

St Mary's Catholic Primary School
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Mobile Phone Policy

2015-16

POLICY DETAILS:

Legal Status: Non-statutory

Adopted: September 2015

Version Date: September 2015

Last Review:

Next Review: September 2016

Responsible Person: Executive Headmistress

(Any reference to 'Governing Body' and 'Governors' is applicable to the Governing Body or Interim Executive Board of St Mary's Catholic Primary School and their respective appointed members.)

Introduction:

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, the mobile phone policy has been reviewed recently and takes into account the potential of modern technology which allows us to make phone calls, send text messages, take photographs and access the internet. The policy also reflects national concern over the role of mobile phones in bullying and child abuse issues.

As a result, we have decided that there is **no** justification for having a mobile phone in school. ***Therefore, mobile phones are banned from the school premises at all times, for all pupils.***

Rationale:

The main reasons for banning pupil's having mobile phones in school are as follows;

- ***Bullying*** – Mobile phones can be used to bully other children
- ***Inappropriate Use*** – Mobiles have been used in other schools to transmit inappropriate or unauthorised images of pupils and/or staff.
- ***Disruption*** – Using mobile phones within school time may disrupt learning and teaching.
- ***Crime*** – Mobiles are the cause of much crime and being a valuable item, can go missing in school.
- ***Health Risks*** – There is a lot of research which suggests that mobile phones are not suitable for children.

Aims and Objectives:

Bullying and Inappropriate Use:

The purpose of this policy is mainly to prevent unacceptable use of mobile phones or camera-phones by pupils, and thereby to protect the School's staff and pupils from undesirable materials, filming, intimidation or harassment.

Nearly all phones now have a camera facility. These phones may enable pupils to make still images of each other and send them to other phones, or post them on the internet. Sometimes these can be candid images that have been taken without the consent or even knowledge of the subjects, with malicious intent.

This is something that we will not tolerate and in order to ensure this never happens at St Mary's Catholic Primary School, this policy must be adhered to.

Crime:

We realise for those pupils that travel to and from school on their own, having a mobile phone may be seen as beneficial for that child's safety.

However, mobile phones are one of the main causes of muggings of under 16s, so they are far from being helpful to our children's safety. Therefore we do not want to encourage any possibility of compromising our pupil's safety on their way to and from school, due to mobile phones.

Police advice is not to allow mobiles in school, and to discourage the use of mobiles on that journey to and from school.

Parents may leave any important messages with the school office staff and they will be passed on accordingly.

Health Risks:

In addition to safety concerns there is a lot of research into mobile phones and computers with wireless internet connections posing a risk to human health. The Council of Europe committee examined evidence that the technologies have “potentially harmful” effects on humans, and concluded that immediate action was required to protect children.

Sanctions:

If a child is found in possession of a mobile phone, the phone will be immediately confiscated and that child may be sent to RESTART – for being in breach of our policy.

The parent or carer is expected to contact the school to make an appointment to collect the phone.

Taking pictures/videos on mobile phones in school, without permission, is both contravening the Data Protection Act of 1998 and breaking the rules of St Mary’s Catholic Primary School.

In any case where a mobile phone is used to record sound, pictures or video images which are deemed to be an invasion of privacy, the school will reserve the right to apply an appropriate sanction which could include exclusion from school and, in extreme cases, permanent exclusion.

Any severe harassment or continuous bullying with regard to mobile phones could result in police involvement which could lead to prosecution.

Conclusion:

St Mary’s Catholic Primary School reserves the right to protect its pupils and staff and holds the Safeguarding of all pupils with the upmost regard.

Therefore, pupil mobile phones are strictly banned from St Mary’s Catholic Primary School and should not be used on the way to and from school.