



St Mary's and St Peter's C of E School

Pupil Use of Digital Devices Policy

We believe high standards of care and love are an integral part in the quality of teaching and learning across the whole curriculum. Our Christian vision of 'Life in all its fullness' is at the heart of our school and we believe that all within our community should be able to flourish and achieve their full potential.

This policy, along with all our policies and practices, has been written with our vision of *life in all its fullness* for the children, staff, and wider community in mind, and to support us in realising that vision.

This policy reflects the core values of the school: wisdom, hope, community and dignity.

Introduction

In today's digital age, with the widespread use of mobile phones and devices, it is crucial for us to work together to ensure the online safety of our children.

Therefore, the aims of this policy are to:

- Outline the permitted devices that pupils may bring into school.
- Outline the use of devices during school activities.
- Detail the acceptable usage of personal digital devices by pupils.

Mobile Phones

At SMSP, pupils do not need to have access to their own personal communication devices during the school day. Pupils do not need to contact their parents (or other external entities) during school hours. In an emergency situation, communication can be facilitated by the school office.

For older pupils (years 5 & 6) who make their way to/from school independently, a mobile phone can be a necessary safety tool. In such cases, a phone may be brought into school, provided the following expectations are met:

- Mobile phones are switched off upon entering the school gates and remain off until leaving school grounds at the end of the day.
- All mobile phones should be placed in the designated space before registration, not kept in lockers, bags or pockets.

Smart Watches

Smart watches (e.g. Apple Watch) and activity trackers (e.g. FitBit) are permitted in school provided:

- they do not have video, photo or audio recording capabilities;
- they do not have the ability to connect to mobile infrastructure by their own means;
- any mobile phone, with which they have a Bluetooth (or similar) connection with, is not in school.

These conditions apply irrespective of whether the device is able to suspend communication features during 'school hours'.

If any device is discovered to have its own mobile connection, it will be treated like a mobile phone and be locked away during the school day.

If we find that any devices are causing a distraction during lesson time or are being used inappropriately at break times, we will confiscate them and parents will need to collect them from the school office, and such devices will not be allowed back in school.

Cameras

Pupils do not require their own digital recording technology in school. However, some clubs activities may require such devices and pupils attending residential excursions are often encouraged to bring a camera to record their adventures. Where this is the case, parents will always receive notification in writing.

When taking photos/video in school or at a school-related event, SMSP have the following expectations:

- **Consent-based recording**
Pupils should only record (photograph, video or audio) individuals with their consent. This doesn't have to be a formal request & confirmation, but all participants in the recording should be aware that it is happening and not object. Where practical, pupils are expected to honour requests to view and/or remove the recorded media by subjects.
- **Monitoring**
School staff can monitor what is being recorded and can, at their own discretion, ask to view the recorded media stored on a device. Parents should bear this in mind when sending in devices from home. Content deemed inappropriate or compromising to the subjects involved will be deleted. If inappropriate use is repeated, the device will be confiscated.
- **Sharing with others**
Consent to feature in a photograph, video or audio recording should not be assumed to also grant permission for that content to be shared with a wider audience. Pupils and parents are expected to exercise discretion with how they handle such content, not sharing with an audience beyond what the participants could reasonably expect. In particular, such content should not be shared online.

GPS Trackers

The use of GPS trackers such as 'AirTags' is not permitted in school. Their presence can be disruptive and cause safeguarding concerns. We ask parents/carers to ensure these are not attached to pupils' school bags or included in packing for residential trips.

Other Devices

Apart from unique special occasions, which will always be requested in writing, there are no established reasons for pupils to bring any other form of personal digital device (such as e-readers, tablets, laptops, etc.) into school.

Exemptions

The school will make exemptions for digital devices related to specific medical or SEN needs, on a case-by-case basis. Such exemptions will need to be discussed beforehand with the Senior Leadership Team and the school may require alternative restrictions be in place.

In addition, the school reserves the right to prohibit devices on an individual basis if there are privacy or child safety concerns or if the device is causing undue disruption.

Managing Emerging Technologies

These are generalised rules and may be adapted, without notice, as new technologies and usage develops.

Emerging technologies will be examined for educational benefit and a risk assessment will be carried out before use in school is allowed.

Responding to Incidents

It is hoped that all parents/carers will support their pupils in understanding and adhering to this policy. However, there may be times when infringements could take place, through careless, irresponsible or (very rarely) deliberate misuse.

Incidents of misuse will be dealt with as soon as possible and in a proportionate manner. Consequences may entail the confiscation of equipment until the end of the day and the possible removal of permission for the device to come into school.

Parent Responsibility

At SMSP, we strive to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all our pupils. In today's digital age, with the widespread use of mobile phones and devices, it is crucial for us to work together to ensure the online safety of our children. Parents are encouraged to support the school's Digital Devices policy and reinforce guidelines regarding responsible usage with their children.

While we endeavour to educate pupils about responsible online behaviour, it's equally crucial for parents to actively monitor their child's online activities.

SMSP kindly request that parents take some time to check their child's mobile phone regularly for any inappropriate messages and chain mails. These messages can sometimes be hurtful and unkind, and contain harmful content, which can lead to negative consequences for the sender and recipient.

By monitoring and guiding your child's online activities, we can collectively create a safer digital space for them to thrive and learn. Encouraging open communication about online behaviour and setting guidelines for the responsible use of technology are essential steps in promoting a healthy digital lifestyle.

If parents come across any concerning messages or content on their child's mobile phone, we encourage you to address the issue promptly and discuss it with your child. Together, we can empower our pupils to make positive choices online and navigate the digital world safely.

For more information about online safety and useful links, please see our Safeguarding page in the Our School section of our website.

Liability

Digital devices are expensive and often delicate pieces of equipment. While the school will take care to protect any devices used and stored in the approved manner, we cannot be held responsible for any damages that may occur. Furthermore, we will not take responsibility for the provision of additional care for devices (for example, looking after a smart watch during PE).

Monitoring and Review

The monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of everyone. The Computing Lead and the Senior Leadership Team will take a lead on this.

The school's policy will be regularly reviewed and may be revised to reflect changes in technology, safety concerns, or educational needs.

Safeguarding

St Mary's and St. Peter's school fully recognises its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils and staff. Our Pupil Digital Devices Policy is one of a range of documents which set out the safeguarding responsibilities of the school. We wish to create a safe, welcoming and vigilant environment for pupils and staff where they feel valued and are respected.

Policy Date: December 2023

Review Date: September 2024

Appendix 1

Mobile Phone Pupil Agreement

This agreement is for children who walk to or from school without an adult and require a phone for their personal safety. We do not envisage children bringing a phone in to school for any other reason.

The agreement demonstrates clear and simple expectations and the consequences of not following them. This also includes any additional events outside of school hours, for example clubs, discos, etc.

By signing this agreement I commit to the following:

- My phone will be turned off from the moment I enter the school grounds and it will remain so until I leave the school grounds.
- My phone will be placed in the locker at the start of the school day and left there until I leave.
- I will not take any photos, record video or audio of the school's staff, pupils or site.
- I understand that the school takes no responsibility for my phone.

I understand that by breaching any of the above statements I will no longer be able to bring my phone in to school.

Child's signatureClass Date.....

Parent/carer signature..... Date.....