



St. Paul's
C of E Primary School

We are a Christian School and
we value being:
Encouraging and challenging;
Brave and kind;
Thankful and thoughtful.



Our school vision:

Matthew 19:14a Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me'.

We are all equally important, listened to and loved by God

PROHIBITING THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES IN SCHOOL POLICY

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This policy is related to the following Guidance:

- Mobile phones in schools – DfE (January 2026)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation - DfE guidance (2022)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education - DfE (September 2025)
- Behaviour in Schools – DfE (February 2024)
- The 'Staff Code of Conduct Policy'
- The school's 'Safeguarding Policy'
- The schools 'Data Protection Policy'

1. Rationale

St Paul's Church of England Primary School recognise that mobile phones (including smart phones) and other electronic devices such as tablet computers and smart watches are now a part of everyday life in modern Britain. However, such devices can disrupt learning and create other issues such as cyber bullying.

In the Department for Education's (DfE) 2026 guidance 'Mobile phones in schools', it states: *'All schools should be a mobile phone-free environment by default; anything other than this should be by exception only'.*

This policy aims to:

- Make clear the school's position on the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices in school.
- Acknowledge and follow the guidance 'Mobile Phones in Schools', Department for Education (January 2026).
- Provide clear guidance to children and parents / carers as to what is expected with relation to the use of mobile phones whilst in and around the school premises.
- Provide guidance to staff and adults in school with regards to the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices in school, allowing them to be positive role models for our children in school.
- Support the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

2. Roles and Responsibilities

In this policy the term 'adults in school' includes:

- Teachers
- Support staff
- Supply staff
- Volunteers
- Governors
- Trainee Teachers
- Work experience students
- Professionals who come in to support students or teachers (EG, specialist teachers)
- Members of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).
- Members of St Paul's Church Team.
- Visitors

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy. All other adults are expected to alert a member of staff if they have a concern that this policy is not being enforced or complied with. If unsure who to discuss this with, please speak to either the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

3. Use of Mobile Phones by Pupils

St. Paul's is a 'Phone Free' environment. This means that pupils' phones should not be seen, heard or used during the school day. Pupils are encouraged to not bring mobile phones or other electronic

devices (such as tablets and smart watches) with them to school. However, the school recognises that pupils and their families may rely on mobile phones as a safety measure where children travel to and from school independently. If a child is being brought into school and collected by an adult, we do not allow mobile phones to be brought in with them. Where the pupil is travelling to and from school independently, they may bring a mobile phone with them providing the following conditions are met:

- It is a day where the child is travelling to school independently.
- The mobile phone is switched off and handed in to the class teacher on arrival into the classroom.
- The phone is then placed in their class storage container and this is then taken to the school office for safe keeping during the day.
- The mobile phone is only returned to the child at the end of the school day.

If a parent/carer do want their child to own a mobile phone, St. Paul's encourages parents to purchase non-smart phones. Basic phones are all that would be necessary for the purposes of making calls and receiving texts and will not allow access to such things as social media. This is something the local of cluster of schools together support and encourage their parents to do (see APPENDIX A).

3.1 Pupils in Breach of this Policy

Pupil mobile phones and other electronic devices (such as tablets and smart watches) are prohibited items in our school. Where pupils are in breach of the policy the following process should be followed:

- A reminder of the conduct expectations and an opportunity to comply with the policy.
- Confiscation of the device and parents/carers advised. The device is then stored in a secure location away from the classroom such as the Headteacher's office (in locked storage).
- The device is only returned to the parent or carer of the child.
- Sanctions, where necessary, may be issued in line with the school's Recognising and Supporting Behaviour policy.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. This conduct is taken extremely seriously and other agencies such as the police will be involved where necessary. This conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or text directed at someone on the basis of their ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation
- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos).
- Upskirting

Staff should refer to the DFE guidance Searching, Screening and Confiscation (2022) for further advice if required.

Parents / carers are reminded that children under the age of 13 should not have their own social media accounts. Any accounts made should be created, owned and monitored by the parent / carer. Any issues that may arise from such accounts are therefore the legal responsibility of the holder of this account, that being the parent / carer.

3.2 Communicating with parents/carers

It is expected that the school write to families at least once a year to advise them of our expectations and routines with regards to mobile phones. This may be through the school's weekly newsletter.

Where a pupil joins mid-year, parents should be advised of the school's approach to mobile phones as part of the induction process and signposted to the policy, which can be found on the school website. Where there has been a breach of this policy by a pupil, the school must advise parents/carers at the earliest opportunity before the end of the school day.

4. Use of Mobile Phones by Adults in School

St. Paul's acknowledge that staff and other adults that come into contact with our pupils are role models for expected behaviour. Appropriate use of mobile phones in school is considered an important part of the child's education and their safeguarding.

In the Department for Education's (DfE) 2026 guidance 'Mobile phones in schools', it states:

'Staff should not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day. This will empower staff to better challenge pupils to meet the school expectations and effectively enforce the prohibition of mobile phones throughout the school day. There may be occasions where it is appropriate for a teacher to use a mobile phone or similar device, for instance to issue homework, issue rewards and sanctions or use multi-factor authentication. Responsible bodies and school leaders should be clear with staff on their expectations around use of mobile phones during the day'.

