MOBILE PHONES AND SMART DEVICES POLICY

Our commitment

A calm, safe and focused school day where children can learn, build relationships and flourish — Rooted in Love.

Mobile-phone-free by default

Pupils should not have access to personal mobile phones or equivalent smart communication devices throughout the school day.

Policy information

Policy owner	Head of School
Responsible leadership	Executive Headteacher / Head of School
Approval	Governing Body / IEB
Date approved	October 2026
Effective from	October 2026
Review date	October 2027, or sooner if statutory guidance changes
Applies to	All pupils, staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors
Key linked policies	Behaviour; Safeguarding and Child Protection; Online Safety; Acceptable Use; Staff Code of Conduct; SEND; Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

Statutory basis: Department for Education, Mobile phones in schools (updated 29 June 2026; statutory from 29 June 2026; schools expected to follow from 1 September 2026), and section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026.

1. Purpose and principles

At St Luke's CE Primary School, the safety, wellbeing and education of our pupils are our highest priorities. Our Christian vision, "Rooted and established in love" (Ephesians 3:17), shapes our commitment to a safe, respectful and inclusive environment in which every child can flourish.

Mobile phones and smart devices can provide reassurance to families, particularly when older pupils travel independently. However, access during the school day can distract from learning, disrupt relationships and create additional safeguarding and online-safety risks.

St Luke's is therefore a mobile-phone-free school for pupils throughout the school day. Pupils should not bring a mobile phone or personal smart communication device to school. Where there is a genuine need, an exception must be agreed with school.

2. National guidance and statutory context

The Department for Education's statutory guidance states that all schools should be mobile-phone-free environments by default and that anything different should be by exception only. Schools should implement a policy whereby pupils do not have access to their mobile phones throughout the school day, including lessons, movement around school, breaktimes and lunchtimes.

The guidance also makes clear that schools must comply with other legal duties, including making reasonable adjustments where necessary. School leaders retain responsibility for deciding how the mobile-phone-free environment is implemented in their context.

3. Scope

For this policy, "mobile phone" includes personal mobile phones and other smart technology with similar communication or recording functionality. This may include smartphones, basic mobile phones, smartwatches capable of communication or recording, internet-enabled watches, personal tablets and other personal interactive communication devices.

School-owned devices provided for teaching and learning are not covered by this prohibition and are managed through the school's ICT and acceptable-use arrangements.

4. Expectations for pupils

Children should not bring a mobile phone or personal smart communication device to school. There is no educational requirement for a primary-aged pupil to have access to a personal phone during the school day.

If a child needs to contact home during the school day, a member of staff will support them to do so through the school office. If a parent or carer needs to contact their child urgently, they should contact the school office rather than the child's personal device.

5. Exceptional circumstances

The school recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances in which a pupil needs to bring a mobile phone to school. Examples may include a Year 6 pupil travelling independently, a significant journey to or

from school, a medical need, a disability or SEND-related reasonable adjustment, or another exceptional family circumstance.

Permission should be agreed with the Head of School in advance. Each request will be considered individually. An exception for one pupil does not create a general entitlement for other pupils.

6. Arrangements for an authorised phone

- The phone must be switched off before the pupil enters the school building.
- The pupil must hand the phone to the designated member of staff or school office on arrival.
- The device will be stored securely during the school day.
- The pupil will not have access to the device during the school day unless an agreed medical or reasonable-adjustment plan specifically requires this.
- The device will be returned at the end of the school day.

Phones should not be kept in pupils' pockets, bags, trays or classrooms unless this forms part of an individually agreed arrangement. The school will take reasonable care of devices handed in for safekeeping; however, expensive personal devices are brought onto the school site at the owner's risk.

7. Smartwatches and wearable technology

Pupils may wear a basic watch. A smartwatch or wearable device capable of making or receiving calls or messages, accessing the internet, taking photographs, recording audio or video, or receiving interactive notifications is treated in the same way as a mobile phone. Such functionality must not be accessible during the school day unless an individual medical or reasonable-adjustment arrangement has been agreed.

8. Breaches of the policy

Where a pupil brings a mobile phone or prohibited smart device into school without permission, or retains access to a device contrary to this policy:

- the device will be removed from the pupil and stored securely;
- the incident will be addressed in line with the Behaviour Policy;
- parents or carers will be informed where appropriate;
- for repeated or deliberate breaches, the school may require a parent or carer to collect the device; and
- permission to bring a device onto the school site may be withdrawn.

Any consequence will be reasonable, proportionate and consistent with the school's Behaviour Policy and the individual needs of the pupil.

9. Inappropriate use

Unless expressly authorised for a specific safeguarding or individual need, pupils must not use a personal device on the school site to:

- take photographs, video or audio recordings;
- make telephone or video calls or send/receive messages;

- access social media, websites, apps or games;
- share images, recordings or personal information;
- bully, intimidate, harass or exclude another person; or
- access, create, store or share inappropriate or harmful material.

Concerns involving bullying, harmful content, sexual imagery, harassment or safeguarding will be managed under the school's safeguarding, behaviour and online-safety procedures. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed where appropriate.

10. Searching, confiscation and safeguarding

Headteachers and authorised staff have statutory powers to search for items identified in school rules as items that may be searched for. Mobile phones and similar devices are identified by St Luke's as such items. Any search or confiscation will be undertaken in line with current DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation and the school's Behaviour Policy.

Staff will not routinely search through the contents of a pupil's personal device. Any decision to examine data or files will be made only where lawful, necessary and appropriate. Where an incident may involve criminal activity or a serious safeguarding concern, the school will seek appropriate advice and may involve children's social care and/or the police.

