

# St Mary's RC Primary Academy Boston



## Mobile Phone Policy

Mission Statement

We love, we grow, we learn; walking with faith in the light of the lord.

Date Adopted: Lent 2020  
Date of Review: Lent 2022

**Introduction**

St Mary's RC Primary Academy Boston is committed to ensuring the safety of its pupils. We recognise the importance of Mobile Phones in school for communication purposes, but are aware that casual or inappropriate use of Mobile Phones in school could pose a risk to pupils and adults.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and visitors.

Please note that for the purpose of this policy the term 'Mobile Phone' also covers any electronic device with the capacity to be used as a form of communication, either through the device itself or any applications stored in the device.

## **Staff Personal Mobile Phones**

Staff will not use personal mobile phones while working. This protects staff from being distracted from their work from allegations of inappropriate use. Phones must be kept out of sight of pupils and should be on silent so that they cannot be heard by the pupils.

### **Usage**

When staff have a break during their working hours, they may use their Mobile Phone but only in areas where pupils are not present; such as the Staffroom.

In an emergency, staff needing to make a personal call during a lesson or whilst on duty should first obtain agreement from their Line Manager, ensuring that adequate cover has been put in place and that the phone call is made in an area not used by pupils.

A personal Mobile Phone may be taken on any educational visits or outings in accordance with the following guidance.

The school recognises that the use of Mobile Phones on educational visits can be beneficial in ensuring safety for all members of the school party. However, it is important that the following guidance is adhered to in order to keep pupils safe and protect staff and volunteers from accusations of inappropriate use:

- Members of staff and volunteers may carry their personal Mobile phones within the following guidelines
  - Mobile Phones should only be used to contact other staff members or volunteers on the visit, the school or the emergency services. If possible these calls should be made away from the pupils.
  - Personal Mobile Phones should not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of the visit. This means that personal calls or texts should not be made or accepted. On residential visits this will apply while the member of staff/volunteer is on duty. Staff and volunteers should ensure that their next of kin are provided with the school telephone number so that in an emergency the school is contacted and will make contact with the relevant person.
  - If it becomes necessary for a member of staff or volunteer to make a personal call or text another staff member should be informed and take responsibility for the pupils whilst this is being carried out, away from the sight and sound of any pupils.
  - Mobile phones should not be used under any circumstances to take photographs or videos of pupils. Volunteers are acting as staff members for the duration of the visit and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including their own child, using a Mobile Phone or any other Mobile Device, e.g. personal cameras or iPads, without permission from a staff member. Volunteers may be asked to take photographs of pupils using a school camera or iPad, which must be returned to a staff member at the end of the visit.
  - Staff members may ask volunteers to provide them with their mobile phone number for the duration of the trip so that they can be contacted in case of an emergency. It is the staff member's responsibility that these Phone numbers are not held on any mobile device or in any written form after the end of the visit.
  - It is advised that if a staff member is using their Mobile Phone, that if they need to contact anyone during the visit they pre dial 141 (some Mobile providers use a different prefix – staff are advised to check this with their provider) before the number so that their personal phone number is protected.
- Appendix 1 provides guidance for volunteers on educational visits

Camera or video functions on personal Mobile Phones must not be used in the school by staff to take images of pupils under any circumstances.

Staff should not be required to make work calls on their own Phones, either Mobile or Landline, however if this should be necessary then they are advised to use the prefix 141 before dialling the number to ensure their own number is protected.

Failure by staff to comply with the Mobile Phone policy guidelines could result in disciplinary action.

### **Emergencies**

Staff must give the School's telephone number, 01205 362092, to anyone who would need to contact them in case of an emergency during the school working hours, 9am – 3.30pm.

## **Misuse**

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many Mobile Phones that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. It is also recognised that Mobile Phones can cause unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

When Mobile Phones are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, partially in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all Mobile Phones is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

## **Pupils**

The school recognises that pupils who walk to and from school without an accompanying adult may carry a Mobile Phone for safety. In these cases, pupils may bring a Mobile Phone onto the school premises but must hand over to their Class Teacher at the start of the day, and collect it at the end of the school day.

