# MOBILE PHONE POLICY

**The Saints Academies**

Reviewed and revised September 2026
Next review September 2027

## 1. Introduction and Aims

At St Augustine's, St Peter's and All Saints CE Academies and Horton St Michael's CE First School, the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The purpose of this policy is to create a safe, calm and focused school environment by ensuring that pupils do not have access to mobile phones and similar personal communication devices during the school day, except where an agreed exception applies.

The policy reflects the Department for Education's statutory guidance Mobile phones in schools, which schools in England are expected to follow from 1 September 2026. It should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the school's behaviour, safeguarding, online-safety, medical needs, equality and educational visits arrangements.

The policy recognises that mobile phones and smart devices can support communication, safety and accessibility outside school. However, their use in school can cause distraction, disruption, bullying, safeguarding risks and inappropriate recording or sharing of images and information.

## 2. Scope and Definitions

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones or similar devices on the school site, including staff, volunteers, governors/LAC members, pupils, parents, carers, visitors and contractors.

For the purposes of this policy, 'mobile phones and similar devices' includes smartphones, mobile phones, smartwatches and other personal interactive communication devices capable of sending or receiving calls, messages or notifications, accessing the internet, recording audio/video or providing similar functionality.

'School day' means the period from a pupil's arrival at school until the end of the school day, including lessons, movement between activities, breaktimes and lunchtime.

## 3. Core Principle – A Mobile-Phone-Free School Day

Pupils must not have access to mobile phones or similar personal communication devices during the school day. This includes lessons, transitions, breaktimes and lunchtime.

The school's default position is that pupils should not bring mobile phones or similar devices onto the school site. Where a pupil has an agreed reason for bringing a device, it must be stored securely and remain inaccessible to the pupil during the school day unless an agreed exception specifically requires access.

The school will consider individual circumstances and will make reasonable adjustments or other appropriate adaptations where required by law or where exceptional circumstances make this necessary.

## 4. Exceptions and Reasonable Adjustments

The Headteacher or an appropriately authorised member of staff may agree an individual arrangement where a pupil needs a device because of a medical condition, disability or SEND, safeguarding circumstance, or another exceptional circumstance. Each case will be considered on its individual merits.

- Any exception should specify what device may be used, why access is required, when access may occur and where it will take place.
- Where a device is required for medical purposes, the arrangement should be consistent with the pupil's individual healthcare plan or other relevant medical arrangements.
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the pupil's individual needs.
- An exception does not automatically provide unrestricted access to the device throughout the school day.
- Parents/carers should discuss a proposed exception with the school before the pupil brings the device to school.

## 5. Pupils Bringing Devices to School

Where the school has agreed that a pupil may bring a mobile phone or similar device, the device must be switched off or placed in an agreed non-notifying mode and handed to the designated member of staff or placed in the school's agreed secure storage on arrival.

The school will determine the storage arrangements for each academy and will take reasonable steps to keep devices secure. Devices remain brought onto the premises at the owner's risk unless otherwise agreed.

Pupils must not access, use, display or share a mobile phone or similar device during the school day unless an agreed exception applies.

## 6. Breaches, Confiscation and Behaviour

If a pupil is found using or accessing a mobile phone or similar device without permission, the device may be confiscated in accordance with the school's behaviour policy and this policy.

The length of confiscation and any further sanction will be proportionate to the circumstances, taking account of the pupil's age, individual needs, SEND/disability and any relevant mitigating factors.

Repeated or serious breaches may result in additional consequences under the Behaviour Policy. Parents/carers may be contacted where appropriate.

The school will not routinely promise that a confiscated device will be returned at the end of the same school day; the arrangements for return will depend on the circumstances and the school's Behaviour Policy.

## 7. Searching for Mobile Phones and Similar Devices

The Headteacher and authorised staff may identify mobile phones and similar devices as items that may be searched for under the school's Behaviour Policy. Where a search is necessary, it will be undertaken lawfully, reasonably and proportionately and in accordance with the Department for Education's Searching, screening and confiscation guidance and the school's procedures.

