

Mobile Phone Policy - 2026



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At St Margaret's CE Primary School, our Christian vision *Created to Shine* and our values of *Love* and *Aspire* guide how we create a safe, respectful, and flourishing learning environment. The use of mobile phones in school is managed in line with our commitment to safeguarding, wellbeing, and equity. This policy ensures that pupils can learn without distraction, that staff can maintain professional boundaries, and that the school environment reflects our values of love, respect, and aspiration.

Purpose of This Policy

This policy sets out how the school meets statutory expectations from the **2026 DfE mobile phones guidance**, **KCSIE**, and **Ofsted**. It ensures that mobile phones do not disrupt learning, compromise safeguarding, or undermine the calm, purposeful atmosphere of the school.

This policy applies to all pupils, staff, parents, volunteers, contractors, and visitors.

3. Statutory and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by:

- DfE Mobile Phones in Schools 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework
- The school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, and Acceptable Use Agreements

4. Principles Underpinning the Policy

- Safeguarding is paramount.
- Online safety is a core part of our duty of care.
- Behaviour expectations must be upheld consistently.
- Professional boundaries must be maintained at all times.
- Learning time must be protected from distraction.

5. Pupils' Mobile Phones

5.1 General Rule

In line with Department for Education guidance on creating smartphone-free school environments, pupils are not permitted to bring smartphones to school or access mobile phones at any point during the school day.

From September 2026, pupils may not bring a smartphone onto the school site unless this is required as part of an agreed medical need set out in an Individual Healthcare Plan.

This requirement is intended to support pupils' wellbeing, safeguard children from online harms, reduce distractions to learning, and help create a calm and focused school environment.

This includes the use of smartwatches with internet, messaging, camera, or app functionality.

5.2 Pupils Who Walk to School (Year 5 and Year 6)

The school recognises that some pupils in Years 5 and 6 travel to and from school independently and that parents may wish them to have a means of communication for safety.

Where written permission for independent travel is held by the school, pupils may bring a basic mobile phone ("brick phone") to school.

A "brick phone" is defined as a device that:

- Has no internet access.
- Has no social media, apps, or smart functionality.
- Is limited to calls and text messages.

Pupils bringing a "brick phone" must:

- Switch the device off before entering school.
- Hand it to their class teacher at the start of the school day.
- Have it stored securely by staff during the school day.
- Collect it at the end of the school day.

Staff supervise arrivals to ensure that pupils do not access phones on the school site before handing them in.

Any communication between home and school that is needed during the school day can be facilitated by our office team.

5.3 Medical Exemptions

The school recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, a pupil may require a smartphone to support a medical condition.

Any such arrangement must be agreed in advance with the Headteacher and set out explicitly within the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan. Appropriate safeguarding and storage arrangements will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

5.4 Prohibited Use

Pupils must not:

- Bring a smartphone onto the school site (unless covered by a medical exemption).
- Use any mobile phone on school premises.
- Keep mobile phones in bags, pockets, trays, or lockers during the school day.
- Use phones on educational visits unless specifically authorised by the Visit Leader and Headteacher.
- Use phones to take photographs, record videos, send messages, access the internet, or engage with social media.

Any breach will be treated as a safeguarding and behaviour concern.

6. Staff Mobile Phones

6.1 Expectations

Staff must follow the Staff Code of Conduct and **Acceptable Use Agreement**. Staff mobile phones must:

- Be kept out of sight during teaching time
- Never be used to photograph or communicate with pupils
- Only be used in staff-only areas during breaks
- Never be used for school business unless using a school-approved device or platform

6.2 Safeguarding

Staff must never store pupil data on personal devices. Any breach will be managed under safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

7. Visitors, Volunteers, and Contractors

Visitors must:

- Keep phones on silent
- Not to use phones in classrooms or pupil areas unless approved
- Never take photos or videos on site

Signage will remind visitors of these expectations.

8. Confiscation and Sanctions

In line with DfE guidance, staff may confiscate a phone if it is used in breach of this policy.

Sanctions may include:

- Phone held until a parent collects it
- Behaviour consequences in line with the Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding follow-up where necessary

Repeated breaches may lead to a ban on bringing a phone to school.

9. Online Safety and Safeguarding

Please read our Online Safety Policy.

All concerns must be reported immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead**.

10. Communication with Parents

Parents will receive clear information about:

- The requirement for Y5/Y6 pupils to hand phones in
- The prohibition of phone use during the day
- The consequences of breaches
- How the school promotes safe and responsible use of technology

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher and DSL, or sooner if required by updates to WSCC policy, DfE guidance, Ofsted expectations, or safeguarding needs.