St Mary's School
Gerrards Cross

# MOBILE DEVICES AND CAMERA POLICY (INCLUDING WITHIN EYFS SETTING)

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

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| Person Responsible | Deputy Head & DSL |
| Reviewed by | SLT |
| Approved by | Safeguarding Governor |
| Frequency of Review | Annually |
| Date of Last Review | September 2026 |
| Date of Next Review | September 2027 |

The Deputy Head/DSL is responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy through safeguarding audits, incident records, behaviour logs, staff supervision processes and periodic reviews of safeguarding practice. Findings will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team and, where appropriate, the Safeguarding Governor.

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The School refers to all staff and students in St Mary's School, which includes the Early Years/Foundations Stage (EYFS), the Preparatory Department (Years 1-6), Senior House (Years 7-11) and the Sixth Form (Years 12-13).
The term 'parent' refers to those who have parental responsibility for a child.

## WIDER REFERENCES

This policy operates within a wider national policy framework, which includes:

- KCSIE (2026)
- Mobile Phones in Schools June 2026
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings February 2022

## RELATED INTERNAL POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with St Mary's School:

- Safeguarding Policy (Child Protection)
- Code of Conduct
- Bring Your Own Device Policy
- Data Protection
- Behaviour and Sanctions Policy
- Online Safety Policy

## AIMS

Due to the significant advances in mobile technology, there is the potential for mobile phones, smart watches and cameras to be used inappropriately and compromise the confidentiality of the children in our care.
This policy applies to all relevant digital devices, i.e. not just desktops and laptops, but also smartphones, tablets, smart watches and smart glasses which facilitate communication and have the capability to record sound or images. The policy applies to both School and privately-owned equipment brought on site by either pupils, staff or third parties, as well as School and privately-owned equipment used to access St Mary's School services and data.

## SCHOOL-ISSUED DEVICES

School-issued devices remain subject to the School's filtering, monitoring and acceptable use arrangements and must be used in accordance with safeguarding, data protection and online safety requirements. Any misuse will be managed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy.

## STUDENT MOBILE DEVICES

Students in Prep are not permitted to bring mobile phones into School. Students in Senior House are permitted to bring a mobile phone into School if they require this for communications regarding travel home; this should be switched off on arrival at the site and handed in during morning registration. They are returned during afternoon registration and should not be used on site. Current

Year 7 students are only allowed to bring a non-smart phone into School. This will extend into Year 8 next year.
If a student is found to have, or to be using, a mobile phone on the school site, without permission, the school's Behaviour Policy will be followed. This applies to activities before and after the school day as well as during the school day.
Sixth Form students are permitted to use their phone within the Sixth Form areas e.g. the Common Room. They may use their device to support learning at the discretion of the teacher in charge.
Very occasionally, it may be appropriate to allow students access to a mobile phone for a very specific teaching reason e.g. to document a process for coursework. This needs permission from a member of SLT in advance of the lesson, and the office should be notified in advance. During the lesson, students should be given clear instruction for its use and supervised closely by the subject teacher. The mobile phone should then be returned immediately to the office.

Smart watches and glasses are not permitted to be worn by any student, owing to the potential nature of their use in relation to audio and image recording.

Any use of mobile phones during School trips is in accordance with the BYOD policy and is considered on a case by case basis at the discretion of the trip leader and with the agreement of the Head.
St Mary's School does not accept responsibility for any loss or damage which may occur whilst the mobile phone is on school premises. The phone is the sole responsibility of the pupil at all times. All other electronic devices come under the BYOD policy.

## MISUSE OF MOBILE DEVICES

The misuse of mobile devices, including mobile phones, smart watches, tablets and other electronic devices, is prohibited.
Students must not use any device to access, create, store or share content, including AI-generated content and manipulated images, that is inappropriate, harmful, threatening, extremist, discriminatory, defamatory, sexually explicit, or otherwise contrary to the School's values and policies.
The use of mobile devices for cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, unauthorised photography, recording or the sharing of images or information relating to members of the School community is strictly prohibited.

Any misuse of a device will be dealt with in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy and any associated disciplinary procedures.

## SEARCHING AND EXAMINATION OF DEVICES

Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a mobile phone, tablet, smart watch or other electronic device contains evidence of a breach of School rules, misconduct, bullying, safeguarding concerns, criminal activity or other harmful content, the School reserves the right to take appropriate action in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy and applicable legislation.
Any search, examination or confiscation of a device will be conducted by authorised staff and with due regard for the privacy, dignity, safeguarding and welfare of all individuals involved.
Where inappropriate content is identified, the School may retain the device, secure evidence, contact parents, refer the matter to external agencies and/or apply disciplinary sanctions as appropriate.

Searches will be conducted in accordance with DfE guidance 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' and the School Behaviour Policy.

## EYFS

The use of personal mobile phones, smart watches, cameras or any other device with photo taking capacity is strictly prohibited in the EYFS. Where photographs are required, even if not of a student, they must be taken on school cameras or devices and stored in strict accordance with the School's policy on taking and storing of images. (i.e. on the designated area on the School system or prior agreed 3rd party application).

## MOBILE PHONES ON OUTINGS AND TRIPS

Staff members will be permitted to take their mobile phones on school trips. These phones should remain stored securely in staff bags, out of sight and only be used in the case of an emergency unless no suitable school-issued device is available and prior authorisation has been obtained from the Head or DSL in accordance with the School's procedures for taking and storing images.

Parents accompanying day trips should be informed by the member of staff in charge of the trip that they will have a role in supervising the children and hence will be requested to switch off their phones during the outing and are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children. If phones need to be kept on for emergency contact reasons, parents must clearly understand that they need to be switched to silent and should under no circumstances be used for photography or personal conversation in the presence of the children.

