



Mobile Phone and Smart Devices Policy

Responsible for policy:

Policy Status:

Review :

Chair of Directors

CC3: Quality Provision and Performance

Compliance

Annually



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Definitions

In this **Mobile Phone and Smart Devices Policy**, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

- i **'The Romero Catholic Academy'** means the Company named at the beginning of this **Mobile Phone and Smart Devices Policy** and includes all sites upon which the Company is undertaking, from time to time, being carried out. The Romero Catholic Academy includes; **Corpus Christi, Good Shepherd, Sacred Heart, SS Peter and Paul, St Gregory, St John Fisher, St Patrick, Cardinal Wiseman, Shared Services Team.**
- ii **'Romero Catholic Academy'** means the Company responsible for the management of the Academy and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff at the Company.
- iii **'Board'** means the board of Directors of the Romero Catholic Academy.
- iv **'Chair'** means the Chair of the Board or the Chair of the Local Governing body of the Academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.
- v **'Clerk'** means the Clerk to the Board or the Clerk to the Local Academy Committee of the Academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.
- vi **'CEO'** means the Chief Executive Officer – the person responsible for performance of all Academies and Staff within the Multi Academy Company and is accountable to the Board of Directors.
- vii **'BDES'** means the education service provided by the diocese, which may also be known, or referred to, as the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service.
- viii **'Local Governing Body'** means the governing body of the School.
- ix **'Principal'** means the substantive Principal, who is the person with overall responsibility for the day to day management of the school.
- x **'School'** means the school or college within The Romero Catholic Academy and includes all sites upon which the school undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.
- xi **'Shared Services Team'** means the staff who work in the central team across the Company (e.g. HR/ Finance)
- xii **'Vice-Chair'** means the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body elected from time to time.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- xiii **Mobile and smart Devices** Any personal electronic device capable of communication, data storage, internet access, or audio/visual recording. This includes, but is not limited to, mobile phones, smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, smart glasses, gaming devices, wireless audio devices (e.g. earbuds), and any emerging technology with similar functionality.
- xiv **Use** Any interaction with a device, including but not limited to making or receiving calls, sending messages, accessing the internet, using applications, recording audio or video, taking photographs, or displaying content.
- xv **Educational Visits / Off-site Activities** Any school-organised activity taking place off the main school site, including trips, visits, and residential experiences, where pupils are under the supervision of staff.
- xvi **Confiscation** The temporary removal of a device by a member of staff where a breach of this policy has occurred. Confiscation will be carried out in a lawful, reasonable, and proportionate manner, in line with statutory powers.
- xvii **Personal Data** Any information that relates to an identified or identifiable individual, including images, recordings, contact details, or any other data protected under data protection legislation (e.g. UK GDPR).
- xviii **Authorised Use** Use of a device that has been explicitly permitted by the school under defined circumstances, such as for medical needs, approved educational purposes, or specific staff duties.
- xix **Misuse** Any use of a mobile or smart device that breaches this policy, including unauthorised use, use that disrupts learning, infringes privacy, poses a safeguarding risk, or brings the Academy into disrepute.

1. Purpose

At Romero Catholic Academy, we recognise that mobile phones and similar devices (including smartphones) are an important part of everyday life for pupils, parents/carers, staff, and the wider community. For the purposes of this policy, 'mobile or smart devices' refers to any personal electronic device capable of communication, recording, storage, or internet connectivity. This includes, but is not limited to, mobile phones, smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, wireless audio devices, cameras, and any emerging technologies with similar functionality.

This policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors, and volunteers
- Support other school policies, particularly those relating to safeguarding, behaviour, and anti-bullying

This policy also addresses challenges such as:

- Safeguarding risks
- Data protection issues
- Disruption to learning
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in school

The Academy is committed to educating pupils on the safe, responsible, and respectful use of technology. This includes teaching online safety through the curriculum in line with DfE *Teaching Online Safety in Schools* guidance. Pupils will be supported to understand risks such as cyberbullying, online exploitation, misinformation, and the responsible use of digital tools.

