



# Mobile Phone Policy

## Introduction and Aims

At St Chad's CE Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice, through establishing clear and robust mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the working day, and which are most susceptible to misuse - including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. However, as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices.

## Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, Governors, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive. This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding Statement and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Acceptable use of ICT Policy
- EVC policy

## Code of Conduct

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative 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.

Our aim is therefore that all practitioners:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse;
- 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; and
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting, which is agreed to by all users.

### **Personal Mobiles – Staff**

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children, except in an emergency
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag or pocket) during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present unless for use in an emergency during forest school, playground duty, PE, outdoor learning.
- Use of phones (inc. receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- It is also advised that staff securely protect access to functions of their phone using a secure pin code
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images.
- Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and iPads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Head of school in line with the School Whistleblowing Procedure.
- A staff professional St Chad's WhatsApp group has been created to share information regarding school snow closures, sickness, cancelled events, etc as a quick way to give information to all staff who may not have their school email account linked to their mobile phone. Staff who are no longer employed at St. Chad's will be removed by the WhatsApp administrator.

### **Mobile Phones for work related purposes**

We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities. However, staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children);
- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office; and
- Where parents are accompanying trips they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children. This must be included on the risk assessment and parents agree to abide by this.

### **Personal Mobiles – Pupils**

We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others. Therefore:

- Pupils are allowed to bring mobile phones into school;
- The phone must be switched off, handed in and given to the teacher first thing in the morning and it will be stored in the classroom in a safe place and collected by the child at home time.

**The phone is left at the owner's own risk and school is not responsible for loss or damage.**

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the Head of School or DSL does have the power to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site.'

### **Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors**

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises. Reminders of school's expectations of mobile phone use on school site are displayed on mini posters at the signing in desk and around school they are on outside doors for parents/carers to see).

### **Parents**

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as essential means of communication at all times. We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is *courteous* and *appropriate* to the school environment. We also allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones – **but stipulate that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.**

The acceptable use of ICT policy is given to all new parents and they sign to say they will not publish photographs taken at school events of any other child other than their own.

Staff will challenge other members of staff/governors/volunteers/visitors/parents/contractors who use their mobile phone whilst children are present. This will then be reported to senior staff.

### **Dissemination**

The mobile phone policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents via the school website.

Updated: Summer 2018