Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust
Through Christ, in Partnership

Mobile Telephone and Devices Policy

Date Approved by school	**12/03/2026**
Statutory Policy	**Yes**
Required on Website	**Yes**
Review Period	**Every two years**
Next Review Date	**12/03/2028**
Reviewed by	

Contents

1. Introduction and aims

2. Relevant guidance

3. Roles and responsibilities

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

7. Loss, theft or damage

8. Monitoring and review

9. Appendix A: Mobile Phone Permission Request Slip

10. Appendix B: Acceptable Use Agreement

11. Appendix C: Mobile phone information slip for visitors

1. Introduction and aims

At Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust, we recognise that everyone is created in God's image, and we therefore educate the whole person, so that all can flourish. We recognise that mobile telephones and similar devices are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community and we acknowledge the valuable contribution that smart devices can make to the quality of life.

However, we know that smartphones and other smart devices do not just offer connection, they also potentially open the door to harmful content for our pupils. We also know that smart devices can be addictive for pupils and can increase peer pressure and distraction. Even with good intentions, they can expose children to things they are simply not ready for.

This policy recognises the benefits of technology. However, at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School we want pupils to be given the time and space to develop the foundations they need to navigate smart technology well, at an appropriate age and stage.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones and smart devices for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers.
- Support other policies including BWCET GDPR Acceptable Use of IT Systems Policy, BWCET Employee Code of Conduct and school's policies relating to safeguarding and behaviour.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones/smart devices in school, such as:

- Safeguarding risks
- 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 telephones and similar devices including smart phones, smart watches, smart glasses, tracking devices and other devices which allow for mobile communication.

Note: throughout this policy, 'staff' refers to all staff, supply staff, governors, clergy, volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school.

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School supports parents at the school who have set up a Smartphone Free Childhood Parent Group. Smartphone Free Childhood

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 includes:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK
- Data protection in schools - Guidance - GOV.UK
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 **Staff**

All staff are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

3.2 **Governors**

Governors are responsible for monitoring and ensuring this policy is reviewed every two years.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 **Personal mobile phones**

All staff (including teachers, support staff, supply staff and contracted staff,) may wish to have their personal mobile phones at work for use in case of emergencies, however, staff are not typically permitted to use their personal mobile phone while pupils are present. Use of personal mobile phones should be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom), in line with the Department for Education's non-statutory mobile phone guidance. Staff may join the school WiFi network to access the internet within these restrictions. However, all activity is monitored and logged and any breach of school or Trust policy by staff may be considered in relation to the procedures set out in the Disciplinary Policy.

Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, staff mobile phones should be switched off or on silent mode, and left in a safe place. Staff smart watches or other personal messaging devices should be silenced during lesson times.

Adults working in classrooms should store their personal belongings, including phones, in their relevant classrooms cupboards or office.

There may be circumstances in which it may be agreed by the headteacher 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 exceptional emergency contact by their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members
- Where a mobile phone is necessary to monitor staff's medical condition

If a member of staff believes they need access to their personal messaging devices during contact time, they should approach the headteacher in advance to discuss this request. 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 0191 917 2484 as a point of emergency contact.

If staff are permitted to use personal phones, or any work phone provided to them, they should ensure that devices are locked with a passcode or biometric security so that they cannot be accessed by pupils. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

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 e.g. ChatGPT.

More guidance on data protection can be found in the Trust's Data Protection Policy available to staff via the Trust intranet, or more widely available on request from the school office.

4.3 **Safeguarding**

Staff should typically not contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone in or out of school time or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, a school telephone should be used.

Staff should not share personal contact details, including through social media and messaging apps.

Staff should never send to, or accept, texts, messages or images that could be considered inappropriate from colleagues or pupils.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones or other digital devices to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school or Trust equipment.

4.4 **Using personal mobiles for work purposes**

In some exceptional circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Where possible this should always be agreed with the headteacher in advance. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Parental contact in emergencies (141 should be used prior to the contact number in order to withhold the member of staff's personal number)
- Use of multi-factor authentication to access work materials
- 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 this policy and the Trust staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers unless in an emergency. Wherever possible, contact should be made via a work device or via the school office.

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff and the school.

4.5 **Work phones**

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised school employees are permitted to use school mobile phones.

Staff must:

- Use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet in line with the Trust's GDPR Acceptable Use of IT Systems Policy.
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with the Trust's Employee Code of Conduct and the Trust's GDPR Acceptable Use of IT Systems Policy.