The Academy recognises that mobile and smart devices can facilitate or expose children to online safeguarding risks. Any concern involving child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, harmful or inappropriate content, coercion, bullying, exploitation or other technology-assisted abuse will be managed as a safeguarding concern in accordance with KCSIE and the Academy's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and not solely as a behaviour incident.

2. Scope

At Romero Catholic Academy, this Mobile Phone and Smart Devices Policy applies to all members of the Romero Catholic Academy, including pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers, visitors, volunteers, and contractors while on school premises or participating in school-led activities off-site.

The policy covers the possession, use, storage, and management of mobile phones and similar smart devices (including smartphones, smartwatches, and devices capable of communication, recording, or internet access). It applies throughout the entire school day, including before and after school where individuals are on site, during lessons, break and lunch times, transitions between lessons, and on educational visits, trips, and residential experiences organised by the school.

The policy also extends to circumstances where mobile phone use may impact safeguarding, behaviour, or the reputation of the school community, including the inappropriate use of devices to communicate, record, or share content connected to the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with associated policies, including safeguarding, behaviour, staff code of conduct, and data protection policies, to ensure a consistent and coherent approach to mobile phone use across the school.

3. Policy Statement

The Romero Catholic Academy is committed to upholding its mission as a Catholic community, rooted in the values of dignity, respect, and the common good. We strive to provide a safe, calm, and purposeful learning environment in which all pupils are enabled to flourish academically, spiritually, and personally.

The Academy recognises that mobile phones and smart devices are a significant part of modern life; however, their use must not detract from learning, compromise safeguarding, or undermine the wellbeing of individuals or the wider community.

Accordingly, The Romero Catholic Academy adopts a clear, consistent, and proportionate approach to the possession and use of mobile and smart devices. Our approach prioritises safeguarding, minimises disruption, protects personal dignity and privacy, and promotes responsible and respectful digital behaviour in line with our Catholic ethos.

All members of the Academy community—pupils, staff, parents, and visitors—are expected to adhere to this policy and model behaviours that reflect our shared values, ensuring that technology is used appropriately and in a way that supports teaching, learning, and the holistic development of every individual.

This includes ensuring that mobile and smart devices are not used in ways that may cause harm to others, including **cyberbullying, online harassment, or the sharing of inappropriate or harmful content**, in line with safeguarding expectations.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The effective implementation of this policy relies on clear roles and consistent expectations across The Romero Catholic Academy community.

4.1 Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for:

- Ensuring the consistent implementation of this policy across the Academy
- Determining any exceptions to the policy on a case-by-case basis
- Ensuring that staff are supported in enforcing expectations
- Applying disciplinary measures where necessary, including extended confiscation of devices
- Promoting a culture of safeguarding, respect, and responsible use of technology

4.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for:

- Ensuring that risks associated with mobile and smart devices are addressed within safeguarding procedures
- Responding to incidents involving misuse of devices that may pose a safeguarding risk
- Liaising with external agencies, including the police, where necessary
- Providing guidance to staff on safeguarding issues linked to technology

4.3 Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Senior leaders are responsible for:

- Supporting the implementation and consistent application of the policy
- Monitoring behaviour trends and safeguarding concerns linked to device use
- Ensuring that appropriate systems are in place for the safe storage of confiscated devices
- Communicating expectations clearly to staff, pupils, and parents

4.4 Senior leader/ policy lead

The nominated policy lead in each school, is responsible for:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy on at least an annual basis
- Leading the review process and recommending updates
- Holding staff and pupils accountable for adherence to the policy
- Responding to feedback from stakeholders and ensuring continuous improvement

4.5 Staff

Staff must not use personal telephone numbers, personal social media accounts, private messaging applications or other personal accounts to communicate with pupils. Communication with pupils must take place through Academy-approved systems and in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct and safeguarding procedures. Any exceptional safeguarding or emergency circumstance must be managed through an Academy-approved process and reported to the appropriate senior leader/DSL.

