

# OUR BLESSED SAINTS FEDERATION

## Mobile Phone Policy



Autumn 2023

## **1. Introduction and Aims**

Our Blessed Saints Federation recognises that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents 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:

- Risks to child protection.
- Data protection issues.
- Potential for lesson disruption.
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage.
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom.

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

### **2.1 Staff**

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

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

The headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every 2 years, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

## **3. Use of mobile phones by staff and governors**

### **3.1 Personal mobile phones**

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by Our Blessed Saints Federation) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while children are present/during contact time. Use of personal mobile phones and smart watches must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of Our Blessed Saints Federation where pupils are not present and where it does not disturb others. Smart watches may be worn but accessing functions other than the time should be as detailed above.

Staff should never contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a parent, they should use a school telephone. Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate. With regard to camera phones and the camera function on a smart watch, a member of staff should never use their phone or watch to photograph a pupil or allow themselves to be photographed by pupils.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance, waiting for a call back from a medical professional.

The headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, Our Blessed Saints Federation staff can use the school office number as a point of emergency contact.

### **3.2 Data protection**

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential Our Blessed Saints Federation information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard). More detailed guidance can be found in Our Blessed Saints Federation's data protection and ICT acceptable use policy.

### **3.3 Safeguarding**

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents or pupils, including 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 or pupils as detailed in Our Blessed Saints Federation's social media policy, ICT acceptable use, and E-Safety policy.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/Our Blessed Saints Federation trip/activity, this must be done using the school's ipads. In exceptional circumstances, teachers may capture photos of children at offsite activities, but these photos must be sent to Our Blessed Saints Federation straight away for use on twitter or for other communication forms but only if another member of staff is there to witness the correct deletion process of the photograph takes place. If staff are concerned this procedure is not being followed, this should be reported to the Headteacher.

### **3.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes**

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- emergency evacuations
- supervising off-site trips
- supervising residential visits.

Staff may use personal mobile phones when supervising residential visits or school trips, in case of emergencies. Only phone calls are allowed to be made to Our Blessed Saints Federation or emergency services.

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 which could identify a pupil.
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office.

### **3.5 Work phones**

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by Our Blessed Saints Federation for work purposes. Only authorised staff are permitted to use Our Blessed Saints Federation phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

### **3.6 Sanctions**

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

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

#### **4. Use of mobile phones by pupils**

Pupils may bring a mobile to Saint Luke's Catholic Primary School or SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School:

- If travelling to and from either school by themselves.
- Are young carers who need to be contactable.
- Attending a different family home after school than before the school day began.
- Pupils must hand in their mobile phone to the class teacher who will ensure it is stored securely in the school's office until home time.

#### **4.1 Sanctions**

If a pupil is in breach of this policy:

- The phone will be confiscated. (Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from pupils under sections 91 and 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#).)
- If they are confiscated, the Headteacher will collect the phone and inform the parent that it needs to be collected from Saint Luke's Catholic Primary School or SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School at home time.
- The Federation's behaviour policy sanctions will be applied.

Staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). The DfE guidance allows school to search a pupil's phone if you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury. If inappropriate content is found on the phone which is a serious cause for concern in regard to the pupil's conduct, bullying, peer-on-peer abuse, it can be classified as criminal conduct. Our Blessed Saints Federation takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- sexting
- 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.

#### **5. Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors**

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on Saint Luke's Catholic Primary School or SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School during the day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's 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, or when working with pupils.

Parents, 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 either Saint Luke's Catholic Primary School or SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School.

A summary of these rules, are provided when parents, visitors and volunteers sign in.

Parents or volunteers supervising Our Blessed Saints Federation trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents.
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil.

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the federation's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above. Parents must use Saint Luke's Catholic Primary School or SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary 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 his/her personal mobile during the school day.

## **6. Loss, theft or damage**

Pupils bringing phones to Saint Luke's Catholic Primary School or SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School must ensure that phones are stored securely at the school office. Pupils must secure their 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.

Our Blessed Saints Federation accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on the Federation's premises, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from Saint Luke's Catholic Primary School or SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School.

If Our Blessed Saints Federation confiscates phones from pupils, they will be stored in the Headteacher's office in a secure location at Saint Luke's Catholic Primary School or SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School.

Lost phones should be returned to the office. Our Blessed Saints Federation will then attempt to contact the owner.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

Our Blessed Saints Federation is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, Our Blessed Saints Federation will take into account:

- Feedback from parents and pupils.
- Feedback from teachers.
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents.
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations.

**Appendix 1: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to Saint Luke's Catholic Primary School or SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School**

PUPIL DETAILS	
<b>Pupil name:</b>	
<b>Year group/class:</b>	
<b>Parent(s) name(s):</b>	

Our Blessed Saints Federation has agreed to allow [pupil name] to bring [his/her] mobile phone to Our Blessed Saints Federation because [he/she]:

- Travels to and from Our Blessed Saints Federation alone.
- Is a young carer.
- Is attending a school trip or residential where use of mobile phones will be allowed.
- Needs the phone for an educational activity during class time.
- Attends a different home after the school day to the one home departed from in the morning.

Pupils who bring a mobile phone to Our Blessed Saints Federation must abide by the federation's policy on the use of mobile phones.

Our Blessed Saints Federation reserves the right revoke permission if pupils don't abide by the policy.

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR OUR BLESSED SAINTS FEDERATION USE ONLY	
<b>Authorised by:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

## **Appendix 2: Mobile phone information slip for visitors**

### **Use of mobile phones in our schools**

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

Our Blessed Saints Federation 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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