

St. Chad's C.E. (C) Primary School

Mobile Devices Policy



We are a Church of England School and our policies are written with a commitment to our Christian Character, which is rooted in the Bible.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the person of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an annual basis.

Signature *J Brennan*
Joanne Brennan

Headteacher 11th September, 2026

Signature *Z Comley*
Zoe Comley

Chair of Governors 11th September, 2026

Renewal Date: 11th September, 2027

Statement of intent

Mobile phones, tablets and other personal electronic devices have become widely available and accessible to pupils. This policy is designed to prohibit the use of mobile phones and similar smart technology throughout the school day, including break and lunch times.

St Chad's accepts that personal mobile phones and tablets are often given to pupils by their parents to ensure their safety and personal security; however, such devices pose inherent risks and may jeopardise the learning environment. The school also recognises the safeguarding risks associated with pupils having unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile networks during the school day.

As a school, we must strike a balance between personal safety and a suitable educational setting. We understand that parents may wish for their child to carry a mobile phone for their personal safety, whilst pupils may wish to bring additional devices to school for other reasons. This policy establishes how personal electronic devices should be used by pupils in school to ensure both personal safety and an appropriate learning environment.

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to the following items:

- Mobile phones
- Smart watches
- Personal digital assistants (PDAs)
- Handheld entertainment systems, e.g. video game consoles, iPods
- Portable internet devices, e.g. tablets, laptops
- Wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems, e.g. devices used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture and/or recording, sound recording, and information transmitting, receiving and/or storing

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory and good practice guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Mobile phones in schools'
- DfE 'Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents'
- DfE 'Behaviour in Schools'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school'
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- The implementation of the policy and procedures.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and procedures.
- Ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Reviewing the policy **annually**.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- The day-to-day implementation and management of the policy.
- Informing parents and pupils of the Personal Electronic Devices Agreement.
- Communicating this policy to the relevant staff members and the wider school community.
- Communicating what devices can be brought to school and when they can and cannot be used.
- Deciding how best to achieve a mobile phone-free school environment.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Negotiating incidents of cyberbullying in conjunction with the headteacher, in line with the Behaviour Policy.
- Applying this policy consistently and proportionately, including confiscating devices where appropriate.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns to the DSL, or deputy, where misuse indicates risk of harm.
- Avoiding use of their mobile phones in front of pupils for any non-work related issues.
- Teaching pupils about the risks associated with mobile phones, smart technology, social media and online activity in accordance with the school's Online Safety Policy.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Initiating and managing responses to incidents of upskirting and suspected nude or semi-nude images with relevant staff members and in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Liaising with and reporting the relevant information to children's social care and/or the police, when it is necessary to do so.

Pupils are responsible for adhering to the provisions outlined in this policy.

Ownership and responsibility

Pupils are responsible for their own belongings. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing property that is lost, stolen or damaged either on school premises or travelling to and from school, and at school events.

Staff will be protected against liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to personal devices that have been confiscated as an appropriate sanction, provided that they have acted lawfully.

Pupils are responsible for replacing school property they lose, damage or steal, including electronic devices.

Pupils and staff should enable a personal PIN or passcode on all the devices they bring to school to protect their personal data, images and videos in the event that the device is lost, stolen or accessed by an unauthorised person.

Acceptable use

Where pupils are bringing personal electronic devices into school, they will be expected to make their parents aware of this.

Personal devices will not be used at any point during the school day and are handed into the main office each morning to be stored securely for the duration of the day, including during break and lunch times, unless an agreed exception applies. Where an agreed exception is in place, use of a personal device will be limited strictly to the specific purpose outlined within that exception and will be subject to any conditions set by the school.

Pupils will sign a [Device and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement](#) to ensure that devices are only used for the educational purpose intended.

Unacceptable use

Unless express permission is granted by a member of staff or [adaptations and reasonable adjustments](#) apply, mobile devices will not be seen, heard, or accessed at any time during the school day.

Any permitted use for specific pupils will be limited strictly to the specific purpose outlined in the agreed plan. All other use will be prohibited.

Pupils will be able to access their personal devices when travelling to and from school; however, they should not be used to arrange travel during the course of the school day.

Staff members will be required to model expectations surrounding the use of personal devices when they are in front of pupils throughout the school day, and only use their personal devices where required for work or safeguarding purposes.

If pupils fall ill during school hours, they will not use their mobile device to contact parents; they will use the agreed procedures.

Under no circumstances will personal electronic devices be taken into examinations. Under no circumstances will mobile devices be used in changing rooms or toilets.

Staff will not give out their personal contact details to pupils.

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, the act known as “upskirting” is an offence. Any incidents will not be tolerated by the school. Despite the name, anyone (including both pupils and teachers) of any gender, can be a victim of upskirting.

