Read St. John's Church of England Primary School

# Mobile Phone Policy

*Sowing the seeds of tomorrow, growing in the light of the Lord.*

*Matthew 13:1-23*

Date of Policy: March 2026
Updated/last reviewed: Sept 2026
Review Date: Sept 2027

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## 1. Introduction and aims

At Read St. John's, we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices, including smartphones, 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 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: Child Protection and Safeguarding and Behaviour Policy, Acceptable Use Policy

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 phones' 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 and Deputy Headteacher are responsible for monitoring and reviewing the policy, 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

The policy will be presented to the governing body at each review to ensure they are fully informed of its contents, effectiveness, and any issues arising from its implementation.
Governors will have the opportunity to:

- Consider any incidents or challenges relating to mobile phone use in the school.
- Suggest amendments or updates based on evolving best practice or guidance from the Department for Education.
- Approve any significant changes to the policy before they are communicated to staff, pupils, and parents.

The review cycle will occur at least once every two years, or sooner if prompted by changes in legislation, technology, or school circumstances.

## 4. Use of mobile phones 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 phone, while children are present or areas that children frequent. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time e.g. break times and lunch times, 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 phone 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-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01282771065 as a point of emergency contact.

### 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 such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard). Further details can be found in the ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Data Protection (GDPR) 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. Refer to Acceptable Use Policy, Online Safety Policy and Staff Conduct Policy.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that 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.

Our school uses the Authenticator app to verify staff identity when logging in to CPOMS.

In these circumstances, staff must:

- Use their mobile phone solely for the intended school purpose (e.g., authentication).
- Ensure their phone is secure and protected with a password, PIN, or biometric lock.
- Not store or share any pupil data on their personal device.
- Report immediately if the device is lost, stolen, or compromised.

Staff mobile phones should not be used for personal matters during school hours while performing official school duties, and access to school apps should always comply with GDPR and our data protection policies.

### 4.4 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 are not limited to:

- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

There is a school mobile phone that can be used, for example on a residential visit or school trip. Details have been shared with parents/carers.

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 that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

### 4.5 Work phones

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

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, 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

### 4.6 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 phones by pupils

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

To support this, pupils are asked to sign their mobile phones into the school office on arrival each morning and collect them at the end of the school day. The school keeps a record of phones being signed in and out.

We recognise that some pupils walk home and may need a mobile phone to contact a parent or guardian. In such cases, phones must remain in the school office during the day and can only be accessed once the pupil has left the school building.

### 5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The Department for Education's non-statutory guidance on mobile phones includes all devices with communications or smart technology that the school chooses to include in its policy.

At Read St. John's, smartwatches are not permitted to be worn or used during the school day. This includes devices capable of sending or receiving messages, making calls, or accessing apps, even if they appear similar to ordinary wristwatches.

Pupils should leave smartwatches at home. Any smartwatch brought into school will be confiscated and returned only at the end of the day in line with our mobile phone procedures. This ensures consistency with our approach to mobile phones and protects pupils' safety and focus during lessons.

### 5.2 Exceptions for special circumstances

While the school does not allow pupils to use mobile phones during the school day, exceptions may be made for pupils with special circumstances. For example, pupils who need to monitor their diabetes using their mobile phone may be permitted to bring and use their device for this purpose only.

Any pupil who is given permission to bring or use a mobile phone for exceptional circumstances must adhere to the school's Mobile Phone Code of Conduct / Acceptable Use Agreement (see Appendix 1).

All other pupils are expected to follow the standard procedures for signing mobile phones into the school office at the start of the day and collecting them at the end of the school day.

### 5.3 Sanctions

If a pupil breaches this policy, the school will respond in a reasonable and proportionate manner, in line with the school's behaviour policy.

If a pupil is found using a mobile phone or smartwatch during the school day without permission:

- The device will be confiscated by a member of staff
- It will be taken to the school office for safekeeping
- Parents/carers will be informed
- The device will be returned to the pupil at the end of the school day

Repeated breaches of this policy may result in further action in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Staff may also take further action if there is reason to believe a device has been used inappropriately (for example, to upset another pupil or access unsuitable content). In such cases, the school will:

- Follow safeguarding procedures in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Inform parents/carers
- Involve external agencies where appropriate

All sanctions will take into account the pupil's age, individual needs, and any special circumstances. Where there are concerns that a pupil may be at risk of harm, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

## 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 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 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, 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 must secure their mobile 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.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office, for collection at the end of the school day.

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 on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school 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, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

**Signed: Fran Agar** (Headteacher) **Date: 01/09/26**

**Signed: Martin Roberts** (Chair of Governors) **Date: 09/10/26**

**9. Appendix 1: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school**

Read St. John's C.E. Primary School, Straits Lane, Read. Lancashire. BB12 7PE

Tel: 01282 771065

E-mail: bursar@read.lancs.sch.uk

Website: https://read.lancs.sch.uk/

# Mobile Phone and Handheld Device in School Agreement

When my child takes a mobile phone or handheld device into school, I agree to the following restrictions to usage and terms and conditions:

**The phone is to be handed into the School Office on entry to school and is to be collected end of the day**

1) The School is not responsible for any loss or damage – it is the child's responsibility to ensure that the device is handed in to the School Office at the beginning of the school day and picked at home time.
2) The device must be switched off whilst on school premises.
3) Where the mobile phone has the capacity to take photos or video clips, students are expressly forbidden from using these facilities.
4) Where the mobile phone has the capacity to access the internet, students are expressly forbidden from using these facilities.
5) Where these guidelines have been breached the equipment will be confiscated by the Head Teacher and returned to the pupil's parents.
6) Any breach of the above will result in the child no longer being allowed to bring the mobile phone or handheld device to school.

**I agree to the above terms and conditions and I understand that under no circumstances is the School liable for any loss or damage to the mobile phone or handheld device.**

Pupil's Name: _____ Class: _____

Signed by (parent or guardian): _____

Print Name (parent or guardian): _____

Date: _____

Please give an explanation why your child needs a mobile phone or handheld device in school:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

## 10. Appendix 2: Mobile phone information slip for visitors

### Use of mobile phones and similar devices 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 an office or 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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