All staff (including supply staff, support staff, and contractors) are responsible for:

- Consistently enforcing this policy in line with school expectations
- Modelling appropriate and professional behaviour regarding mobile device use
- Confiscating devices where breaches occur, in line with school procedures
- Reporting concerns or breaches, particularly those relating to safeguarding
- Responding clearly and promptly to queries from parents/carers regarding the policy
- Deleting images when no longer needed from their device

4.6 Pupils

Pupils are responsible for:

- Adhering to the expectations set out in this policy at all times
- Ensuring that devices are used only when permitted
- Respecting the safety, privacy, and wellbeing of others
- Complying with staff instructions regarding confiscation and sanctions

4.7 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are responsible for:

- Supporting the Academy in enforcing this policy
- Ensuring their child understands and follows expectations
- Using the school office as the main point of contact during the school day
- Not contacting pupils directly via mobile devices during school hours

4.8 Visitors, Volunteers and Contractors

All visitors and volunteers are responsible for:

- Complying with this policy while on school premises or engaged in school activities
- Following safeguarding guidance regarding the use of mobile devices
- Reporting any concerns related to misuse of devices to a member of staff

4.9 Governing Body

The Local Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ratifying the policy on adoption and reviewing it annually
- Providing strategic oversight and assurance regarding implementation
- Ensuring the policy aligns with statutory requirements and safeguarding expectations

5. Procedures

5.1 Daily Expectations for Pupils [Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK](#) (DfE statutory guidance)

On arrival to school: Pupils may bring a mobile device onto site however the law now states pupils do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the school day including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

Primary

- If a pupil brings in a mobile phone it must be handed into the school office at the start of the day or the class teacher (Corpus Christi and Saint Gregory)
- Mobile phones must be collected from the school office when a pupil leaves for the day
- The school is responsible for storing devices in a secure location

Secondary

- From 1 September 2026, schools must have regard to the Department for Education's statutory *Mobile phones in schools* guidance. The Academy therefore operates as a mobile phone-free environment by default. Pupils must not use mobile phones or other personal smart technology with similar functionality throughout the school day, including during lessons, transitions, breaktimes and lunchtimes, except where an authorised exception applies.
- Devices must be:
 - Switched off by the time they enter the internal gates by reception
 - Stored securely in bags and out of sight throughout the day, a pouch such as a secure phone pouch can be used for storage within bags this helps to regulate positive routines and management of a smartphone.
 - During the school day devices must remain **“not seen and not heard”** at all times. This applies to:
 - Lessons
 - Lesson transitions
 - Break and lunch times
 - The Academy additionally restricts device use during Academy-organised after-school activities where this is necessary for safeguarding, supervision, behaviour or the effective running of the activity. Expectations will be communicated to pupils and parents.

5.2 Responding to a Breach (Confiscation Process)

If a smartphone or banned device is seen, heard, or used without permission:

1. **Immediate action**
 - Staff member confiscates the device calmly and professionally
 - Pupil is instructed to hand over the device
2. **Recording the incident**
 - Staff member ensures details are recorded:
 - Pupil name
 - Date and time
3. **Secure storage**
 - Device is placed in a labelled envelope/bag
 - Delivered to the student hub area for secure storage
 - Stored in a restricted, lockable area
4. **Return of device**
 - Device returned at the end of the school day unless this is a persistent issue
5. **Parental communication**
 - Parents will be informed of a phone incident via Arbor

5.3 Escalation for Repeated Breaches

Where a pupil repeatedly breaches the policy:

1. Device must be handed in daily to the **Head of Year or another key staff member**
2. Monitoring period is set by pastoral staff
3. Additional behaviour sanctions may be applied in line with the Behaviour Policy
4. Persistent concerns may trigger:
 - Pastoral meeting with parent/carer
 - Behaviour support interventions

The Principal retains discretion to **extend confiscation periods** where appropriate. Parents will be required to collect device/devices if there are more than 3 breaches or will stay securely locked until parents can collect. Confiscation and any associated sanction will be reasonable, proportionate and applied consistently in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and DfE *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* guidance. Arrangements for the return of a device, including any requirement for collection by a parent/carer following repeated breaches, will be clearly communicated.

