English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School

Mobile Phone & Electronic Devices Policy

Approved by:	English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School Quality of Education Committee	**Date:** September 2026
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Mission Statement

Our children are all unique, beautiful **individuals** but together we are a **masterpiece,** brothers and sisters in **Christ**. As witnesses of Christ, working together as a **team**, we strive to promote the **Gospel Values** and Teachings of Jesus by providing a **caring**, **stimulating environment**, with **nurture**, **trust**, **love** and **tolerance** through our spirituality, learning and play. By making connections with Jesus, we promote **high ambitions** and **confidence** to achieve our goals.

1. Introduction and aims

At English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School, our policy aims to:

- Ensure our environment is mobile phone-free by default
- Ensure the safe, responsible and lawful use of mobile phones, where applicable
- Provide clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Risk of theft, loss or damage
- Appropriate use of technology for learning purposes

Note: throughout this policy, 'mobile phones' refers to mobile phones and similar devices.

2. Relevant guidance

This policy meets the requirements of section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, and the Department for Education (DfE)'s mobile phone guidance and behaviour guidance. Further guidance that should be considered alongside this policy includes Keeping Children Safe in Education, which sets out the expectation that all schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are required to actively enforce this policy and challenge any breach of mobile phone restrictions immediately and consistently.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for monitoring the policy and reviewing it every year, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

Staff will address any questions or concerns from parents/carers quickly, and clearly communicate the reasons for prohibiting the use of mobile phones.

3.2 Governors

Governors at English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School, are responsible for ensuring this policy is upheld and implemented. They will agree to the policy and any reviews annually or as required.

4. Use of mobile phones by staff

4.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to use their personal mobile phone during the school day, while pupils are present and during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time, for personal reasons. For instance (this list is non-exhaustive):

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 01772556092 as a point of emergency contact.

4.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Gemini).

Please refer to the school Data Protection Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Agreement (both can be found on the school website, or a paper copy can be requested from the school office.)

Our Data Protection Officer is Mrs Iwona Galka.

4.3 Safeguarding

Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including by connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils.

Staff must follow and abide to the school Social Networking Sites and Social Media Policy 2026.

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson / school trip / activity, this must be done using school equipment.

Staff should use their own data and not the school Wi-Fi when in school.

4.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones or a similar device during the school day in front of pupils for work. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing homework, rewards or sanctions
- Use of multi-factor authentication
- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

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, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

4.5 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

5. Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils must not use their mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, in the time between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes, unless explicitly authorised by a member of staff (for example, for a specific medical reason).

Whilst pupils are permitted to bring their mobile phones into school, if they journey to and from school alone (UKS2 children only), they must:

- Hand them to class staff immediately on arrival to the classroom
- Not use them on school premises, even before and after school
- Use them during school

Mobile phones will be kept securely in school in the classroom; however, school accept no responsibility for them.

Pupils will be taught the risks that are associated with the use of mobile phones, both in school and more broadly, to make sure they understand the decision 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 will be encouraged to see a mobile-phone free environment as desirable and valuable.

5.1 Use of smartwatches by pupils

The DfE's statutory mobile phones guidance includes in the term 'mobile phones' all devices with communications and smart technology that the school chooses to include in its policy.

Smartwatches are wristwatches with smart technology in them. They can be used to tell the time, send and receive text and voice messages, make calls and listen to music. Some smartwatches have wellness and health-related features.

Smartwatches are permitted in school; however, they are ONLY to be used as a basic watch.

School advises against pupils bringing in/wearing smartwatches because of their value.

5.1a Use of 'Smart' eyewear by pupils and staff

Pupils and staff are not permitted to wear 'smart' eyewear for example: Meta or AI glasses, in school or on school premises.

School advises against pupils and staff bringing in/wearing smart eyewear because of their value and potential misuse.

5.2 Sanctions

Misuse of mobile phones or other devices by pupils will lead to sanctions according to our behaviour policy.

- The mobile phone/device will be confiscated (under sections 91 and 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- Parents/guardians will be informed and requested to attend a meeting either in school or over the phone and informed they need to collect the phone at the end of the school day.
- Staff have the power to search pupils' phones in specific circumstances, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows staff to search a pupil's phone if there is good reason to do so (such as having reason to believe the phone has content which could be used to commit an offence or cause harm to another person). Should this occur, SLT will search the phone and parents/guardians will be made aware as soon as conceivably possible.

In each case, the sanction given must be reasonable and proportionate. The school will also consider whether:

- There are any relevant special circumstances (for example, age, religious requirements, special educational needs (SEN), disability)
- The pupil's behaviour may indicate they may be suffering, or at risk of, harm. If this is suspected, staff will follow the appropriate procedure set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. This will include speaking with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy, who will consider whether pastoral support, an early intervention, or a referral to children's social care is appropriate

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Making of or sharing nudes and semi-nudes including images that are digitally altered or wholly generated using AI (such as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes')
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

6. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents and guardians are encouraged to reinforce and discuss this policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

Parents/guardians, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's at a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

Parents/guardians, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

Parents/guardians or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers

- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else that could identify a pupil

Parents/guardians or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, but must refer any proposed sanctions to a member of staff, as they do not have the power to search or confiscate devices.

