

St Thomas More Primary School

Mobile Phone policy

Reviewed every 3 years



Reviewed	Agreed by GB	Next review
September 2026	September 2026	September 2029

Introduction and aims

At St Thomas More Primary School we are committed to providing a safe, calm and focused environment in which pupils can learn and thrive.

The school operates a mobile phone free environment for pupils. Pupils are not permitted to use, access or possess mobile phones or smartwatches on the school premises during the school day.

This policy aims to:

- Ensure that the school environment is free from mobile phones for pupils.
- Reduce distractions and support pupils to remain focused on learning.
- Support positive face-to-face communication and relationships between pupils.
- Reduce the risks associated with inappropriate use of technology, including cyberbullying, recording and sharing images, and accessing inappropriate content.
- Support safeguarding and child protection.
- Reduce the risk of theft, loss or damage to valuable personal devices.
- Provide clear and consistent expectations for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers.
- Support the school's behaviour, safeguarding, child protection, online safety and acceptable use policies.

Throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' includes mobile phones and similar communication devices.

The school recognises that mobile phones and smartwatches can provide useful functions outside school. However, the school considers that pupils should not have access to these devices during the school day or while on the school premises.

Relevant guidance

This policy has been developed with regard to relevant Department for Education guidance and statutory requirements relating to mobile phones, behaviour, safeguarding, searching and confiscation.

The policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy

Roles and responsibilities

Staff

All staff, including teachers, support staff and supply staff, are expected to actively enforce this policy and challenge breaches of the mobile phone restrictions consistently.

Staff should ensure that pupils understand that mobile phones are not permitted on the school premises.

Volunteers, contractors and anyone else engaged by the school should alert a member of staff if they witness or become aware of a breach of this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring this policy and reviewing it every three years.

Staff will address questions or concerns from parents/carers promptly and clearly communicate the reasons for the school's mobile phone environment.

Governors

The governing body will monitor the implementation of this policy where appropriate and will receive information regarding significant issues arising from its operation.

Use of mobile phones by staff

The school recognises that staff may need access to mobile phones for legitimate personal or professional reasons. Staff must use their personal mobile phones responsibly and in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct and relevant school policies.

Personal mobile phones

Staff, including volunteers, contractors and anyone else engaged by the school, should not use personal mobile phones for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day.

Personal mobile phones should be kept securely and used only in appropriate staff-only areas and during appropriate non-contact time, unless there is an emergency or an agreed professional reason for their use.

In exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher may agree specific arrangements where a member of staff needs to be contactable for an urgent personal or family matter.

The school office number 0208 856 9153 should be used as the primary point of emergency contact during the school day.

Data protection

Staff must not use personal mobile phones to process personal data or confidential school information.

Personal devices must not be used to photograph or record pupils, their work or anything else that could identify a pupil.

Where photographs or recordings are required for legitimate school purposes, school-approved equipment must be used.

Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to pupils or parents/carers, including through social media, messaging applications or other communication platforms.

Staff must not use personal mobile phones to communicate directly with pupils or parents/carers unless this has been specifically authorised under an appropriate school procedure.

Use of personal mobiles for work purposes

There may be circumstances where staff need to use a mobile phone for legitimate professional purposes, for example:

- Emergency situations
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising school trips
- Supervising residential visits
- Accessing authorised multi-factor authentication
- Other circumstances specifically authorised by the school

In such circumstances, staff must use the device appropriately and professionally and must not use it to photograph or record pupils unless this has been specifically authorised and is carried out using approved equipment and procedures.

Where possible, the school will provide an appropriate school device for activities where mobile communication is required.

Work phones

Where the school provides mobile phones to staff for work purposes, only authorised staff may use them.

School phones must only be used for legitimate work purposes and all communication and conduct associated with the device must be appropriate and professional.

Sanctions

Failure by staff to comply with this policy may result in action under the school's relevant staff procedures.

Use of mobile phones by pupils

The school operates a strict mobile phone free environment.

This means that pupils are not permitted to:

- Bring a mobile phone into school.
- Bring a smartwatch or other smart wearable device into school.
- Use a mobile phone anywhere on the school premises.
- Have a mobile phone in their possession during the school day.
- Keep a mobile phone in a school bag, pocket or other location on the school premises.
- Use a mobile phone during lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes, between lessons, assemblies, clubs, educational activities or school trips.
- Use another pupil's mobile phone or smartwatch.
- Use a mobile phone to photograph, film or record anyone on school premises.
- Use a mobile phone to communicate with people outside school during the school day.

