MOBILE PHONES, SMART DEVICES AND WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY POLICY

2026–2027

"Learning, Living, Loving together in Christ."

Approved by	Governing Body
Date approved	22.10.2026
Review date	Autumn 2027

1. Policy Statement and Catholic Mission

At Our Lady and St Rose of Lima Catholic Primary School, we are committed to a safe, calm, inclusive and purposeful environment in which pupils flourish academically, socially and spiritually. Our mission, 'Learning, Living, Loving together in Christ', calls us to respect the dignity, privacy and wellbeing of every person.

The school is a mobile phone-free environment for pupils throughout the school day, including breaks and lunchtimes, subject to carefully considered exceptions. This policy covers mobile phones, smartwatches, smart glasses and other personal communication or recording technology. It applies alongside our Safeguarding and Child Protection, Behaviour, Online Safety, Staff Code of Conduct, SEND, Data Protection, Photography and Video, and ICT and Internet Acceptable Use policies.

2. Aims and Scope

This policy applies to pupils, employees (including supply staff), governors, parents, volunteers, visitors and contractors while on site or taking part in school activities. It seeks to safeguard children; protect personal data; prevent disruption, bullying and unauthorised recording; maintain professional boundaries; and make appropriate provision for medical needs and disability.

Personal smart devices include phones, communication-enabled smartwatches and fitness trackers, smart glasses, wearable cameras, AI-enabled recording or communication devices, and similar technologies. Authorised school-owned equipment is governed by the school's acceptable-use arrangements.

3. Pupil Phones and Independent Travel

Pupils must not bring mobile phones to school as a matter of routine. Year 6 pupils who travel to or from school independently may bring a phone for safety where a parent or carer has requested and obtained prior permission from the Headteacher. Other exceptional requests will be considered individually, including safeguarding and equality considerations.

Permission is conditional on compliance with the storage procedure and may be reviewed if misused, taking account of any relevant individual needs. Parents needing to contact their child during the school day must telephone the school office on 0121 464 2283; children may contact home through staff.

4. Arrival, Storage and Collection

An authorised pupil must switch off their phone before entering the school grounds. On arrival, the pupil hands the phone to the class teacher for placement in the class phone box; a designated member of staff transfers the box promptly to secure storage in the school office. Phones must not be used on school premises during the day.

At dismissal, devices will be returned through the supervised class or office collection process. Pupils may only switch phones on after leaving the school premises. Staff will maintain clear handover arrangements to reduce the risk of loss or misidentification.

5. Smartwatches and Wearable Technology

Pupils must not bring or wear personal devices capable of calling, messaging, internet access, photography, audio or video recording, livestreaming or similar communication functions without an agreed exception. This includes smartwatches, smart glasses and AI-enabled wearable devices, regardless of whether those functions are actively being used. Traditional time-only watches are permitted.

6. Medical Needs, SEND and Reasonable Adjustments

Devices needed for medical monitoring, alerts, assistive communication or disability-related access will be considered individually by the Headteacher and SENDCo, Mrs Nicky Edgington, in consultation with parents and relevant professionals. This includes equipment supporting diabetes care and arrangements specified in an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Any agreed provision will specify how the device can be accessed, who supervises it and what safeguards are needed. The general prohibition must not obstruct essential medical care or reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

7. Unauthorised Devices, Confiscation and Searches

Where a pupil brings or uses a device contrary to this policy, authorised staff may confiscate it in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It will be logged where appropriate and stored securely in the school office. Parents will be informed as appropriate; collection by a parent or carer will normally be required following unauthorised use, but the Headteacher may approve a proportionate alternative.

Any search of a pupil or examination of electronic data must comply with current DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance and applicable legal powers. Staff must not assume that any suspected misuse automatically authorises a search of device content. Where there is a safeguarding concern, the DSL must be consulted before further action, particularly in relation to intimate or potentially illegal images.

8. Repeated Breaches and Safeguarding Concerns

Repeated or serious breaches will be managed through the Behaviour Policy, considering age, circumstances, SEND, disability and safeguarding needs. Permission to bring a phone may be reviewed or withdrawn where appropriate. Suspected bullying, exploitation, harmful content or unlawful recording must be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed under safeguarding procedures.

Staff should not unnecessarily view, download, copy, share or forward suspected indecent images of children. Advice should be sought through the DSL and relevant safeguarding procedures, with police or other agencies involved when appropriate.

9. Photography, Recording and Social Media

Pupils must not use personal devices to photograph, film, record, livestream, message or access social media during the school day. Unauthorised recording of pupils, staff or visitors may be treated as a serious safeguarding or behaviour matter.

School photographs and videos must be taken using approved school equipment and systems, subject to the school's Photography and Video Policy, privacy notices and relevant consent or other lawful basis.

10. Staff Personal Devices and Professional Boundaries

Staff, including supply staff, must not use personal phones for routine calls, texts, social media or other private purposes while teaching, supervising or otherwise directly responsible for pupils. Personal devices should be stored securely and used during breaks or non-contact time in areas away from children. The Headteacher may authorise an exception for urgent family circumstances or other justified needs; the school office can act as an emergency contact point.

Staff must not use personal phones to take photographs, videos or audio recordings of pupils for school purposes. Any exceptional emergency arrangement must be expressly authorised and managed securely. Staff must not store or process confidential pupil information on unauthorised personal devices, share private contact details with pupils or families for school communication, or communicate with pupils through personal messaging or social media accounts.

On visits, residential activities and during evacuations, staff must follow an agreed communication plan. Personal phones may be used for urgent safety communication where authorised or necessary in an emergency, but routine contact with parents should be via school-approved channels. School-owned phones may be used only by authorised personnel for appropriate professional purposes. Breaches by staff may be addressed through the Code of Conduct and relevant disciplinary or safeguarding procedures.

11. Parents, Volunteers, Governors and Visitors

Visitors, contractors, volunteers and governors must not use personal devices to photograph, film or record children without express school authorisation. Devices must not distract adults from supervising pupils or compromise confidentiality. Smart glasses or wearable recording devices must not be activated in pupil areas without the Headteacher's express permission.

Parents and carers should use phones respectfully on site. At performances, assemblies, Masses and other events, the school will explain whether personal photography is permitted and any restrictions needed to protect children. Families must respect others' privacy and must not publish identifiable images of other children without appropriate permission. Volunteers accompanying visits must not contact other parents directly about pupils or take unauthorised photographs.

12. Loss, Theft and Damage

Pupils and families are encouraged not to bring valuable devices unnecessarily. The school will take reasonable care of phones accepted for storage or confiscated under this policy, but cannot guarantee against loss, theft or damage. Devices should be identifiable and secured with appropriate access controls. Any loss or suspected data breach must be reported promptly through school procedures.

13. Responsibilities, Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher is responsible for implementation, with all staff expected to apply the policy consistently. Safeguarding concerns are referred to the DSL team: Mrs Hensman, Mrs Nicky Edgington and Miss Paula Kavanagh. The governing body will review the policy annually, or sooner if guidance or technology changes, considering behaviour and safeguarding records and feedback from pupils, parents and staff.

14. Legal and Guidance Framework

This policy has regard to the DfE's statutory guidance on mobile phones in schools, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance, the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Equality Act 2010, UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. It should be interpreted alongside the school's published safeguarding and behaviour arrangements.