Student use on residential and day trips will be at the discretion of the Trip Leader and in consultation with the Educational Visits Coordinator and Head. Instructions on permitted use of phones will be communicated to students in advance of a trip and must be always adhered to by students on the trip. When permitted, students must use their phones responsibly and ensure that they do not use them in any way that will bring themselves or the school into disrepute. Phones must be handed in if requested by a member of staff.

## STAFF MOBILE DEVICES

- Personal mobile phone use during the school day is discouraged and should be limited to exceptional circumstances. Phones should be kept out of sight when staff are supervising pupils.
- Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with pupils at all times. The use of personal mobile phones or devices to show, share, send or receive photographs, videos, messages, social media content or any other material with pupils is prohibited, regardless of the nature of the content or the intentions of the member of staff.
- Staff must not receive or make calls on their mobile phones during lessons and whilst supervising children.
- Staff may use their mobile phones during break time or non-contact time if there are no children present.
- All staff must silence their phones whilst teaching and supervising children. Phones must be stored securely in staff bags, out of sight.
- Staff must securely protect access to the functions of their mobile phones.

- Staff are not generally permitted to use recording equipment on their personal mobile phones or devices to take photographs, videos or audio recordings of pupils, or to share images. Where exceptional circumstances make this necessary, prior authorisation must be obtained from the Head. Any images or recordings taken must be transferred to the School's approved storage system at the earliest opportunity and permanently deleted from the personal device as soon as the transfer has been verified. Images must be handled in accordance with the School's Data Protection Policy and procedures for the taking and storage of images.
- Smart watches capable of recording images, audio or internet communications must not be used to photograph, record or communicate with pupils except where specifically authorised for operational purposes.
- Any use of a Smart Watch is subject to the same safeguarding rules as any personal device such as a mobile phone.
- In a genuine emergency, where immediate action is required and no suitable school device is available, staff may use a personal phone. Any such use must be reported to the Head, DSL or a member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as practicable.

## MOBILE PHONES FOR WORK RELATED PURPOSES

We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities. However, staff should ensure that:

- Mobile phone use on these occasions is appropriate and professional and will never include taking photographs of children in the EYFS.
- Contact with parents during school trips should be made via the School Office or where deemed appropriate by using a school mobile to call parents directly.

## VOLUNTEERS, VISITORS, GOVERNORS AND CONTRACTORS

All volunteers, visitors, governors and contractors who are required to sign into the School are expected to follow our mobile device policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises. On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations and asked to read a related statement on our Inventry sign-in device.

## PARENTS

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile devices while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as an essential means of communication at all times. We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile devices, whilst on the School site is courteous and appropriate to the School environment. Parents invited to participate in lessons with the children are asked to surrender their mobile phones on arrival to school. These are returned at the end of the session.

## THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN SCHOOL

Parents are requested to sign relevant documentation when their child commences at St Mary's giving authorisation for the setting to take photographs for marketing, assessment and observation purposes only.
The consent is given for a child's photograph to be taken and reproduced whether in School publications including the prospectus, on the School's website or in the press and/or to the child being filmed on video for purposes appropriate to the School's business and incidental thereto.

Parents are also informed in the same documentation that communications sent to the press may include the child's full name and year group.

## WHEN PARENTS TAKE PHOTOS IN SCHOOL

Parents should only make recordings or take photographs of any event for their own personal use. The School requests that parents do not publish images taken at School events (e.g. on social network sites) that include any children other than their own. Parents are asked to consider the potential damage associated with the uploading of children's images to social media and to respect the views of other parents in this regard.

## BYOD - STUDENT WEBCAMS AND TABLETS

The School's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy permits students to bring devices capable of capturing images, even where they do not have access to a mobile phone. Capturing images without the permission of a teacher and for a clear educational purpose is prohibited and will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy. These devices are not permitted to be used anywhere near students in an EYFS setting.

## GENERAL

- No electronic copies of photographs should be passed to outside agencies without the permission of the parent, or unless there is a Safeguarding issue.
- Images are only to be used for a specific purpose and will not be used in any other context.
- The collection, storage, use, sharing, retention and disposal of photographs, video recordings and other images will be undertaken in accordance with the School's Data Protection Policy, Records Retention Schedule and applicable UK data protection legislation.
- School Photographers will be treated as any other visitors and appropriate levels of supervision will be in place at all times. This will ensure that no unsupervised access to children will be given.
- Children may on occasion be given the opportunity to photograph each other in their surroundings. This may occur both on and off site and for most children it will be to record a trip or event.

## DISPOSAL OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Where photographs have been printed for use in School, they should be disposed of carefully. Where photographs are of individual pupils, the photograph may be given to the parent. Other photographs should be shredded. Photographs should not be disposed of in bins.

The mobile Phone Policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents via the School Office and website.

## APPENDIX A - VISITORS' STATEMENT

**Mobile Devices Policy**

St Mary's School
Gerrards Cross

St Mary's School is committed to safeguarding our girls and staff. We therefore ask that visitors' usage of mobile phones, and other mobile devices such as smart watches, whilst on the School site is courteous and appropriate to the School environment. Visitors are therefore asked to have their mobile phones switched off wherever possible on the School premises. If they are switched on, they should be turned to silent and should under no circumstances be used for either conversation or photography in the presence of our pupils.
If you have a safeguarding concern, please ask to speak to one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads whose names are on the back of the visitor's badge and displayed at reception.
Our fire assembly point is Cedar Lawn.