

## **Mobile Phone Policy**

This Policy has been agreed with all staff. Review will be due in academic year 2023/2024 or earlier if required.

All pupils have a right to an education which enables them to flourish and is set in a learning community where differences of lifestyle and opinion are treated with dignity and respect; where bullying of all kinds is eliminated; and where they are free to be themselves and fulfil their potential without fear. Our school vision echoes this:



### **1 INTRODUCTION**

Mobile phone technology has advanced significantly over the last few years - and it continues to evolve. Wireless connections in particular have extended the capabilities of mobile phones, enabling access to a wide range of new content and services globally. Many phones now offer Internet and email access, alongside the most often standard functions of messaging, camera, video and sound recording.

Mobile phones, alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance; however there are also associated risks. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe. As with e-safety issues generally, risks to children and young people can be broadly categorised under the headings of content, contact and conduct and managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

### **2 AIM**

The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines.

This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools - which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

### **3 SCOPE**

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones on site. This includes practitioners, (which includes teachers, teaching assistants, meal-time assistants, administrators and cleaners), volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

### **4 POLICY STATEMENT**

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

It is also recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.



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When mobile phones are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile phones is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

Designated 'mobile free' areas are situated within the school, and signs to this effect are displayed throughout the circulation spaces.

A zero-tolerance policy is in place with regards to the **use** of personal or work-related mobiles by any individual in these areas.

### **5 CODE OF CONDUCT**

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a co-operative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

It is therefore ensured that all practitioners:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- are vigilant and alert to potential warning signs.
- know how to minimise risk.
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use.
- are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours.
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

It is fully recognised that studies consistently indicate that imposing rigid regulations and/or 'bans' on the actions of others can be counterproductive, leading to a culture of suspicion, uncertainty and secrecy.

The imposition of rigorous, inflexible rules is therefore avoided, unless the potential risks of not enforcing them far out-weigh the benefits. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting environment, which is agreed to by all practitioners.



## 6 PROCEDURES

### 6.1 Personal mobiles

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile phones causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against potential misuse.

In the interests of equality, and to further promote safety, the guidance applies to any individual who has a mobile phone on site, including children, parents and visitors, as detailed below:

**Practitioners** are permitted to have their mobile phones about their person; however there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to allocated lunch and/or tea breaks. Messages can be checked and calls made in classrooms or office spaces, where children are not present.

Staff who are carrying out first aid duties may have their mobile phone about their person and should use this in the case of an emergency e.g to call emergency services or to contact SLT in an emergency situation.

It is recognised that mobile phones provide direct contact to others, and at times provide a necessary reassurance due to their ease of access, particularly at stressful times. Practitioners, therefore, in agreed exceptional circumstances are permitted to keep their phone on 'vibrate' or 'silence'. This is to enhance their own well-being and peace of mind, to reduce stress and worry and to enable them to concentrate more effectively on their work. Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, phones must be switched off and calls and texts must not be taken or made during work time. SLT who are required to be contactable throughout the day will be permitted to carry their mobile phone and answer calls and messages throughout the day.

Practitioners are not permitted, in any circumstance to use their phones for taking, recording or sharing images and 'mobile free' areas must be observed at all times.

Practitioners are not permitted to use their own personal phones for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside of the setting.

**Pupils** are not permitted to have their phone about their person. However, we fully acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision (Years 4, 5 & 6, only). We discourage phones being brought into school for any other purpose. When a child needs to bring a phone into school, a permission form must be signed by their parent or carer. The phone must be handed into the class teacher for safe-keeping at the beginning of the school day. Pupils leave their belongings in safe storage at their own risk. It is therefore recommended that phones are security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damages is accepted for phones brought into school or onto school grounds. Pupils will not be permitted to take mobile phones with them on residential or school trips or to use mobiles on the school site.



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Should a pupil be found to be using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a phone into school. Inappropriate use includes taking photographs or video footage of other pupils or staff, using text messages or e-mails to bully pupils.

**Parents, visitors and contractors** are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones in any of the designated mobile free areas. Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children in order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others.

Under normal circumstances **no** individual is permitted to take images or make recordings on a mobile phone. Any individual bringing a personal device into the school must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content. Exceptions to this are during school performances, such as Christmas plays, class assemblies and sports days.



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March 2022

Dear Parent or Carer,

### **Re. Parental Consent for Mobile Phone (Years 4, 5 & 6 only)**

In accordance with our mobile phone policy, we understand that as your child walks to and from school without adult supervision, they will be bringing a mobile phone into school on a regular basis. Whilst this acts to safeguard your child as they develop their independence, mobile phones can also be used to cause distress to others.

Please sign the form below giving permission for your child to bring a mobile phone to school and please be reminded that:

- Your child needs to hand in their phone to the class teacher first thing in the morning for safekeeping.
- The school bears no responsibility for any loss or damage to the mobile phone.
- Your child's phone should be appropriately marked so that they can recognise it.
- Should your child be found to be using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a phone into school.
- Mobile phones will not be permitted on school or residential trips.
- Mobiles phones found in school which have not been handed to a class teacher will be confiscated. Parents only can collect a confiscated phone from the class teacher.

Thank you for helping us to keep all our children safe.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs E Jones  
Head teacher

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### **MOBILE PHONE PARENTAL CONSENT**

**Name of pupil:**

**Class:**

I/ We give permission for our child (named above) to bring their mobile phone into school.

We have read the policy and understand its implications.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_