

26th June 2023



Dear Parent/Carer,

In line with best practice and, like many other schools, following the government's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' updated guidance with effect from September 2023, we are making some important changes to our mobile phone policy. Our new policy will ban mobile phones on the school site during school hours; this includes break time and lunchtime.

We understand that mobile phones and technology are now a key part of modern life; most students own a mobile phone and, clearly, this provides the reassurance of contact with home during their journey to and from school. However, mobile phones can, and often do, lead to problems in school such as bullying, filming, disruption to lessons, as well as inappropriate use of the internet and social media leading to potential safeguarding issues. Indeed, a large number of parents have expressed concern that mobile phones could be used inappropriately. As a result, students are aware that we have been monitoring their mobile phone use since September 2022 and, on a daily basis, mobile phones are being misused, with students taking them out in lessons, sending inappropriate social media messages and arranging to meet during lesson time. Increasingly, teachers are spending a disproportionate amount of time 'policing' the use of mobile phones and investigating the results of their misuse.

Any student found using their mobile phone during school hours will be dealt with in accordance with our policy and procedure outlined in the brief below. A copy of the policy will be available on the school website in due course.

Guidelines and Procedures

1. St Michael's is a mobile-free zone, however, if your child chooses to bring their mobile phone into school, it will be collected by their form tutor at the start of the day, when it will be stored; phones can be collected at the end of the school day. The school cannot accept any responsibility for theft, loss, or damage relating to mobile phones, or any other electronic device.
2. Any student seen using their mobile phone during school hours, **including break and lunchtime**, will have their phone confiscated; parents/carers will be required to collect it after school or the following morning. A confiscated mobile phone will not be returned to a student under any circumstances. Further breaches of the policy by the same student will result in sanctions proportionate to the level of disruption caused.
3. We appreciate that there are sometimes situations where a student may need to contact home during the school day. In such cases, they will be able to speak to Reception **at break and lunchtime only** and ask for a call to be made home. Likewise, should you need to contact your child during the school day, please contact reception.

Should you wish to discuss the content of the letter further or have any questions, an informal drop-in opportunity will be given on Thursday 29th June, from 4 pm to 6 pm. Please report to reception on your arrival.

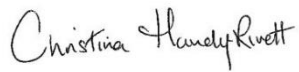
Headteacher: **Mrs C Handy-Rivett, BA (Hons), MA, NPQH**

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The policy will come into effect on **Monday 4th September 2023**. Students will be advised and reminded of the new procedures during assemblies and form time during the next few weeks.

However, we know that our students do best when our rules and policies are supported and reinforced by you at home. Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Christina Handy-Rivett'. The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name 'Christina' being more prominent than the last name.

Mrs Handy-Rivett
Headteacher