The prohibition applies **regardless of whether the device is switched on, switched off, on silent or in flight mode.**

Pupils who need to contact a parent/carer during the school day must do so through the school office and with the permission of a member of staff.

Parents/carers who need to contact their child during the school day should contact the school office rather than contacting the pupil directly.

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to make sure they understand the decision to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying. Pupils will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

Smartwatches and other smart devices

The school's prohibition includes smartwatches and other wearable or portable devices with communication or smart technology.

This includes devices that can:

- Send or receive messages.
- Make or receive calls.
- Access the internet.
- Connect to a mobile network.

- Connect to another smart device.
- Record audio or images.
- Access social media or other applications.
- Provide communication or notification functions.

A smartwatch does not become permissible simply because its communication functions have been disabled.

Pupils who wish to wear a watch may wear a traditional watch without smart or communication functions, subject to the school's uniform policy.

Exceptions for medical or safeguarding reasons

The school's expectation is that pupils will not bring or use mobile phones or smartwatches on the school premises.

Where a pupil has a medical device that requires a mobile phone to provide connectivity, the school will make appropriate arrangements to support the pupil's medical needs while maintaining the school's mobile phone-free environment.

In these circumstances:

- The mobile phone required to support the medical device will be held securely and supervised by a designated member of staff.
- The pupil will not have unrestricted access to the mobile phone.
- The phone will only be made available or used when required for the operation or monitoring of the pupil's medical device.
- The member of staff responsible for supervising the device will ensure that it is stored securely when it is not required.
- Arrangements will be agreed in advance with the pupil, parents/carers and the appropriate member of school staff.
- The school will ensure that the agreed arrangements are communicated to relevant staff so that the pupil's medical needs can be supported consistently.

The school will work with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant medical professionals where necessary to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place.

Sanctions

A breach of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Where a pupil is found to have a mobile phone or smartwatch on the school premises, the device may be confiscated in accordance with the school's procedures and applicable guidance.

The school will determine the appropriate consequence based on the circumstances of the incident, including whether the pupil has breached the policy previously.

Repeated or deliberate breaches may result in further sanctions under the Behaviour Policy.

Where a device has been used to record, photograph, film, bully, harass, threaten or otherwise cause harm to another person, the school will respond in accordance with its safeguarding, behaviour and online safety procedures.

The school may search for and/or confiscate a mobile phone or other device where this is permitted under applicable legislation and Department for Education guidance.

Any search or confiscation will be carried out in accordance with the school's procedures and relevant statutory guidance.

The school will consider any relevant individual circumstances, including special educational needs, disability, medical requirements or safeguarding concerns.

Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers are expected to support the school's mobile phone environment.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers should not use mobile phones in a way that disrupts learning, compromises safeguarding or results in pupils being photographed or recorded without appropriate permission.

In particular, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers must not:

- Photograph or record pupils without appropriate permission.
- Photograph or record pupils' work where this could identify a pupil without appropriate permission.
- Use mobile phones while working directly with pupils where this is inappropriate.
- Attempt to contact pupils directly on their personal mobile phones during the school day.
- Encourage or facilitate pupils to breach this policy.

Parents/carers who need to contact their child during the school day must contact the school office.

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must follow the instructions of school staff regarding the use of mobile phones and must not use their devices to photograph or record pupils unless specifically authorised.

Loss, theft or damage

As pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones or smartwatches onto the school premises, the school strongly advises parents/carers that such devices should be left at home.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones or smartwatches that are brought onto the school premises in breach of this policy, including devices that are lost, damaged or stolen.

Where a device is confiscated by the school, it will be stored securely in accordance with the school's confiscation procedures.

Confiscated devices will be returned in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and confiscation procedures.

Any device that is lost and subsequently found should be handed to the school office.

Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour, wellbeing and safeguarding.

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.
- The frequency and nature of mobile phone and smartwatch breaches.
- Relevant advice and guidance from the Department for Education, the local authority and other relevant organisations.

Any concerns regarding this policy should be brought to the attention of the headteacher

The policy will be reviewed by September 2029 or sooner where there are significant changes to legislation or relevant guidance.