

ST. AUGUSTINE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Use of Mobile Phones Policy May 2025

Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Roach

Date agreed by staff: Summer 2025
Date agreed by Governors: Summer 2025
Next Review: Summer 2027

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Catholic school is united in God's love, enabling everyone to grow in love for one another and to develop in faith. We strive for all children to achieve their best by becoming active and confident learners in a nurturing and caring environment. We guide everyone to shine in their own unique way.

'Unique and United in God's love. We let our light shine'

Introduction and Aims

At St Augustine's Catholic Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of this Use Mobile Phones Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools.

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the working day, and which are most susceptible to misuse – including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. However, as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, governors, children, young people, students on placement, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:-

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policies
- Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children in Schools statement

More in-depth information about acceptable practice is available in the school's Online Safety Policy.

Code of Conduct

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a co-operative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

Our aim is therefore that all practitioners:-

- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse
- Know how to minimise risk
- Avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations
- Understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use
- Are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours
- Are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting, which is agreed to by all users.

Personal Mobiles

Staff:

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts/emails/messages during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office or **by special permission from the Headteacher if not in direct pupil contact.**
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag) during class time. **Dispensation will be given to staff using their mobile phone as an authenticator for a website – mainly CPOMs.**

- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (e.g. classroom, playground).
- Use of phones (including receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time (e.g. break/dinner and before/after school) and where no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room (when not busy), empty classrooms.
- It is also advised that staff securely protect access to functions on their phone.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Headteacher and office staff aware of this so messages can be relayed promptly or other arrangements made.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones in school, for example: to take recordings (photos/videos/sound) of children. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and iPads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher immediately (including any staff contravening this code of conduct).
- The above applies to smart watches which must not be used as a method of communication during contact hours with children. A smart watch may be used as a step counter and time telling device only during these contact hours with children.

Mobile Phones for work related purposes

Teaching staff and DSLs need to use their mobile phones in school when they are authenticating the login to their CPOMs account. Phones should be put out of sight as soon as possible after their use. We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on off-site activities. However, staff should ensure that:-

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children)
- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips (**unless in an emergency or via Class Dojo**) – all relevant communications should be made via the School Office or the school mobile phone.
- Where parents are accompanying trips they are to be informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children.

Personal Mobiles – Pupils

We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others. Therefore:-

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips
- If in the event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school:-
 - The phone must be handed into the School Office (switched off) first thing in the morning and collected from the office by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk)
 - Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned a parent at a later time.
 - Smart watches may be worn in school for the sole purpose of a time piece (watch). If they are connected to a phone, they must be disconnected and the phone handed in to the office as per instructions above.
 - Any additional camera facilities must be disconnected and not used.

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others then the Headteacher does have the power to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site'.

Volunteers, Students, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers, Students, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises. On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones.

Parents

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while on school premises, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as essential means of communication at all times. We, therefore, ask that parents' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment.

We do allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones – but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.

Parents/carers are reminded of this at the start of every school performance, on sports day, etc and will receive written reminder in the Newsletter at the start of the academic year.

Dissemination

The mobile phone policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parent via the school office and website.