Parents/guardians must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on their personal mobile during the school day.

7. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing mobile phones to school must make sure that their phones are appropriately labelled, ready to be stored away securely in their class when not in use during the school day.

Pupils must secure their mobile phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to or from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a locked filing cabinet until parents/guardians collect them.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

8. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to making sure that this policy has a positive impact on pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the DfE, the local authority and any other relevant organisations

9. Appendix 1: Code of Conduct/Acceptable Use Agreement for pupils allowed to bring their phones to school due to exceptional circumstances

Pupil Code of Conduct/Acceptable Use Agreement

You must obey the following rules if you bring your mobile phone to school:

1. You may not use your mobile phone throughout the school day, including lesson times, in between lessons, breaktime and lunchtime, unless a teacher specifically allows you to for a specific reason.
2. Phones must be switched off (not just put on 'silent').
3. You may not use your mobile phone in the toilets or changing rooms. This is to protect the privacy and welfare of other pupils.
4. You cannot take photos or recordings (either video or audio) of school staff or other pupils.
5. Avoid sharing your contact details with people you don't know, and don't share other people's contact details without their consent.
6. Don't share your phone's password(s) or access code(s) with anyone else.
7. Don't use your mobile phone to bully, intimidate or harass anyone or otherwise to act in breach of the school's Relational Policy. This includes bullying, harassing or intimidating pupils or staff via:
    a. Email
    b. Text/messaging app
    c. Social media
8. Don't use your phone to send or receive anything that may be a criminal offence. For instance, by making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes (including AI-generated images or 'deepfakes')
9. Rules on bullying, harassment and intimidation apply to how you use your mobile phone even when you aren't in school.
10. Don't use vulgar, obscene or derogatory language while on the phone or when using social media. This language is not permitted under the school's behaviour policy.
11. Don't use your phone to view or share pornography or other harmful content.
12. You must comply with a request by a member of staff to switch off, or hand over, a phone. Refusal to comply is a breach of the school's behaviour policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
13. Mobile phones are not permitted in any internal or external exam or test environment. If you have a mobile phone, you will be asked to store it appropriately, or turn it over to an exam invigilator, before entering the test room. Bringing a phone into the test room can result in your exam being declared invalid.

10. Appendix 2: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school

English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School

Sizer Street
Preston
PR1 7DR
Headteacher: Mrs. A. Howarth
www.englishmartyrs.lancs.sch.uk

Telephone: 01772 556092
Nursery: 01772 258476
Email: head@englishmartyrs.lancs.sch.uk

Tuesday 29th September 2026

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Children own phones…fact! This is particularly prevalent in Years 5 and 6. Phones are an important way of helping children to keep safe when walking to and from school. These children are the **only** children that have a need for a phone in school unless there are special circumstances that are approved. If parents want children to have their phones with them whilst travelling to and from school and as a result, keep them in school, the permission slip below **MUST** be completed and returned as soon as possible.

The Governors and staff have made the decision that only approved and agreed children are to bring phones to school. If approved, then these children must hand their phones into their class staff at the start of the day. Their phone will be kept in the office until home time.

It is also becoming more popular for children to have *smart watches* and there is a current rise in the use of *smart glasses* too, both of these can act in a similar way to Smart Phones. Therefore, the same policy applies, children must hand these into class staff when they get to school.

It is important to note that even if approved, children are not to use their phones or smart watches/glasses on school premises, this includes before and after school.

Any children who are found to have a phone or a device in school that has not been either approved or handed in, will have their device confiscated and will receive a sanction. Parents will be informed as soon as possible so that they are aware that their children have brought their phones/devices to school and so they can arrange to collect them.

This policy is now statutory to ensure that children and staff are safeguarded. It will also ensure that expensive tech is not lost, damaged or stolen whilst giving children the safety net they need when walking to and from school alone.

Please be aware that school does not accept any responsibility for any phones or smart devices during the school day.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Many thanks as always for your continual support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs A Howarth
Headteacher

English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School

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Preston
PR1 7DR
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www.englishmartyrs.lancs.sch.uk

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Nursery: 01772 258476
Email: head@englishmartyrs.lancs.sch.uk

My child.....Class..... has my permission to bring a phone to school and will hand it in to a member of their class staff team, switched off, each day.

I understand the phone remains the responsibility of my child and that School does not accept any responsibility for phones that are not kept by staff during the school day.

Signed.....

Date.....

11. Appendix 3: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones and similar devices in our school

- Our school is a mobile phone-free environment.
- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the Staffroom
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, when working with pupils or while children are present

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

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