5.4 Authorised Use Procedures

Exceptions for pupils will only be permitted where justified by an individual pupil's circumstances and authorised by the school. This may include reasonable adjustments for disability or SEND, medical requirements, or exceptionally where use forms part of an agreed safeguarding, care or support plan. Any exception will be proportionate, documented, regularly reviewed and will specify when, where and how the device may be used.

1. Request reviewed by:
 - Head of Year or pastoral lead
2. If approved:
 - Written or recorded authorisation is issued
 - Clear conditions are set (e.g. location of use)
3. Monitoring:
 - Staff oversee appropriate use
 - Misuse results in withdrawal of permission

5.5 Staff Procedures

During the school day:

1. Staff must not use personal mobile phones in the presence of pupils
2. Devices may only be used:
 - During non-contact time
 - In staff-only areas

Where use is permitted (exceptional circumstances):

1. Staff must:
 - Seek approval where required
 - Maintain professional conduct
 - Avoid any safeguarding or data protection risks

5.6 Safeguarding Incident Procedure

If a device is suspected to have been used for safeguarding concerns (e.g. inappropriate images, harassment):

1. **Immediate action**
 - Where a mobile phone or smart device is suspected of containing data or files relevant to a safeguarding concern, staff must not routinely access, view, copy, forward or delete the content. The device should be secured and the concern reported immediately to the DSL or a deputy. Any search of a pupil or examination, deletion or retention of data or files on a device must only be undertaken where lawful and in accordance with the DfE *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* guidance, KCSIE and the Academy's safeguarding and behaviour procedures. Where there may be evidence of a criminal offence, the DSL/senior leader will consider whether police advice or involvement is required before accessing the device.
2. **Report**
 - Incident reported immediately to the DSL
3. **DSL response**
 - Assess level of risk
 - Secure evidence in line with safeguarding guidance
 - Decide on next steps (internal action / external referral)
4. **Escalation**
 - Police or external agencies involved where required

The school treats all safeguarding concerns involving devices as **serious incidents**. Any incident the creation, possession or sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos involving children will be referred immediately to the DSL/deputy DSL and managed in accordance with KCSIE and current safeguarding guidance. Staff must not view, copy, print, forward or otherwise share such imagery unless expressly required as part of an authorised safeguarding process.

5.7 Procedures for Visitors, Parents and Volunteers

1. On arrival:
 - Visitors receive guidance on mobile phone use
 - Expectations are clearly communicated
2. While on site:
 - Devices must not be used around pupils
 - No photographs or recordings are permitted **unless explicitly authorised by the school**. The school reserves the right to request that mobile devices are switched off or not used in certain areas as part of safeguarding procedures.

3. If a breach occurs:
 - Visitor is reminded of expectations
 - Serious breaches may result in:
 - Removal from site
 - Escalation to senior leadership

5.8 Off-Site Visits and Trips

1. Pupils may bring devices (if permitted by trip leader)
2. If permitted on residential visits, the trip leader will establish clear arrangements for the possession, use and overnight storage of mobile devices. Ordinarily, pupil devices will be collected or securely stored overnight unless an authorised individual exception applies.
3. All usual school rules apply
4. Staff must:
 - Reinforce expectations
 - Monitor use
 - During residential phones must be handed to the trip leader overnight and are not permitted in rooms.
5. Any misuse:
 - Managed in line with confiscation procedures
 - Escalated to trip leader and senior staff

5.9 Loss, Theft or Damage

If a device is lost or stolen:

1. Pupil reports immediately to:
 - Reception or staff member
2. School will:
 - Log the incident
 - Attempt to identify the owner if found
3. Responsibility:
 - Devices remain the responsibility of the pupil.

The school accepts no liability for loss, theft, or damage to personal devices, **except where required by law or where loss or damage is the result of proven negligence by the school.**

6. Ongoing feedback for review

6.1 Policy is reviewed **annually** by:

- Policy lead in school and reported back to admin@romeromac.com if any suggestions are recommended.

