



St Anne's CofE Primary School

Aims and values of school

'Let all that you do be done in love' - 1 Corinthians 16:14

Use of mobile phones and other smart devices in school

1 - Introduction and aims

It is widely recognised that many children have access to personal communication devices including mobile phones, smart phones and smart watches. Children using these devices are likely to have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile networks such as 3G, 4G and increasingly 5G. For many these devices can provide security and reassurance; however there also associated risks. Safeguarding of children within the school is paramount.

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

The terms 'phone' or 'mobile phone' in this guidance denotes mobile phones, smart phones, airpods, iPods, iPads, MP3 players, MP4 players and smart watches.

1.1 The guidance aims to:

- Set out clear guidance for the use of mobile phones for staff (including supply staff), pupils and volunteers
- Set out clear guidance visitors and contractors
- Ensure robust safeguarding
- Support schools' other policies relating to child protection and behaviour

2.0 Staff responsibilities

All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) may wish to have their personal mobile phones at work for use in case of emergencies, however, there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to areas and times when there are no children present or likely to be present.

2.1 All staff:

- The school expects staff to lead by example and therefore should not make or receive personal calls, or texts (via mobile phone or smart watch), whilst children are present or during contact time.

- Staff (including volunteers and supply staff) should only use their mobile phones and smart devices for personal contact in designated areas such as a staff room, back office or Head Teachers office.
- Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, mobile phones should be switched off or on silent and left in a safe place and smart watches silenced during lesson times.

2.2 Safeguarding

- Staff should not contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone in or out of school time or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, a school telephone should be used.
- The school appreciates that some staff working at the school are also parents at the school. Whilst this may mean that staff who are 'parents' may have shared their personal number with other parents (for example those who are parents of children in their child's social network), communications must always be professional and not include discussions about work or school business.
- Staff should not share personal contact details through social media and messaging apps.
- Staff should regularly monitor and update their privacy settings on social media sites
- Staff should never accept a 'friend request' or respond to any posts that may deliberately or inadvertently include them but inform their line manager or Senior Leader of the contact
- Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate
- Staff are not permitted to take and share photos or videos of pupils or anything else (e.g., work) that might identify the pupil.
- If photos or videos are being taken as part of the school curriculum or for promotional purposes then school equipment should be used. If there is a technical failure and a private mobile must be used to take photos, permission must be sought from the SLT and witnessed by another member of staff who will then witness the photo/video being removed fully from the device after being securely transferred onto the schools system.
- Staff should not allow themselves to be photographed by a pupil(s) on their personal devices.

2.3 Using a personal mobile for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use a personal mobile phone for work purposes. Where possible this should always be agreed with a line manager or Senior Leader in advance. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Emergency contact with the school during a school trip/visit.

- Parental contact in emergency's (mobile phones setting that allow for the number not to be identified should be used)

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff and the school. Any breach of school policy may result in disciplinary action against that member of staff.

3.0 Pupils:

- We recognise that some pupils may need to bring mobile phones to school and some may own and wear a smart watch. Smart watch capabilities are in line with smart phones and should therefore be regarded as such within this policy. This is due to their capability of being able to record, take photos and access the internet.

3.1 Pupil use of personal devices

- If it is deemed necessary for a pupil to bring a mobile phone / smart watch to school, (e.g., in the case of older pupils because they travel to and from school independently), then the following rules apply:
- The phone / device is to be switched off upon the child entering the school site.
- The phone / device is handed into the Class Teacher at the start of the school day and placed in the mobile phone box for that class.
- The Phone box will be secured in the school office. Devices are handed back to children at the end of the day. However, the device needs to remain switched off until the child exits the school site.

4.0 Parents, visitors and contractors:

Parents, visitors and contractors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones at all on the school site/in any area where children/young people are present.

- Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others.
- Should phone calls/and or texts need to be taken or made, visitors are asked to leave the premises to do so or speak to the school office staff and request a suitable area within the school to take / receive the call/text.
- Photos of children must not be taken without prior discussion with a member of the Senior Management Team. This is in accordance with the UK *General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018*.
- Any individual bringing a personal device into the school must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

5.0 Inappropriate or illegal content:

Where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may be unsuitable and may constitute evidence relating to a criminal offence, the allegations process

will be followed (please refer to the school's 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy').

Liability for devices:

- For staff, pupils and visitors, the school retains no liability for any device that is brought into school which is either lost, stolen or damaged
- For staff, pupils and visitors, the school retains no liability for any device that is used in a manner that is against the owners consent.

Related Policies and guidance:

Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (September 2022)

Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings February 2022

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022)

Guidance for schools and other establishments on the use of images (September 2022)

Data Protection: A toolkit for schools, DfE, (August 2018)

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