



Sacred Heart School

Electronic Devices and Photography Policy

At Sacred Heart School we all aspire to provide a happy, safe and secure environment in which every child is encouraged to achieve their full potential...

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Introduction and Aims

At Sacred Heart we recognise that all electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible electronic device use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of electronic devices for pupils, staff, parents/carers 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

Roles and responsibilities

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 two years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Use of electronic devices by staff

The school accepts that employees will bring their electronic devices to work. However,

- Employees are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during work time (excluding break times).
- Staff mobile phones must be switched off during teaching times. Devices must be kept in a cupboard or drawer and not be left on display. In the Foundation Stage building personal mobile phones are only used in the staff room.
- In the event that an employee has a particular reason, for a specified period of time, they may request via the Head that they leave their phone on during working hours. In such instances the phone should be left in the school office to receive calls, alternatively the caller should be asked to use the office number.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their electronic devices, for example: to take photographs or videos of children; or to use personal cameras or recording equipment; or to store images of children on their personal computers.
- Staff electronic devices should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. Classroom, playground) and may only be used during rest periods.

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).

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
- During the Lockdown Procedure

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 as a point of emergency contact.

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).

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 electronic 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.

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
- For medical purposes eg for diabetic children

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

Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

Use of electronic devices by pupils

Children are **not** permitted to bring electronic devices to school other than with prior agreement. An example of this would be a phone required for medical purposes when a risk assessment will be completed.

Use of electronic devices 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.

Visitors to the school are advised that electronic devices, including mobile phones and other photographic devices must be switched off whilst on the school premises, unless required for undertaking work on behalf of the school.

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
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

Parents who take photos of their child at school events (assemblies, sporting events) must agree that such materials will not be displayed on social media, such as Facebook. This undertaking is included in the Photo Permission Form which parents are requested to sign when they join the school.

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 will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.