



St. Mary's Catholic
Primary School

MOBILE TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Agreed by Governors: April 2021

Review: April 2025

Rationale:

Aims of this policy:

- To inform staff, students and parents about safe mobile technology use in and out of school.
- To ensure staff, pupils and parents are familiar with the school policy on pupil use of personal mobile technology in school.
- To counter the use of text messaging in school as a form of bullying.
- To determine exactly when and where mobile phone use is permitted in the school.
- Offer safety guidelines to the students/staff on general mobile phone use.
- To outline the consequences of not adhering to the school mobile phone policy.
- To outline who has responsibility in the case of loss, theft or damage of mobile technology.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is paramount when adults, young people or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety.
- To ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social networking sites on or off mobile devices including contacting pupils or their family members, accepting or inviting friend requests from pupils or their family members, or following pupils or their family members on social media.

The school understands that some staff members are also parents of pupils at the school and, therefore, may wish to contact other parents. When doing so, staff will exercise their professional judgement and will not contact family members on social media if this would lead to a conflict of interest.

Staff will remain mindful of their use of social media and their web-based presence including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or indirectly which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute.

Premises, equipment and communication

School equipment and systems are available only for school-related activities and will not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised by the headteacher.

Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of school equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, could lead to an employee's dismissal.

Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material, or who are unsure about whether something they propose to do might breach this policy, should seek advice from the headteacher.

The school reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the headteacher or systems manager.

Photography and videos

Sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and can provide a record of our activities as a school.

Consent for taking photographs will be obtained from parents, or the pupil themselves, if they are deemed old enough and able to make the decision for themselves.

Where consent is given and then withdrawn it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared.

Names will not be used alongside images. Where this is necessary (eg. A competition winner) only a first name will be used and specific permission sought from parents.

The age of consent that is legislated is 13 and above; however, this is only applicable for online services provided directly to children. For everything else, an appropriate age for consent is considered on a case-by-case basis by the headteacher and a pupil's parents (where appropriate).

Pupils who have not provided consent, either personally or via their parents, to have their photograph taken or be filmed will have their wishes respected.

School equipment must be used to take photographs.

All photographs and videos will be available for scrutiny, and staff will be prepared to justify the images or footage taken.

Careful consideration will always be given to the activities which are being filmed or photographed, to ensure that images or videos are not indecent and cannot be misused.

When parents or spectators are taking photographs or filming at events and the images are for personal use we will publish guidance about image sharing in the event programmes and/or announce details of our policy before the start of the event.

Sexting

Sexting is when people share a sexual message and/or a naked or semi-naked image, video or text message with another person. It's also known as nude image sharing.

Children and young people may consent to sending a nude image of themselves. They can also be forced or coerced into sharing images by their peers or adults online.

If a child or young person originally shares the image consensually, they have no control over how other people might use it.

If the image is shared around peer groups it may lead to bullying and isolation. Perpetrators of abuse may circulate a nude image more widely and use this to blackmail a child and/or groom them for further sexual abuse.

It's a criminal offence to create or share explicit images of a child, even if the person doing it is a child. If sexting is reported to the police, they will make a record but may decide not take any formal action against a young person.

Sexting disclosures should follow the normal safeguarding practices and protocols. A child is likely to be very distressed especially if the image has been circulated widely and if they don't know who has shared it, seen it or where it has ended up. They will need pastoral support during the disclosure and after the event. They may even need immediate protection or a referral to social services.

Always...

- Inform the school Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Record the incident

- Act in accordance with school safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures

If there is an Indecent image of a child on a website or a social networking site then you should report the image to the site hosting it. Under normal circumstances you would follow the reporting procedures on the respective website; however, in the case of a sexting incident involving a child or young person where you feel that they may be at risk of abuse then you should report the incident directly to CEOP www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-report, so that law enforcement can make an assessment.

What to do and not do with the image ...

If the image has been shared across a personal mobile device:

Always ...

- Confiscate and secure the device(s)

Never...

- View the image unless there is a clear reason to do so
- Send, share or save the image anywhere
- Allow students to do any of the above

If the image has been shared across a school network, a website or a social network:

Always ...

- Block the network to all users and isolate the image

Never ...

- Send or print the image
- Move the material from one place to another
- View the image outside of the protocols in your safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.