



St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

Our Christian vision is rooted in the words:
"Whatever you do, do it with all your heart."
Colossians 3:23

Guided by this vision, we believe every child is unique, valued and full of potential. We nurture confident, happy and determined young people with enquiring minds and a curiosity about the world around them.

Through high expectations, meaningful learning and strong relationships, we support every child to flourish creatively, academically, socially and spiritually. We encourage perseverance, compassion and respect so that our children grow in character and develop the confidence to make wise choices in their lives.

Inspired by the words of Jesus that all may *"live life in all its fullness"* (John 10:10), we work together as a community of children, staff, governors, church and families to create an environment where everyone feels valued and supported.

Mobile Phone Policy

Policy written by Kirsten Cameron

Policy approved in Summer 2026

Policy to be reviewed in Summer 2028

Linked Policies: Child Protection and Safeguarding
Online Safety and Acceptable User Policy
Behaviour Policy
Data Protection Policy (MAT)
Staff Disciplinary (MAT)
Staff Code of Conduct (MAT)



St Edmundsbury and Ipswich
Diocesan Multi Academy Trust

Version History:

Version	Date	Author	Changes Made
First Edition	April 2026	Headteacher	

Intention and Aims:

At St Matthew's Church of England Primary School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We recognise that mobile phones, including wearable technology, are an important part of everyday life for our children, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Definition: For the purposes of this policy the term 'mobile phone' refers to mobile phones, tablets, e.g., iPads, and wearable technology, including but not limited to, smart watches and Bluetooth headsets.

This policy aims to:

- promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for children, staff, parents and volunteers in school
- support the other policies of the school, especially those related to Child Protection and Behaviour.
- 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
 - inappropriate use of technology in the classroom

As a school, we acknowledge that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks. This access means some children, whilst at school, could potentially sexually harass, bully, and control others via their mobile phone, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content.

Relevant Documentation

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](#).

Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy.

Volunteers, or anyone else engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Headteacher, Online Safety Lead and Governors are responsible for monitoring the policy every two years, reviewing it and holding staff and children 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.

Use of Mobile Phones by Staff

Personal Mobile Phones

The DfE's non- statutory mobile phone guidance states that staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of the children throughout the school day.

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive personal calls, or send texts, in the presence of children.

Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time where possible, and to areas of the school where children are not present (such as the Staff Room, SLT offices and the main school office).

There may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for special arrangements to be in place to allow a member of staff to have use of their personal phone during contact time. For instance:

- 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-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements for emergency contact. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, members of staff should use the School Office number – 01473 251614 - as a point of emergency contact.

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).

Staff must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. This includes any staff work phones. Failure by Staff to do so could result in data breaches.

More detailed guidance can be found in the MAT Data Protection Policy and in the school's Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy.

Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents or children, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their personal contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or children.

More detailed guidance can be found in the school's Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of children, their work, or anything else that could identify a child. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

Using Personal Mobile Phones for Work Purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for Staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- use of multi-factor authentication
- emergency evacuations
- supervising off-site trips

In these circumstances, Staff will:

- use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with the Staff Code of Conduct
- not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of children, their work, or anything else which could identify a child, unless agreed by a member of SLT.
- refrain from using their phones to contact parents where possible. Contact should normally be made via the School Office. If use of a personal mobile is unavoidable, the personal number must be withheld.

Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the Trust's Staff Disciplinary Policy for more information.

Use of Mobile Phones by Children

The DfE's non-statutory mobile phone guidance states that children should not use mobile phones throughout the school day.

Mobile phones are a prominent feature of modern society, therefore children in Years 5 and 6 are permitted to bring mobile phones to school. Children may bring a mobile phone into school under the following strict conditions:

- the child **regularly** walks/cycles home on their own.
- a Child Mobile Phone Permission Form, agreeing to the Mobile Phone Code of Conduct for Children, is signed by the child and parent and given to the Online Safety Leader.
- the phone is switched off as the child enters school premises and handed in each day and is not switched on again until they have left the school premises.

- the school accepts no liability for the loss/damage of any personal equipment whilst on school premises.
- the camera on the phone is never used by a child to take photographs or video of another child or an adult.

Unauthorised Possession of a Mobile Phone

Where a child is found by a member of staff to be in the possession of a mobile phone, in the first instance the phone will be taken from the child and taken to the School Office where it can be collected at the end of the school day. Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from children under Sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#). On subsequent occasions, the phone will be taken to the School Office and returned only to the parent, guardian or carer.

If a child is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other children or teachers, the images must be removed by the child in the presence of a Senior Leader.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct:

- 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.

The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the Police or other agencies as appropriate.

