



## St Thomas More R.C. Primary School

# Mobile Phone & SMART Watch Digital Device Policy 2024-2026

### Mission Statement

*As Servants of God, we follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Through His love, we guide each member of our family on their own spiritual and learning journey to achieve and grow."*

***We Love, We Learn, We Live with Christ***

Signed by Chair.....

Date.....

**This policy provides clear guidance on the use of mobile phones and SMART watches in school by both staff and pupils**

**For the purpose of this policy Mobile Phones and SMART watches may be referred to as 'digital devices'.**

### **Introduction**

St Thomas More has a clear policy on allowing staff and pupils to bring mobile phones into school and this policy makes explicit reference to camera mobile phones and SMART watches.

### **Mobile Phones and SMART watches**

Mobile phones and SMART watches are now the norm with built-in digital cameras which enables users to take high resolution pictures. These can be sent instantly to other digital users or email addresses. They can also be posted on the internet or in chat rooms.

There is a potential for these digital devices to be misused in schools. They can become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils or/and teachers.

Therefore, any digital devices will be placed into the class basket at registration and stored in the office until the end of the day.

### **Staff policy**

Staff use of mobile phones or SMART watches during their working day should be:

- outside of their contracted hours
- discreet and appropriate eg: not in the presence of pupils i.e. in the staff room or office.

Digital devices should be switched off/put on silent and left in a safe place during lesson times. The school cannot take responsibility for items that are lost or stolen.

Staff should **never** contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, they should use the school telephone in the office.

If personal phones are used to make contact at Parent Meetings the caller ID **must** be withheld. Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.

With regard to camera phones and SMART watches no member of staff should use their device to photograph a pupil(s) or allow themselves to be photographed by pupils. All photographs and posts to **X** (formally Twitter) should be done via school iPads.

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff, the school and the Local Authority. Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy is likely to result in the enforcement of the Whistleblowing policy and associated procedures.

## **Parent, Visitors or Volunteers in School Policy**

Adults either in school or accompanying children on school trips should not use their digital devices to take pictures of pupils unless it is at a public event such as Sports day or the Summer fair and of their own children.

Adults, visitors or volunteers in school should only use their digital devices within the confines of the school office or staff room. Personal cameras and digital devices should not be used to take pictures of children. If parents accompanying children on a school trip are asked by the teacher to take photos to record the educational visit, they will be issued with a school camera. Parents accompanying children on school trips should not use their digital devices to take pictures of children.

## **Pupil Policy**

While we fully acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a digital device to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision, St Thomas More discourages pupils bringing such devices to school due to the potential issues raised above.

When a child needs to bring a device into school, a permission slip (Appendix 1) must be signed by the parent and the device must be left in the school office at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day. Devices should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone. Parents are advised that St Thomas More accepts no liability for the loss or damage to digital devices which are brought into school or school grounds.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a digital device, the device will be confiscated from the pupil, handed to a member of the office team who will record the name of the pupil and attach it to the device. The digital device will be stored by the school office. The parent will be contacted to collect the device at the end of the school day.

If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a digital device of either other pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to our Behaviour policy.

If images of other pupils or teacher have been taken, the digital device will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a senior teacher.

Should a pupil be found to be using their digital device inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring the device into school.

*We ask that parents should talk to their children about the appropriate use of text messages and other messaging APPS as they can often be used to bully pupils.*

*Should parents need to contact pupils or vice versa during the school day, this should be done via the usual school procedure of contacting the school office via phone, Class Dojo or email.*

This policy will be monitored and reviewed as required but at least every two years.

**Appendix 1: Template letter**

**Mobile Phone or SMART watch (Digital device) Parental Consent Form**

Dear Parent/Carer

In accordance with our Digital Devices policy, if your child is bringing in a mobile phone or SMART watch to school on a regular basis, sign the form below to give your permission for your child to do this and remind them of our school policy.

- Your child needs to bring their device into the class basket at registration
- The school bears no responsibility for the loss or damage to a digital device
- Your child’s device should be appropriately marked so that they can recognise it
- Should your child be found using their device inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring their device into school.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Joanne Butterworth

Head teacher

.....

**DIGITAL DEVICE PARENTAL CONSENT**

I/we give permission for our child (name) ..... in Year .....  
to bring their digital device into school.

We have read the policy and understand its implications

Signed ..... Date.....

PLEASE RETURN PERMISSION SLIP TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE. THANK YOU.