished with.

### 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

Staff are allowed to use personal mobile phones when supervising residential visits or school trips if it is deemed necessary however they should withhold their phone number from pupils and parents/carers. Parents are advised to use the school contact number to contact members of staff.

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. In an emergency, and if deemed appropriate (for example during a residential visit which is outside of office hours) staff may use their personal phone to contact parents but should withhold their contact number by dialling 141 before the parents contact number.

### 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 phone, 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

St. Stephen's CE Primary School discourages pupils from bringing mobile phones to school due to the potential issues outlined above however children in Year 6 are allowed to bring a mobile phone to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision,

- When a child needs to bring a phone into school, the mobile phone must be left with their class teacher at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day. (phones will be stored in a secure box) Phones should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone. Parents are advised that St.

Stephen's CE Primary School accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into the school or school grounds.

- Parents are encouraged to talk to their child about the appropriate use of text messages as they can often be used to bully pupils.
- Should parents need to contact pupils, or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures: via the school office. (tel no. 01388 746426)
- Pupils must adhere to the school's acceptable use agreement for mobile phone use (see appendix 1).

## 4.1 Sanctions

The following sanctions will be used if a pupil is in breach of this policy.

- Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone, the phone will be confiscated from the pupil, handed to a member of the school office team who will record the name of the pupil and attach to the phone. The mobile phone will be stored by the School Office. The pupil may collect the phone at the end of the school day. A letter will be sent home to the parents. If this practice continues more than three times, then the school will confiscate the phone until an appropriate adult collects the phone from a senior teacher.
- If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Behaviour Policy.
- If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a senior teacher.
- Should a pupil be found to be using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a phone into school.

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

The DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation allows staff to search a pupil's phone if they 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.

A copy of this policy and disclaimer will be given to new pupils and parents/carers

If your school confiscates phones from pupils, add:

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked safe.

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

# Pupils online safety agreement

## For my own personal safety - everywhere!

- I will ask permission from a member of staff before using devices at school
- I am aware of "stranger danger" and know that not everyone online is who they say they are
- I will tell a trusted adult about anything online which makes me feel uncomfortable
- I will not try to bypass the system to reach websites the school has blocked
- I understand that the school may check my files and may monitor my activity
- When in school I will only contact people with my teachers permission



- I will be very careful when sharing pictures or video of myself or my friends.
- I know that many apps have privacy settings which allow my data to be shared and I will check these settings with a trusted adult
- I will not put my "Personal Information" online. (My full name, birthday, phone number, address, postcode, school etc.)

## To keep the system safe

- I will only use my own login and password, which I will keep secret
- I will not access other people's files
- I will not play games on a school computer unless my teacher has given me permission
- I will not install software on school computers
- I will not use the system for games, gambling or shopping
- I will not bring in memory sticks from home unless I have asked permission from a teacher.



## Responsibility to others

- The messages I send will be polite and responsible
- I will not share images or video of other people without their permission
- I understand that the school may take action against me if I am involved in incidents of inappropriate behaviour wherever their location. If the activities are illegal this may be reported to the police

## Personal Devices

- The school cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to personal devices
- It is not permitted for pupils to use Mobile Phones during the school day. If phones are brought into school accidentally or are needed by older children who are allowed to walk home on their own, these should be handed in to the class teacher who will then arrange for it to be stored securely until home time.
- Other devices (e.g. Games consoles, cameras) should only be brought into school with permission from a teacher.



We understand that your child is too young to give informed consent on his/her own; however, we feel it is good practice to involve them as much as possible in the decision making process, and believe a shared commitment is the most successful way to achieve this.

## Pupils online safety contract

Please complete, sign and return to the school secretary

**Pupil:**

**Class:**

### Pupil's Agreement

I have read and I understand the pupils online safety agreement, and will abide by the rules which are designed to keep both myself and the school safe

**Signed:**

**Date:**

### Parent's Consent

I have read and understood the online safety agreement and give permission for my son / daughter to access the Internet at school, and will encourage them to abide by these rules. Children will receive advice on online safety at school, advice for parents is available at [www.thinkuknow.org.uk/parents](http://www.thinkuknow.org.uk/parents) or by contacting the school. I understand that the school will take reasonable precautions to ensure pupils cannot access inappropriate materials.

The school will help children to learn about staying safe online, but recognises that the primary responsibility for online safety at home lies with parents / carers. The school will seek to work with families to help them to encourage children to adopt safe use of the digital technologies at home. *I will encourage my child to adopt safe use of the internet and digital technologies at home and will inform the school if I have concerns over my child's e-safety.*

I will follow the school's guidance on taking and sharing images and video at school events.

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Please print name:**

## Appendix 2: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

### Use of mobile phones 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. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staff room
- 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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