6.2 Review includes:

- Behaviour logs
- Safeguarding records
- Feedback from staff, pupils, and parents

6.3 Changes are:

- Approved by the Core Committee
- Communicated to all stakeholders

7. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read alongside the following key Department for Education (DfE) guidance and statutory frameworks:

- **7.1 Mobile Phone Guidance**
- **Mobile Phones in Schools (DfE, updated 2026)**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools>
 - Sets expectation that schools should be **mobile phone-free environments by default**
 - Provides guidance on implementation, communication, and enforcement
- **7.2 Safeguarding**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Statutory Guidance**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
 - Sets out **legal duties for safeguarding and child protection** in schools
 - Includes guidance on online safety, peer-on-peer abuse, and harmful behaviours linked to technology
- **7.3 Behaviour and Discipline**
- **Behaviour in Schools (DfE, updated 2024)**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2>
 - Provides guidance on creating a **calm, safe and supportive environment**
 - Includes expectations for behaviour policies and sanctions, including mobile phone use
- **7.4 Searching, Screening and Confiscation**
- **Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools (DfE)**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>
 - Explains schools' **legal powers to confiscate devices** and search pupils
 - Includes requirements for safe, proportionate practice .
- **7.5 Data Protection and GDPR**
- **Data Protection in Schools (DfE, updated 2026)**
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools>
 - Supports compliance with **UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018**
 - Covers use of images, recordings, and handling personal data
- **7.6 Additional Relevant Guidance**
 The following should also be considered:
 - **Equality Act 2010**
 - Ensures reasonable adjustments (e.g. for pupils requiring devices for medical needs)
 - **Education and Inspections Act 2006**
 - Provides legal powers for confiscation and discipline
 - **Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026**
 - Section 36 establishes the statutory framework requiring relevant school leaders and proprietors to have regard to Secretary of State guidance concerning pupils' possession and use of mobile phones and other personal interactive communication devices.

8. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This Mobile Phone Policy is underpinned by the following legislation and statutory guidance, which establish the legal framework for safeguarding, behaviour, data protection, and the management of mobile and smart devices in schools:

8.1 Core Statutory Guidance

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**

Statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education, placing a legal duty on schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It includes expectations regarding online safety, peer-on-peer abuse, and risks associated with mobile and smart technology.

8.2 Behaviour and Discipline

- **Education and Inspections Act 2006**

Provides schools with the legal power to regulate pupil behaviour, including the authority to confiscate items such as mobile phones where appropriate.

- **DfE Behaviour in Schools Guidance**

Sets expectations for maintaining good behaviour, including the establishment of clear rules on mobile phone use to support a calm and orderly environment.

8.3 Searching, Screening and Confiscation

- **DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance**

Provides advice on the lawful and proportionate confiscation of items and, where necessary, the searching of pupils in line with safeguarding and behaviour expectations.

8.4 Data Protection and Privacy

- **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)**

- **Data Protection Act 2018**

These establish legal requirements for handling personal data, including images, recordings, and information that may be accessed or shared via mobile devices.

8.5 Equality and Inclusion

- **Equality Act 2010**

Requires schools to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with protected characteristics, including where mobile devices are required for medical or accessibility purposes.

8.6 Digital and Online Safety

- **DfE Guidance on Teaching Online Safety in Schools**

Supports schools in educating pupils about the safe, responsible, and respectful use of technology.

- **DfE Mobile Phone Guidance for Schools**

Encourages schools to adopt clear approaches to limiting or restricting mobile phone use to support learning, behaviour, and safeguarding.

- Schools must also have regard to evolving risks associated with digital technologies, including AI-generated content and online harms, as referenced within safeguarding guidance and national policy developments.

9. Monitoring and Review

- The Board of Directors delegate the implementation of this policy to the Local Governing Body of each school.
- This policy will be reviewed by CC3 Quality, Provision and Performance Biannually.

10. Link to other policies

- TRCA Safeguarding policy
- TRCA Visitor Management policy
- KCSIE Latest guidance