

St Louis Catholic Academy, Newmarket
Part of Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi Academy
Trust

Christ at the Centre: Children at the Heart
Loving to Learn: Learning to Love



Mobile Phone Use

Date Approved	24th April 2024
Signed	Bethan Byrne Co-Chair of Governors
Minuted	24th April 2024
Date of Next Review	April 2027

Purpose:

St Louis has a duty to create an environment that is calm, safe and free from distraction so all pupils, whatever their background, can learn and thrive. One of the greatest challenges facing schools is the presence of mobile phones. Today, by the age of 12, 97% of pupils own a mobile phone. The majority (63%) of 8-11-year-olds use social media and messaging apps.

For this reason, St Louis prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day – not only during lessons but break and lunchtimes as well. This policy fully reflects communications to parents and carers about phone use in school.

Prohibiting the use of mobile phones in school

The mobile phone policy prohibits the use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video) throughout the school day, including after school clubs. The school requires that:

- a) Mobile phone must be switched off before entry onto the school site and handed in to an adult upon entry into the school building in switched off mode.
- b) Mobile phones are kept in secure location, which the pupil does not access throughout the school day.
- c) Mobile phones are returned to the pupil at the end of the school day and the device must only be switched on once the student has left the school grounds.

Communicating the school behaviour policy

School leaders ensure that all staff, pupils and parents are familiar with the policy and how it is implemented. The policy is available on the school website.

The role of staff

All staff consistently enforce the school's policy on the use of mobile phones. Staff do not use their own mobile phone for personal reasons in front of pupils throughout the school day.

The role of pupils

All pupils are taught about the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and are reminded of the policy, and the consequences and sanctions for not following it, at the start of each

school year and again, where appropriate, at regular intervals. Pupils are taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to ensure they understand the decision being taken by their school to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. These risks can include a loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying.

Pupils are taught the benefits of having a mobile phone-free environment and be encouraged to see such an environment as desirable and valuable. This helps to create intrinsic motivation to support the school culture.

The role of parents

Parents have an important role in supporting the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and should be encouraged to reinforce and discuss the policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

Where parents need to contact their child during the school day, they should contact the school office, where staff will respond to the communication need.

Where parents have questions or concerns, staff will address these in a timely manner and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

The use of sanctions

Where a child is found using a mobile phone on the school site, it will be confiscated and arrangements will be made to return it to the parent or carer on the same day.

Special circumstances, adaptations and reasonable adjustments

The need for medical tracking on a mobile phone will be supported and parents and carers are asked to discuss exceptional circumstances with the class teacher, SENCO or senior leaders. For example, pupils with diabetes might use continuous glucose monitoring with a sensor linked to their mobile phone to monitor blood sugar levels.

Searching pupils

School will not search a pupil. Instead a parent or guardian will be asked to come into school to facilitate the recovery of any suspected concealed mobile device.

Model Communication to parents and carers

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will be aware, mobile phone use on school grounds is prohibited and any child found using their mobile phone or other mobile device will have this confiscated immediately and we will ask you to come to school to ensure safe return of the phone. Currently, we trust children to turn off mobiles upon entry onto school grounds and we collect phones upon entry to the building, but we may instead require phones to be handed into School Office Reception immediately upon entry onto the school site to better manage this if we believe that children are placing others at risk of being posted on public sites that link them to our school because of their location and/or distinctive school uniform.

We take online safety very seriously and will be monitoring this situation closely.

Kind regards

Designated Safeguarding Team

Further advice and help

The following national organisations provide support:

Internet Matters

[Keep Children Safe Online: Information, Advice, Support - Internet Matters](#)

NSPCC

[NSPCC | The UK children's charity | NSPCC](#)

Parent Zone

[Parent Zone | At the heart of digital family life](#)

BBC Own It

[Own It - A place to help you boss your life online - Own It - BBC](#)

Childline

[Childline | Childline](#)

Young Minds

[Social Media & Mental Health | Guide For Parents | YoungMinds](#)