Where a search identifies safeguarding concerns, including inappropriate images, threats, bullying, exploitation or other harmful content, the matter will be managed under the school's safeguarding and behaviour procedures and referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate.

## 8. Safeguarding, Recording and Online Safety

Mobile phones and similar devices must not be used to photograph, film, record or otherwise capture pupils or staff without appropriate authorisation. The taking, possessing or sharing of inappropriate or indecent images is a serious safeguarding matter and will be dealt with in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Any concern about bullying, intimidation, harassment, exploitation, inappropriate images, harmful online content or other misuse of a device should be reported promptly to the appropriate member of staff and, where relevant, the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy, Behaviour Policy and arrangements for filtering and monitoring.

## 9. Staff Personal Mobile Phones

- Staff must not use personal mobile phones for personal reasons during contact time with pupils.
- Personal phones should be kept securely and should be on silent or switched off when staff are working with pupils, unless an agreed exceptional circumstance applies.
- Personal phones must not normally be used in spaces where pupils are present, including classrooms and playgrounds.
- Personal use should be limited to appropriate non-contact times and places where pupils are not present.
- Staff must not use personal mobile phones to photograph, film or record pupils. School-approved equipment and systems must be used for authorised photographs, recordings and educational purposes.
- Where a personal device is required for an authorised professional purpose, its use must be appropriate, proportionate and consistent with school policies.
- Staff should report any concerning use of mobile devices to the Executive Headteacher and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead, as appropriate.
- Where there is an exceptional personal circumstance requiring a staff member to remain contactable, this should be discussed with the Executive Headteacher.

## 10. Mobile Phones for Work-Related Purposes and Educational Visits

The school recognises that mobile phones can be useful for communication during off-site activities. Staff use must be professional, proportionate and consistent with the educational visit risk assessment and school procedures.

- Staff should use the school's designated communication arrangements where available.
- Staff must not use personal phones to photograph or record pupils.
- Routine contact with parents/carers during trips should be made through the school office or designated school mobile, where practicable.
- Any use of mobile phones on residential visits outside the normal school day will be governed by the arrangements communicated for that visit.

- Parents/carers accompanying visits will be reminded of expectations regarding photography, recording, contacting other families and social-media sharing.

## 11. Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are asked to use mobile phones courteously and appropriately on the school site and must not photograph, film or record children other than their own unless the school has specifically authorised this.

Parents/carers should not attempt to contact their child directly by mobile phone during the school day. The school office should be used for routine or emergency communication with pupils.

At school events, the school may permit photography or filming subject to the arrangements communicated for the event. Parents/carers must respect the privacy and safeguarding of other children and must not publish or share images of other children without appropriate permission.

## 12. Visitors, Volunteers, Governors/LAC Members and Contractors

Visitors, volunteers, governors/LAC members and contractors are expected to follow the same principles as staff while on the school premises. Personal mobile-phone use should not take place in the presence of pupils unless it is authorised, necessary and appropriate.

Visitors will be informed of relevant expectations when they sign in or as part of the arrangements for their visit.

## 13. Communication and Emergencies

The school office is the primary route for contacting pupils and staff during the school day. In an emergency, parents/carers should contact the school office rather than attempting to contact their child directly.

The school will ensure that pupils can access appropriate communication with parents/carers where this is necessary for their welfare or safety.

## 14. Related Policies and Guidance

- Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy and risk assessments
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy / individual healthcare plans
- Equality and SEND arrangements
- Data Protection and Privacy arrangements
- Filtering and Monitoring arrangements
- Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Department for Education: Mobile phones in schools
- Department for Education: Searching, screening and confiscation in schools

## 15. Dissemination, Monitoring and Review

This policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of induction and will be available to parents/carers via the school office and website. The expectations will be communicated clearly to pupils in an age-appropriate way.

The school will monitor implementation of the policy and consider feedback, incidents, safeguarding concerns and the effectiveness of arrangements. The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if statutory guidance or school circumstances change.

## 16. Approval

Reviewed and revised: September 2026

Next review: September 2027

Signed: Karen Mann, Chair of LAC

Signed: Rebecca Walker, Executive Headteacher