

Mobile phone policy

St William of Perth Catholic Primary School



Date: 20th November 2025

Last reviewed on: November 2025

Next review due by: November 2026

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1. Introduction and aims

At St William of Perth 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, 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

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 is responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, reviewing it, 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.

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 / during contact time. 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 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, 01634 404267 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). See also ICT acceptable use agreements.

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.

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.

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:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- 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 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 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

Our school policy is that mobile phones are not allowed in school. We do appreciate however, that for some year 5 and 6 children who walk to or from school unaccompanied, that parents may wish their child to have a mobile phone with them for their journey home. In this circumstance only, we will allow a child to bring a basic mobile phone to school. Under these conditions pupils should not use their mobile phones during the school

day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. If dispensation is given due to these conditions arising staff will collect mobile phones on arrival and pupils mobile phones will be kept in a secure location. Mobile phones will be returned to pupils at the end of the day before hometime by their class teacher.

5.2 Sanctions

The sanctions you will use if a pupil is in breach of this policy.

- A member of the senior leadership will confiscate any mobile phones whereby agreement has not been agreed for a child to bring in a mobile phone into school (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under [sections 91](#) and [94](#) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Parents will be notified and instructed to collect the mobile phone at the end of the day in the event that it has been confiscated.
- The school will review inappropriate mobile phone use in line with its behaviour policy and decide on appropriate sanctions in accordance with this policy. In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate.
- Staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance states that staff are allowed to search a pupil's phone if there is a good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person).

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The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs, disability)
- The pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in Part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

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 as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

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.

We will make sure pupils and parents/carers are aware of the disclaimer above by:

We include disclaimers in your permission forms for bringing a phone to school

We provide a copy of your policy and disclaimer to new pupils and parents/carers

We give talks to Year 6 about mobile arrangements.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a secured location.

Lost phones should be returned to 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

If there are any concerns regarding this policy, these should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher in a timely manner.

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

Dear Parents / Carers,

Mobile Phones in School

Our school policy is that **mobile phones are not allowed in school.**

Ongoing and recent technological advances have enabled mobile phones and other hand-held electronic devices to become multi-functional and far more sophisticated. Nearly all phones now have the facility to take photos and/or video and allow access to the internet for example. We do appreciate however, that for some year 5 and 6 children **who walk to or from school unaccompanied**, that parents may wish their child to have a mobile phone with them for their journey home.

In this circumstance only, we will allow a child to bring a basic mobile phone to school under the following conditions:

1. The phone must not be turned on within the school grounds **at any time whatsoever.**
2. The phone is given directly to the class teacher on arrival in a named, zipped purse/case or cover. Phones may not be kept in school bags.
3. Parents accept that the school will not be held responsible for the phone whilst on school premises.
4. Your child takes responsibility for collecting the phone at 3.20 pm and does not turn the phone on until they have left the school premises.

Please consider whether it is absolutely essential that your child brings a mobile phone to school.

St. William of Perth Catholic Primary School Agreement by parent and pupil of the conditions under which the pupil may bring a mobile phone to school.

Parent:

1. I will ensure my child understands that the phone must not be turned on within the school grounds at any time whatsoever.
2. I will ensure my child understands that the phone is given directly to the class teacher on arrival at school. I understand that the mobile phone may not be kept in my child's school bag.
3. I accept responsibility for the mobile phone whilst my child has brought it onto school premises. I understand that the school does not accept liability for the phone.
4. I understand that my child has the responsibility of collecting the phone from the teacher at the school gate at 3.20 pm and will not turn the phone on until they have left the school premises.

Name of pupil: _____

Signed by parent: _____

Name of parent: _____

Dated: _____

Pupil:

1. I understand that I may not turn my mobile phone on at school at any time and that it is for my journey time only.

2. I will ensure I pass the phone directly to my teacher as soon as I arrive in class in a named purse/case/cover and that I will collect it at 3.20 pm.
3. I will not turn my phone on until I have left the school gates.
4. I understand that I will not be able to bring a phone to school again if I turn it on at school or I leave it in my school bag. My phone will be confiscated for my parent(s) to collect.
5. When walking home I will use my phone responsibly and if I engage in any form of cyber bullying while using my phone, my parent(s) will be informed and I will no longer be allowed to bring my phone to school.

Signed by pupil: _____

Yours sincerely

J Willis

Mr J Willis
Headteacher