Mobile phones can contain files or data which relate to an offence, or which may cause harm to another person. This includes, but is not limited to, indecent images of children, pornography, abusive messages, images or videos, or evidence relating to suspected criminal behaviour. Staff, therefore, have the power to search children's phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#) if they have reasonable cause. Such searches MUST ONLY be carried out by the Headteacher or a member of staff authorised by the Headteacher.

If there is any suspicion that the search will reveal an extreme level of indecent image of a child and/or video, the member of staff should confiscate the device and pass it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will deliver it to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. In no circumstances should a staff member copy, print, share, store or save such images.

Handling such reports or concerns can be especially complicated and schools should follow the principles as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. The UK Council for Internet Safety also provides guidance to support School Staff and designated safeguarding leads: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The phone will be retained in the School Office until the child's parents, guardian or carer are contacted and asked to discuss the matter with the Headteacher, at which meeting the phone may be returned or kept and handed to the Police.

The right to bring mobile phones onto school premises will be revoked if a child fails to adhere to school policy.

Use of Smartwatches by Children

The DfE's [non-statutory mobile phone guidance](#) includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in their policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smart watches have wellness and health-related features.

Children are banned from wearing smartwatches and if they are bought into school they will be placed in an envelope and stored in the School Office. Parents will be contacted and asked to collect the item at the end of the school day.

Use of Mobile Phones by Parents, Visitors and Volunteers

Parents, volunteers and visitors should only use personal mobile phones in staff-only areas of the school. Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to the rules set out for staff in this policy if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- not taking pictures or recordings of children, unless it is a public event (such as a school fair or performance), or the child is their own child
- using any pictures or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- not using phones in lessons, or when working with children.

Parents, visitors and volunteers are also asked to keep their mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds.

Parents, 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.

Volunteers attending school trips must not:

- use their phone to make contact with other parents
- take photos or recordings of children, their work, or anything else which could identify a child

Volunteers attending trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for children using their phones 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.

Loss, Theft or Damage

Children bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, or easily identifiable, when handed in at the start of the day and should secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on the school site, or while children are travelling to and from school, or for mobile phones on school premises that have not been handed. This disclaimer is included in the Child Mobile Phone Permission Form and the Mobile Phone Policy Information Slip for Visitors.

Confiscated phones or other devices will be stored in the School Office in the school safe.

Phones found on the school premises should be returned to the School Office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

Monitoring and Review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of children's education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, we will take into account:

- feedback from parents and children
- feedback from staff
- records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations.



Mobile Phone Policy

Information for Visitors

At St Matthew's Church of England Primary School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Use of Mobile Phones in School:

- Parents, visitors and volunteers should only use personal mobile phones in staff-only areas of the school such as the staff room, SLT offices and the main school office.
- Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to the rules set out for staff in the Mobile Phone Policy if they are on the school site during the school day.
This means:
 - not taking pictures or recordings of children, unless it is a public event (such as a school fair), or the child is their own child
 - using any pictures or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
 - not using phones in lessons, or when working with children
- Please keep your mobile phone on silent / vibrate while on the school site.
- Parents or volunteers attending school trips must not:
 - use their phone to make contact with other parents
 - take photos or recordings of children, their work, or anything else which could identify a child
- The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our Mobile Phone Policy is available from the School Office.

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Mobile Phone Agreement for Years 5 and 6



This agreement is between parents, children and the school and is designed to ensure the safety and security of children and their property.

I give permission for _____ (child's name), in class _____ to be allowed to bring a mobile phone to school because:

The telephone number of the mobile is: _____

My child agrees:

- ★ I will only bring a mobile phone to school if I need it to keep me safe when I am walking to or from school without an adult, and only if my parents say that I can.
- ★ I will switch my phone off as soon as I get to the school gates in the morning.
- ★ I won't switch it on again until I am outside the school gates.
- ★ I will place my phone into the 'phone box' and sign the sheet as soon as I arrive in the classroom.
- ★ If I forget to hand my phone in, I will tell a member of staff as soon as possible.
- ★ I will be responsible for remembering to collect my phone at the end of the day.
- ★ I will not touch anyone else's phone.
- ★ I will not use my phone to take any photographs at school, either in the classroom, playground or anywhere else on the school site.
- ★ The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or while children are travelling to and from school.

I understand that if I break any of these rules, a phone call will be made to my parents which may mean I cannot bring my phone to school.

Parent/Carer: I confirm that I have read and discussed the school's Mobile Phone Policy and the Mobile Phone Agreement to my child and confirm that they may take a mobile phone into school on that basis.

Parent/Carer signature _____ Date _____

Child: I will follow the school mobile phone rules.

Child signature _____ Date _____

Our school Online Safety Leader is Miss Arnold. Please feel free to contact her if you have any concerns regarding online safety.