St John with St Augustine CE Primary School
Mobile Phone Policy 2026

With God's help, together, we aspire, achieve and believe.

Phones & Smart Devices Policy

1. Purpose
   At St John with St Augustine we are committed to a safe, calm and focused environment where every pupil can learn and flourish. Because mobile phones and smart devices can distract learning, risk pupils' privacy and wellbeing, and contribute to bullying or safeguarding concerns, our default position is a mobile-phone-free school. Where a pupil has a genuine, documented need to carry a device for medical or SEND reasons we will make a carefully managed exception.

This policy follows the Department for Education's Mobile phones in schools' guidance (published June 2026) and the expectation that schools operate as mobile-phone-free environments by default from 1 September 2026.

2. Scope
   This policy applies to all pupils and to all personal devices that can:
   - make/receive calls or texts;
   - access the internet or apps;
   - send/receive notifications;
   - record or take photographs or video; or
   - otherwise communicate remotely (including smartwatches and wearables).

The policy applies throughout the school day, including lessons, assemblies, movement between lessons, break times, lunchtime and school-run clubs and activities.

3. Definitions and permitted devices

    - **Basic "brick" phone:** a device whose primary functions are voice calls and simple SMS, **with no internet access, no camera/video, no app store and no messaging/social apps.**
    - **Smartphones and any device with camera, internet or messaging capability are not permitted in school.**

The headteacher will make the final decision if there is doubt about a device's status.

4. Default rule and rationale
    - **Pupils must not bring smartphones or smart devices onto the school site.**
    - **Pupils should not have access to any personal mobile phone during the school day.**

      This protects learning, prevents distraction and reduces safeguarding risks.

5. Permitted exceptions (limited and individual)
   We will consider an exception **only** where there is a clear, evidenced need. Typical exceptions are:
    - pupils with a **medical need** where a device is necessary for monitoring or emergency use;
    - pupils with identified **SEND** where a device is part of a reasonable adjustment or assistive technology.

All exceptions will be agreed in writing, recorded, shared with relevant staff and reviewed termly. Where the exception is for travel, the device must meet the school's definition of a basic brick phone.

6. Arrival, storage and access for permitted phones
   Where a pupil has written permission to bring a basic phone they must:
    - switch the phone off before entering the school building;
    - hand it to the designated member of staff in the school office on arrival;
    - have the phone securely stored and inaccessible to the pupil for the whole school day;
    - collect the phone at the agreed collection point at the end of the day.

Phones are not to be kept in pockets, bags, trays or classrooms.

The school accepts no responsibility for phones once the pupil has left the school site.

7. Smartwatches and wearables
   Wearable devices that can call, message, access the internet, record or receive notifications are treated as smartphones and **are not permitted** during the school day. Families may be asked to provide a simple non-smart watch where needed.

8. Use, photographing and recording
   Pupils must not use personal devices to:
   - take photographs, audio or video of pupils, staff, visitors or school activities without explicit authorisation;
   - post or share images or recordings of others;
   - bully, intimidate or threaten others;
   - access inappropriate content.

Any inappropriate recording or sharing will be treated as a safeguarding concern and handled under the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy. The DSL or deputy will be informed where appropriate.

9. Behaviour, confiscation and sanctions
   We will apply this policy consistently, fairly and proportionately.

   - First breach: device may be confiscated and returned at the end of the day to the child's parent or carer; the incident will be recorded and parents may be informed that they are not allowed in school.
   - Repeated or serious breaches: device may be retained for a specified period, parents may be asked to collect the device, and other behaviour sanctions may follow.
   - **Persistent refusal to comply will prompt action taken as set out by the DFE to confiscate the mobile phone or similar devices for whatever length of time the school feels proportionate.**

Refusal to hand over a device will initially be managed by pastoral staff, using parental partnership and support, recognising the safeguarding risks involved.

10. Searching and screening
    Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil is carrying a prohibited device, authorised staff (SLT) may search for it. Searches will be lawful, proportionate and conducted with regard to the pupil's age, dignity and any SEND needs. There will be two members of staff present when searching bags or items of clothing.

11. Safeguarding and data protection

Mobile-phone misuse can indicate or create safeguarding risk (bullying, sexualised content, sharing personal information, etc.). Any incident that raises safeguarding concerns will be managed under the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures. We will also act in line with data protection requirements when handling devices and any personal data.

12. SEND, medical and reasonable adjustments

The school will make reasonable adjustments where required by SEND, disability or medical need. Any exception will be:

- considered individually;
- recorded in writing;
- shared with staff who need to know;
- reviewed termly or sooner if circumstances change.

13. Communication with parents and contact during the day

Parents should not contact pupils directly by mobile phone during the school day. If contact is needed, parents should phone the school office. Pupils needing to contact home may use the school telephone with staff assistance. We will publish this policy clearly and explain arrangements for any pupils who have an agreed exception.

14. Educational visits and residential visits

Mobile phone arrangements for trips, sporting fixtures and residential visits will be set out separately on a trip-by-trip basis. For residential visits the school will balance safeguarding and wellbeing and give parents clear instructions before the visit.

15. Staff use of mobile phones

Staff must model the school's expectations. Personal mobile phone use is not permitted during the school day. Personal phones should be kept securely and not used in designated areas or during breaks. Legitimate exceptions (emergency contact, school business, approved educational use, multi-factor authentication or safeguarding situations) are allowed but must follow staff safeguarding, data protection and acceptable-use rules.

16. Responsibilities

Headteacher: implement and review the policy, ensure staff understand expectations and keep the policy aligned with statutory guidance.
Staff: enforce the policy consistently, report significant breaches, follow

safeguarding procedures and manage confiscation/searches in line with school practice.
Parents/carers: support the school by not sending pupils to school with smartphones, by providing only an appropriate basic phone where necessary and by using the school office for urgent contact.
Pupils: follow the policy, hand in permitted phones on arrival and not bring smartphones onto school premises.

17. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if: DfE guidance or legislation changes; safeguarding issues indicate amendment is required; or the school identifies the arrangements are not effective.

18. Local context and rationale (school-specific)

- Our school serves a very deprived community with high levels of social need. Removing mobile distractions supports teaching time and helps keep behaviour calm and predictable for all pupils, including those with high anxiety or sensory needs.

Hyndburn schools are also promoting the Smartphone Free Childhood Project.

19. Publication

This policy will be published on the school website and shared with parents and staff. Arrangements for any individual exceptions will be recorded in writing and held on the pupil file.

⊘ NO SMARTPHONES

Smartphones are **not allowed in school**.

📞 BRICK PHONE?

If you need a basic phone because you travel to or from school independently:

1. **SWITCH IT OFF**

⬇

2. **HAND IT IN**

⬇

3. **WE KEEP IT SAFE**

⬇

4. **COLLECT IT AT HOME TIME**

During the school day:

❌ No phones

❌ No texting or calls

❌ No photographs or videos

❌ No social media

❌ No phones at break or lunchtime

❤ WHY?

We want our school to be:

SAFE · CALM · FRIENDLY · FOCUSED

So that everyone can **learn, play and enjoy their day without digital distractions.**

REMEMBER:

BRICK PHONE = HAND IT IN

SMARTPHONE = DON'T BRING IT