

Policy for:

Mobile Technology Policy



Committee: Premises, Health and Safety

Document Control

A. Confidentiality Notice

This policy document has been approved by the Governing body of St. Modwen's Catholic Primary School and is intended for internal and /or external publication. Where the document is identified for internal use the policy information may not be shared with external agencies or parents without the prior agreement of the Headteacher or authorising Committee.

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1. Introduction and aims

At St Modwen's Catholic Primary School we have a duty to create an environment that is calm, safe, and free from distraction so all pupils, whatever their background, can learn and thrive. One of the greatest challenges facing schools is the presence of mobile phones. Today, by the age of 12, 97% of pupils own a mobile phone. Mobile phones risk unnecessary distraction, disruption, and diversion. One in three secondary school pupils report that mobile phones are used in most lessons without permission. Today's children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. This presents many exciting opportunities – but also challenges. By prohibiting mobile phones, schools can create safe and calm environments free from distraction so all pupils can receive the education they deserve.

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 devices' 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 Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every year, 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.

3.2 Governors

This policy is approved by Governors on an annual basis.

4. Use of mobile devices 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 device, while children are present. Use of personal mobile devices must be restricted to 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 mobile device 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-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01283 247560 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile device to process personal staff, pupil or school 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 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.

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 devices 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.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile devices for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- To issue homework, rewards or sanctions
- To use multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

Staff are permitted to use personal mobile devices when supervising residential visits or school trips. School provides a school mobile device for staff to contact parents/carers if needed.

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile devices in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use their mobile devices to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their mobile devices to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4.5 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 devices by pupils

Pupils should not use their mobile devices during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.

Staff collect pupils' mobile devices on arrival and pupils' can collect their mobile phone at the end of the day when they have been dismissed. Pupil's mobile devices are stored securely by the teacher in the pupil's classroom.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

Pupils are not permitted to wear smartwatches to school. They must be left at home or with parents.

5.2 Sanctions

School Sanctions for breach of 5.0 and 5.1 are:

1. Stage 1 Sanction: School will confiscate the mobile device until the end of the school day, contacting parents to inform them of the breach
2. Stage 2 Sanction: if this re-occurs within the School term the mobile device will be confiscated and parents

will be informed to come to the school to collect the device. School will store the confiscated mobile device in the school safe

The Headteacher or staff authorised by the Headteacher can conduct a search of pupil's phones/devices reference [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows you to search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone/device contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

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/devices 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/device 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 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 are required to label their phone with their full name.

Pupils must secure their mobile phones/devices as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone/device's functions. Staff must also secure their personal devices, as well as any work devices provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones/devices 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.

School will make sure pupils and parents/carers are aware of the disclaimer above by:

- Include disclaimers in your permission forms for bringing a device to school
- Include a disclaimer in your home-school agreement (if you have one)
- Provide a copy of your policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents/carers and existing pupils via website
- Newsletter and school website

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 of pupils' education, behaviour, and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will consider:

- 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 Mrs. Andrea Sherratt, Headteacher in a timely manner. This Policy is shared with Governors annually for information.

Appendix 1:Code of Conduct/Acceptable use agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Code of conduct/acceptable use agreement

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone/device during lessons.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone/device in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils without their consent.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone/device's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone/device to bully, intimidate or harass anyone. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
 - a. Email
 - b. Text/messaging app
 - c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone/device to send or receive anything that may be criminal. For instance, by 'sexting'.
9. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone/device even when you aren't in school.
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone/divice to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone/device. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobile phones/devices are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone/device, you will be asked to store it appropriately. Bringing a phone/device into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

Appendix 1: Template mobile phone/device information slip for visitors



**ST MODWEN'S CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**
Excellence For All Through Jesus' Love

USE OF MOBILE PHONES/DEVICES IN OUR SCHOOL

- Please keep your mobile device on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use mobile devices where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go outside the school and away from any present pupils
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your device 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 technology policy is available from the school office or on our school website.

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