4.6 **Policy breaches**

Any breach of school or Trust policy by staff may be considered in relation to the procedure set out in the Disciplinary Policy.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Only pupils who have been granted permission by the headteacher, (See Appendix A: Mobile Phone Permission Request Slip,) may bring a mobile phone to school, clearly labelled with

their name and class, to be handed in at the main school office, where it will be safely secured in a locked cupboard/drawer. Mobile phones should be protected using passcodes to prevent unauthorised access to the phone's functions.

At the end of the day, pupils may collect their phones from the school office, but must not turn their phones on until they have left the school site.

5.1 **Use of smart watches or smart glasses by pupils**

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School we do not allow children to wear smart watches or smart glasses or bring any other devices to school which allow messaging or recording functions. If pupils bring these devices to school, they will be asked to remove them and they will be kept securely in the school office until the end of the day. Repeated incidents may necessitate parents coming into school to collect devices at the end of the school day. Watches without any capability for messaging or recording can be worn, in line with the school's uniform guidance.

5.2 **Exceptions for special circumstances**

The school may, by exception, permit certain pupils to use a mobile phone in school. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the headteacher, but may include:

- Pupils with diabetes who use their phones to monitor their blood sugar levels
- Young carers

To request such permission, parents/carers should contact the headteacher, submitting the Mobile Phone Permission Request Slip (Appendix A). Any pupils who are given permission must then adhere to the school's Acceptable Use Agreement (Appendix B)

5.3 **Sanctions**

If pupils are found to be in breach of this policy, the following sanctions will apply:

- Mobile phones or smart watches will be confiscated and held securely in the main school office until the end of the day, when the pupil may collect their device. Parents/carers will be notified and the breach of school policy will be recorded in the school's behaviour log.
- Repeated breaches of this policy will result in the parent/carer being called to remove the device from school property.
- Where pupils are found to have used devices in school to cause harm to others, the school will respond to this in line with the school's behaviour policy.

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) which except pupils from following the policy
- The pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm.

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 when appropriate.

Staff have the power to search pupils in specific circumstances, as set out in the Department for Education's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation, (Searching, Screening and Confiscation,) and in line with the school's policy.

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

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.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not using mobile phones or messaging/recording devices while on the school site.
- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it has been agreed prior to the event.
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of this policy for mobile phone and other smart device usage when they sign in at reception (see Appendix C). Staff will also remind families and other visitors of the school's policy at the beginning of any school events.

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 or other smart devices, as set out in section 5 above, but must refer any issues to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to sanction a pupil or to search for or confiscate devices.

6.1 **Exceptional Circumstances**

The school may, by exception, permit certain parents/carers or other visitors to use a mobile phone in school. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the headteacher, but may include:

- Adults with a medical condition who need their phones to monitor their condition
- Caring responsibilities.

To request such permission, parents/carers/visitors should contact the headteacher.

7. Loss, theft or damage

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones or other 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.

Parents/carers of pupils who have exceptional permission to bring their mobile phones into school will be given a copy of this policy.

Confiscated phones will be securely stored in the school office.

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, leaders 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, Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

Any concerns regarding this policy should be brought to the attention of the headteacher at enquiries@wsj.bwcet.com in a timely manner.

Appendix A: Mobile Phone Permission Request Slip

Pupil name:	
Year group/class:	
Parent/carer(s) name(s):	
I request that St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School allows my child to bring their mobile phone to school because (insert reason below)	
I understand that my child must abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile phones, and its Acceptable Use Agreement. I understand that the school reserves the right to revoke permission if my child does not abide by the policy.	
Parent/carer signature	
Date	
FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by	
Date	

Appendix B: **Acceptable Use Agreement**

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school: • Your parents need to have filled out a Mobile Phone Permission Request Slip • Permission needs to have been given by the headteacher. • Your phone must be clearly labelled with your name and class. • You must hand in your phone each morning at the main school office every morning • You must secure your mobile phone as much as possible, such as using a passcode to prevent access to the phone's functions. • At the end of the day, you may collect your phone from the school office, but must not turn your phone on until you have left the school site. • Do not share your phone's passcode with anyone else.

Pupil signature	
FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY	
Authorised by	
Date	

Appendix C: **Mobile phone information for visitors**

Use of mobile phones and other smart devices in St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

- Please keep your phone and other devices on silent mode while on school premises.
- Do not use phones or other smart devices on the school premises.
- In the case of exceptional circumstances, please agree with the headteacher where and when you may take and/or receive calls or messages.
- Do not take images or recordings using any device unless agreed with the headteacher prior to the event.
- Do not post any recordings or images on social media unless with the prior agreement of the headteacher.

The school accepts no responsibility for devices that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on school premises.

A fully copy of the Mobile Telephone and Devices Policy is available from the school office.