# St. Mary's Church of England Primary School Fownhope

# MOBILE PHONE POLICY

*"Walking together in the fruit of the Spirit"*

## SEPTEMBER 2026

*A rich education is more than simply learning reading, writing and maths. It is about helping a child grow into their full potential as inquisitive, well balanced and cheerful adults. As a Church school we nurture children to display the 'fruit of the Spirit', which is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23). At St Mary's you will find children growing in mind, body and spirit as they form good relationships with each other, the staff and discover a faith which will sustain them in a rapidly changing world.*

## Introduction and aims

At St. Mary's Primary School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents and volunteers
- support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

This policy also aims to 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
- appropriate use of technology in the classroom

We understand that parents may wish for their child to carry a mobile phone for their personal safety, whilst pupils may wish to bring additional devices to school for other reasons.

This policy establishes how personal electronic devices should be used by pupils in school to ensure both personal safety and an appropriate learning environment.

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to the following items:

- mobile phones
- smart watches
- personal digital assistants (PDAs)
- handheld entertainment systems, e.g. video game consoles, iPods
- portable internet devices, e.g. tablets, laptops
- wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems, e.g. devices used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture and/or recording, sound recording, and information transmitting, receiving and/or storing

**Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory and good practice guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Mobile phones in schools'
- DfE 'Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents'
- DfE 'Behaviour in Schools'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school'
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

**Roles and responsibilities**

The Governing Body will be responsible for:

- the implementation of the policy and procedures.
- evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and procedures.
- ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds.
- reviewing the policy annually.

**The Headteacher will be responsible for:**

- handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- the day-to-day implementation and management of the policy.
- informing parents and pupils of the Personal Electronic Devices Agreement.
- communicating this policy to the relevant staff members and the wider school community.
- communicating what devices can be brought to school and when they can and cannot be used.
- deciding how best to achieve a mobile phone-free school environment.

**Staff members will be responsible for:**

- negotiating incidents of cyberbullying in conjunction with the Headteacher, in line with the Anti-bullying Policy and the Behaviour Policy.
- applying this policy consistently and proportionately, including confiscating devices where appropriate.
- reporting any safeguarding concerns to the DSL, or deputy, where misuse indicates risk of harm.
- teaching pupils about the risks associated with mobile phones, smart technology, social media and online activity in accordance with the school's Online Safety Policy.

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

**The DSL will be responsible for:**

- liaising with and reporting the relevant information to children's social care and/or the police, when it is necessary to do so.

**Parents/Visitors/Contractors/Volunteers**

Mobile phones must not be used on St. Mary's Primary School grounds or in the school buildings. We recognise that contractors, IT Technicians etc. will need access to mobile phones and they will be directed to office or staffroom areas.

**Ownership and responsibility**

Pupils are responsible for their own belongings. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing property that is lost, stolen or damaged either on school premises or travelling to and from school.

Staff will be protected against liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to personal devices that have been confiscated as an appropriate sanction, provided that they have acted lawfully.

**Searching pupils**

School pupils have a right for their private life to be respected under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). This right is not absolute, and the school can interfere with this right as long as it is justified, proportionate, and aligns with the powers to search in the Education Act 1996.

All searches will be conducted in line with the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.

The Headteacher, and other authorised staff members, will have the power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item. Mobile phones and similar devices will be deemed as prohibited items that may be searched for in line with the Behaviour Policy.

In all cases the authorised member of staff will always:

- seek the co-operation of the pupil before conducting a search.
- ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted.
- give the pupil the opportunity to ask any questions so that their agreement is informed.
- have due regard to the DfE's 'Searching, screening and confiscation' guidance.

Staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers. Staff conducting a search must not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing - outer clothing means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear and includes hats, shoes, boots or scarves. Possessions means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control - this includes desks, lockers and bags.

A staff member may ask a pupil to show them what they are doing on their mobile phone or tablet if they reasonably believe that the pupil is using the device to cause harm. If it is

judged reasonable, the staff member may inspect the files or data on a pupil's electronic device and delete them if necessary.

Staff members will ensure they have a good reason to examine and delete data on a pupil's electronic device. When determining a good reason to examine data, staff members will ensure they reasonably suspect that the data has been, or could be, used to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.

When determining a good reason to delete data, staff members will consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence and if so, choose not to delete the data. The data may be deleted if it is found likely to cause harm to any person, and the pupil and/or parent refuses to delete the data themselves.

If a search uncovers a device that is being used to cause harm, or which contains prohibited material such as pornography, a staff member can confiscate the device. If a staff member finds child pornography, it must be given to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. Where staff find stolen items like mobile devices, they must be given to the police as soon as reasonably practicable.

The staff member conducting the search must be the same sex as the pupil being searched. A witness to the search must be present; this should also be a staff member of the same sex as the pupil being searched.

Pupils are required to comply with any request to check their electronic device.

Pupils are required to comply with any request to disable the screen lock function of their electronic device and show any staff member what they are doing. Any pupil who refuses to comply with these requests will be disciplined in line with the Behaviour Policy.

**Sanctions**

The school will apply sanctions for breaches of this policy in a consistent and proportionate manner, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Where a breach gives cause to suspect a pupil may be suffering, or may be at risk of, harm, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the DSL.

Confiscated personal electronic devices will be locked away securely in the **Headteacher's office**.

Bullying via personal electronic devices will be dealt with in line with the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

**Permission Slip**

When a child needs to bring a phone into school because they travel to and from school alone, a permission slip **(Appendix 1)** must be signed by the parent and the pupil and the phone must be left in the school office at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day. Phones should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone. Parents are advised that St. Mary's Primary School accepts no liability for the loss or

damage to mobile phones which are brought into the school or the school grounds or whilst pupils are travelling to and from school.

Pupils are responsible for adhering to the provisions outlined in this policy.

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| This policy was approved by the Governing Body on: | 22nd September 2026 |
| Signature of Headteacher: | T. Milne |
| Signature of Chair of Governors: | A. Gunn |
| Review Date: | September 2027 |

**Appendix 1**


# St. Mary's C of E School

Biggs Lane | Fownhope | Herefordshire | HR1 4PG

Tel: 01432 860474

web: www.stmarys.hereford.sch.uk
email: admin@stmarys.hereford.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr. T. Milne


## Permission for allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

**PUPIL DETAILS: Pupil Name** _____**Class** _____

**Parent (s) name (s)**_____

The school has agreed to allow _____ to bring their mobile phone to school because they travel to and from school alone. Pupils who bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the St. Mary's CofE Primary School Mobile Phone policy.

The school reserves the right to revoke permission if a pupil does not abide by this Mobile Phone Policy.

**Pupil signature** _____

**Parent signature** _____

**Date** _____