11. Online safety education

A mobile-phone-free school does not remove the need to teach children how to use technology safely and responsibly. Through the curriculum and wider safeguarding provision, pupils will learn about:

- privacy and personal information;
- healthy and balanced technology use;
- appropriate online relationships and communication;
- cyberbullying and harmful content;
- sharing photographs and videos;
- reporting concerns and seeking help; and
- the impact of online actions on themselves and others.

We want pupils to understand why the school is mobile-phone-free and to recognise the benefits of a calm, connected and distraction-free environment.

12. Parents and carers

Parents and carers are important partners in maintaining a mobile-phone-free school. We ask families to:

- support and reinforce the school's expectations;
- avoid encouraging children to keep phones secretly in bags or clothing;
- contact the school office when they need to communicate urgently with their child;
- discuss safe and responsible technology use at home;
- ensure children understand that photographs or recordings of others must not be taken or shared without appropriate permission; and
- contact school if there is a genuine reason why their child may need to bring a phone onto the premises.

Important for families

Parents and carers should not expect a child to read or respond to calls, texts, messages or notifications during the school day. For urgent messages or changes to collection arrangements, contact the school office.

13. Staff mobile phones

Staff have an important responsibility to model appropriate technology use. Personal mobile phones should be kept securely and should not be used for personal reasons in front of pupils during the school day.

There may be legitimate professional or operational reasons for staff to use a mobile phone, for example multi-factor authentication, emergency communication, school trips, safeguarding, school-approved applications or another purpose authorised by school leaders. Personal devices must not be used to photograph or record pupils unless specifically authorised in accordance with school safeguarding and data-protection procedures. Members of SLT have work mobile phones that can be used in such circumstances that warrant the taking of photographs for example in relation to a safeguarding concern.

14. Visitors, volunteers and contractors

Visitors, volunteers and contractors are expected to use mobile phones responsibly. Devices should remain on silent and out of sight when working with or around pupils. Photographs, video or audio recordings of pupils must not be taken on personal devices. Where a visitor needs to make or receive a call, they should do so away from pupils.

15. Educational visits and residentials

The school's expectations remain applicable during educational visits taking place within the school day. For residential visits or activities outside normal school hours, the trip leader will establish arrangements appropriate to pupils' age, the nature of the visit and safeguarding requirements. Families will be informed before the visit. The school prohibits pupils from bringing mobile phones on trips or residentials unless for medical reasons stated below.

16. Medical needs, SEND and reasonable adjustments

St Luke's is committed to inclusion. Some pupils may need access to a phone, smartwatch or associated technology because of a disability, SEND, a medical condition, communication need or another significant individual circumstance. The school will consider appropriate reasonable adjustments and individual arrangements.

Where appropriate, arrangements will be recorded within an individual healthcare plan, support plan or other relevant documentation and shared with staff who need to know.

17. Roles and responsibilities

Executive Headteacher / Head of School

- ensure the policy reflects current statutory guidance and legal duties;
- communicate expectations clearly;
- determine requests for exceptions;
- ensure consistent implementation and staff understanding;
- monitor impact on behaviour, safeguarding, learning and wellbeing; and
- review the policy regularly.

All staff

- understand and consistently apply the policy;
- model appropriate mobile phone use;
- challenge breaches consistently and proportionately;
- report safeguarding concerns promptly; and
- help pupils understand the reasons for the school's expectations.

Pupils

- follow the school's mobile phone rules;
- hand in an authorised device as required;
- never use another pupil's device;
- report inappropriate phone or online activity to a trusted adult; and
- show the school's values when communicating online and offline.

Parents and carers

- support the school's policy;
- use the school office for communication during the school day; and
- work in partnership with school when concerns or exceptional circumstances arise.

18. Communication, monitoring and review

The policy will be published on the school website, communicated to families, explained to pupils in an age-appropriate way, included in relevant induction information, shared with staff and revisited at the start of each academic year.

Senior leaders will monitor implementation through behaviour and safeguarding records, pupil voice, parent and staff feedback, incident patterns and checks on consistency. The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance or relevant legislation changes.

19. References

- Department for Education (2026), Mobile phones in schools: statutory guidance, updated 29 June 2026.
- Department for Education (2026), Communicating your policy for prohibiting the use of mobile phones in schools to parents.
- Department for Education (2026), Creating a mobile phone-free environment: school case studies.
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, section 36.
- Department for Education, Behaviour in schools.
- Department for Education, Searching, screening and confiscation at school.
- Department for Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

ST LUKE'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONES: ONE-PAGE GUIDE FOR PUPILS & FAMILIES

Safe • Calm • Focused • Rooted in Love

Our simple rule

Children should not bring a mobile phone or smart communication device to school. St Luke's is mobile-phone-free throughout the school day.

If home needs to contact a child Contact the school office. Staff will make sure an urgent message reaches your child.	**If a child needs to contact home** Speak to a member of staff. We will help them contact home when needed.
If a child genuinely needs a phone Agree this with school first. An authorised phone must be switched off and handed in on arrival.	**Smartwatches** A basic watch is fine. Smart communication, messaging, internet, camera or recording functions must not be accessible during the school day.
If the rule is broken The device will be removed and stored securely. Parents may be contacted and repeated breaches may require parent collection.	**SEND / medical needs** We will make appropriate reasonable adjustments where a device is needed because of disability, SEND, medical or communication needs.

What pupils must not do

- use a phone during the school day
- take photos, video or audio
- send messages or access social media
- use another pupil's device
- use technology to bully, intimidate or share harmful content

Why are we doing this?

A phone-free school helps children focus on learning, talk and play with each other, build healthy relationships, reduce distractions and avoid unnecessary online or safeguarding risks during the school day.

Remember

No phones. No notifications. No distractions during the school day. If there is an emergency, the school office is here to help.

Thank you for helping us keep St Luke's safe, calm and ready to learn.