Therefore, it is important to outline the main conduct expectations of adults in St. Paul's School with regards to mobile phone use:

4.1 Personal Mobile Phones

Staff may need to use their personal mobile phone for work activity, such as accessing emails, writing CPOMS or using authentication applications.

Staff are expected to act responsibly when using their personal mobile phones in our school by:

- Only using phones in areas in school that are guaranteed to be child free. This may be the staffroom or any of the offices. Mobile phones must not be used for any school or personal purposes in any child areas, such as classrooms, playgrounds, the hall or studio.
- During breaktimes, staff may use their personal phones in the staffroom, their own cars, or away from the school grounds. If staff make calls outside the front of the school they must follow the school staff code of conduct expectations regarding appropriate behaviour and language.
- Not taking photographs of children on personal mobile phones.
- Advising their Line Manager if there are circumstances during the school day where they may need to make or accept calls (e.g. their child or another dependent is unwell or are dealing with an emergency situation).

Staff who use their personal mobile phone, or other electronic device such as a tablet computer, for work email must have adequate protection in place to protect the sensitive data that email can contain, including a passcode.

Should the device be lost or stolen, they must inform their Line Manager or Executive Principal/Principal at the earliest opportunity so that steps can be taken to ensure sensitive data from emails remains secure.

4.2 Safeguarding

As described in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

4.3 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process pupil data, or any other school information, including entering such data in to generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools.

4.4 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 are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations.
- Supervising off-site trips.
- Supervising residential trips

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct.
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, or anything which could identify a pupil.
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office, or if not possible by blocking their mobile number in their phone settings first.

5. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers or family members

Any person who is in the school building or grounds must adhere to this policy.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils (or anything that could identify a pupil), unless it is their own child.
- Not using phones in school.
- Parents/carers must use the school office as the point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day.

6. Loss, theft or damage

The school accept no responsibility for mobile phones or other electronic devices (tablets and smart watches) that are lost, damaged or stolen, for pupils and adults' devices. Whether this be on the school premises or transport, during school visits or trips or while travelling to and from school.

7. Adjustments to this policy

The Headteacher may adjust this policy on a case by case basis where they deem this to be appropriate. Circumstances could include, but are not limited to, where a mobile phone is used for medical purposes (e.g. the tracking of blood sugar levels for a diabetic child). If a decision is made that a mobile phone is deemed necessary, adults must ensure that all the steps are taken to prevent the device causing disruption to learning or a safeguarding concern.

APPENDIX A

Dear Parents & Carers

The local group of Headteachers are increasingly concerned about the impact of smartphones on our children.

Smartphones are a big part of life today. Most adults have one. They are great for finding information and staying connected with family and friends.

However, there is now an alarming amount of evidence and research about the negative effects of smartphones and social media on children and teenagers. These include:

- Poor mental health, such as depression, anxiety and low self-esteem.
- Issues with cyberbullying, attention, focus and sleep.
- Exposure to dangerous and harmful content and inappropriate material; and
- Smartphones can be highly addictive, so time spent on a device reduces time spent playing, interacting and developing vital social skills.

Children often get their first phone in primary school, and over 90% of 12-year-olds now have a smartphone. This period is crucial for brain development, and the younger a child gets a smartphone, the more harm it can cause.

Schools are in a powerful position to change the norm, and therefore North Leamington Consortia schools, of which St. Paul's is part of, have come together as we are committed to aiming to make our schools smartphone-free. At St. Paul's children cannot use any phones, including smartphones, during the school day. We would rather our primary school aged children did not own or bring a smartphone to school. Additionally, this academic year new cohorts of children moving to some of the secondary schools in the local area are no longer permitted to bring smartphones or smart watches into school for the duration of their time in Years 7–11. In January, even more local secondary schools are putting in tighter restrictions on smartphones.

Research indicates that children are at their most vulnerable to potential negative influences from access to social media between the ages of 11-15. Accessing the internet through a smartphone can pose greater risks than doing so from a more secure network in the home environment. As such, we are also encouraging all parents to delay giving a smartphone to your child until they are at least 16.

A growing number of parents and schools across the country are choosing to take this approach. We are proud to be working together locally to support the well-being and healthy development of our children.

If you need to contact your child while they travel to and from school, a simple “brick” phone is enough. These phones do not have internet connectivity and are inexpensive.

We would like to work together with parents to safeguard children and preserve childhood. By doing so, we can protect our children's mental health and wellbeing and set a standard for how communities can unite to challenge norms that no longer serve our children.

If you would like to find out more about support for parents who want their children to be smartphone-free, please visit [Smartphone Free Childhood](#) and [One Collective Power](#).

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Bown
Headteacher

Together with:

Milverton Primary School

Cubbington C of E Primary School

Brookhurst Primary School

St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Our Lady & St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

Telford Infants School

Telford Junior School