Parents/Carers should be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to pupils having a Mobile phone in terms of personal safety there are also some associated risks such as potential theft, bullying and inappropriate contact, including grooming by unsuitable persons. We would also like to alert Parents/Carers to the risks that using a Mobile Phone whilst walking to and from school, the pupil who are concentrating on their phone can have reduced general safety awareness which may result in road accidents and/or injury if a pupil is not paying attention to their surroundings.

Mobile phones will be kept safely in a locked cupboard. Whilst the school will take every reasonable care, it accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to Mobile Phones. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure Mobile Phones are properly insured. It is recommended that pupil's phones are security marked and password protected.

Pupils are not allowed to bring Mobile Phones into any other areas of the school. They must be turned off when they enter the school gate and remain off until they leave.

Any Mobile Phones discovered to have been brought into the school and not handed in will be confiscated immediately. Parents/Carers will be asked to collect the Mobile Phone from the school office.

Pupils are not allowed to carry their Mobile Phones on any educational visits.

If a member of staff has any suspicion that a Mobile Phone brought into school by a pupil has unsuitable material stored on it, the pupil will be required to hand over the phone immediately to a member of staff and Parents/Carers will be asked to collect it from a member of SLT. In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the Mobile Phone may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the phone will be handed over to the Headteacher for further investigation and the Parent/Carer will be asked to collect it from them.

**Visitors, Parents and Carers**

It is recognised that many Parents/Carers use their Mobile Phones as a camera/video device to record their child in special performances in school e.g. class productions, assemblies etc. On these occasions the use of a Mobile Phone will be permitted for photography/videoing only; a member of staff will always remind Parents/Carers before a performance that images should only be taken if they include their own child and that the use of these images is for their own personal use and must not be uploaded for any internet use, including Facebook, Twitter or any other social networking sites or used in any other form of publication unless they are solely of their own child.

St Mary’s recognises that pupils may inadvertently be included in photographs by another parent; the school, therefore, is obliged to warn parents the legal and safeguarding risks of publishing such photographs on any platform.

The placing of photographs of children on social media is dangerous and parents may be in breach of the Data Protection Act if they upload photos of other pupils without the explicit consent of that pupil’s parents.

Signed .....  
Chair of Governors

Date .....

## **Guidance for Volunteers using Mobile Phones on Educational Visits**

Thank you for volunteering to help on our educational visit. During the visit you are acting as a member of staff with regard to the safety and well-being of the pupils in your group and we therefore ask that you follow the guidelines below in accordance with St Mary's RC Primary Academy Boston's Mobile Phone policy.

Mobile Phones should only be used to contact staff members or volunteers on the visit, the school or emergency services. If possible these calls should be made away from any pupils.

Personal phones must not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of the visit. On residential visits this will apply whilst on duty. This means that personal calls or texts must not be made or accepted. You should ensure that your next of kin are provided with the school telephone number so that in an emergency the school is contacted and will make contact with you.

If it becomes necessary for you to make a personal call or text another staff member should be informed and take responsibility for the pupils whilst this is being carried out, away from the sight and sound of any pupils.

Mobile Phones should not be used under any circumstances to take photographs or videos of pupils. You are acting as a staff member for the duration of the visit and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including your own child, using a Mobile Phone or any other Mobile Device, e.g. personal cameras or iPads, without permission from a staff member. You may be asked to take photographs of pupils using a school camera or iPad, which must be returned to a staff member at the end of the visit.

Staff members may ask you to provide them with their mobile phone number for the duration of the trip so that they can be contacted in case of an emergency. It is the staff member's responsibility that these phone numbers are not held on any mobile device or in any written form after the end of the visit.

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines please speak to a member of staff.

Thank you for your support and co-operation to ensure the safety of all the pupils.