A “specified purpose” is namely:

- Obtaining sexual gratification (either for themselves or for the person they are enabling to view the victim’s genitals, buttocks or underwear)
- To humiliate, distress or alarm the victim

Any incidents of upskirting will be reported to the DSL and handled in accordance with the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

The school will comply with its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments with regard to this policy where necessary. Adaptations may be made in exceptional circumstances and in response to a pupil’s specific needs.

If it is deemed necessary due to the nature of a pupil’s SEND, reasonable adjustments will be made to allow that pupil to use their mobile phone or similar device during the school day.

The school will not prevent pupils from using their mobile phones in order to manage their medical condition effectively, e.g. if a pupil is using a monitoring app on their phone to manage their diabetes.

Beyond these specific duties, the school recognises that a need for mobile phone access for some pupils may depend on their individual circumstances. The school will allow limited flexibility for these pupils where an agreed exception is required in the best interests of the pupil’s safety and welfare, for example where a pupil is a young carer.

Where a pupil has an agreed adaptation or reasonable adjustment that requires access to a mobile device, this will be permitted only for the specific purpose and within the limits set out in the agreed plan.

Cyberbullying

All personal electronic devices will be used in line with our Online Safety Policy.

Incidents of cyberbullying will be dealt with and reported in line with the Behaviour Policy.

As part of the school's ongoing commitment to the prevention of cyberbullying, regular teaching and discussion about online safety will take place as part of PSHE lessons.

Searching pupils

School pupils have a right for their private life to be respected under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). This right is not absolute, and the school can interfere with this right as long as it is justified, proportionate, and aligns with the powers to search in the Education Act 1996.

The headteacher, and other authorised staff members, will have the power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item. Mobile phones and similar devices will be deemed as prohibited items that may be searched for in line with the Behaviour Policy.

In all cases the authorised member of staff will always:

- Seek the co-operation of the pupil before conducting a search.
- Ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted.
- Give the pupil the opportunity to ask any questions so that their agreement is informed.
- Have due regard to the DfE's [‘Searching, screening and confiscation’](#) guidance.

Staff may search a pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers. Staff conducting a search must not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing – outer clothing means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear and includes hats, shoes, boots or scarves. Possessions means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control – this includes desks, lockers and bags.

A staff member may ask a pupil to show them what they are doing on their mobile phone or tablet if they reasonably believe that the pupil is using the device to cause harm. If it is judged reasonable, the staff member may inspect the files or data on a pupil's electronic device and delete them if necessary.

Staff members will ensure they have a good reason to examine and delete data on a pupil's electronic device. When determining a good reason to examine data, staff members will ensure they reasonably suspect that the data has been, or could be, used to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school and disrupt teaching, or be used to commit an offence.

When determining a good reason to delete data, staff members will consider whether the material found may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence and if so, choose not to delete the data. Where material is considered likely to cause harm, staff should consider whether deletion is necessary and proportionate. Material that may constitute evidence of an offence must not be deleted and should be preserved and referred to the DSL and/or police as appropriate.

If a search uncovers a device that is being used to cause harm, or which contains prohibited material such as pornography, a staff member can confiscate the device. If a staff member finds child pornography, it must be given to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. Where staff find stolen items like mobile devices, they must be given to the police as soon as reasonably practicable.

The member of staff conducting a search must normally be the same sex as the pupil being searched and another member of staff should normally be present as a witness. There is a limited exception where the member of staff conducting the search reasonably believes there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not carried out as a matter of urgency and, in the time available, it is not reasonably practicable for the search to be carried out by a member of staff of the same sex or for a witness to be present.

Where an urgent search is conducted without the usual arrangements, the staff member must report this immediately to the headteacher or another appropriate senior member of staff and ensure that the search is recorded in accordance with the school's Safeguarding procedures.

Where a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe that data or files held on a device may contain material that has been, or could be, used to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the school, disrupt teaching or commit an offence, the member of staff may examine the device in accordance with the school's legal powers and the DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance.

Staff must act proportionately and must not access information that is unrelated to the reason for the search. Where appropriate, the school may require the pupil to cooperate with a lawful examination of the device. Any refusal to cooperate will be managed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Where material may constitute evidence of a criminal offence, staff must preserve the evidence and seek advice from the DSL and/or police as appropriate. Staff must not delete potential evidence.

Where a device search identifies suspected nude or semi-nude images involving children or young people, staff must not copy, save, forward or otherwise distribute the images. The matter must be referred immediately to the DSL and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding policy.

Sanctions

The school will apply sanctions for breaches of this policy in a consistent and proportionate manner, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Where this policy is clearly breached, for example where a device is used, seen, or heard ringing, staff will feel confident to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty. Confiscated devices may be retained for a proportionate length of time, as determined by the Headteacher and in consideration of the circumstances, including the pupil's age, SEND, and any agreed exceptions or reasonable adjustments.

Additional sanctions may include detentions or other disciplinary measures in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Where a breach gives cause to suspect a pupil may be suffering, or may be at risk of, harm, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the DSL.

Confiscated personal electronic devices will be locked away securely in the [headteacher's office](#).

Bullying via personal electronic devices will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.