

Mobile Phone Policy

2018-20

This policy provides clear guidance on the use of mobile phones in school by both staff, student teachers, visitors, parents and pupils

Introduction

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. Most 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.

Aims

The aim of this Mobile Phone Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear, robust and 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.

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.

Staff, volunteers and student teachers' policy

Staff and students use of mobile phones during their working day should be:

- outside of their contracted hours
- discreet and appropriate eg: not in the presence of pupils

Staff, Volunteers and Student Teachers 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 or breaktimes.

Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, phones must be switched off and calls and texts must not be taken or made during lesson time. Staff, Volunteers and Student Teachers are generally not permitted to use their phones for taking, recording or sharing images and should not be used to search the internet with pupils.

Staff members should avoid using a personal mobile phone to take photographs at events such as sporting events and educational visits. However, this may be authorised by a senior member of staff prior to or during the event should it be deemed necessary. Staff members must transfer the images to the school intranet as soon as is practical after the event and delete the images from their personal mobile phone. At after-school organised events, pupils will be reminded that they too should not use their devices.

Staff, Volunteers and Student Teachers are not permitted to use their own personal phones for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside of the setting. This should be done through the office phone or via their school email accounts.

Parents/carers, visitors and contractors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones in classrooms and communal areas during school hour unless in the event of an emergency. 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 no circumstance is any individual permitted to take images or make recordings on a mobile phone. Any individual bringing a personal device into the setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

Parents, either in school or accompanying children on school trips, should not use their personal cameras or mobile phone cameras to take pictures of pupils unless it is at public events such as sports days, charity events or concerts. At such events they will be reminded of the school's policy on photographic consent and not sharing images of other children without the permission of their parents.

Pupil Policy

Whilst we acknowledge a parent's right to allow a Year 6 pupil to bring a mobile phone to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision, Willow Brook discourages pupils bringing mobile phones to school unless it is clearly necessary. Should parents need to contact pupils or vice versa during the school day, this should be done via the usual school procedure of contacting the school office via phone or email.

When a child needs to bring a phone into school, a permission slip must be signed by the parent/carer. The phone must be left in the class teacher's safekeeping at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day. Phones should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone and will be switched off whilst they are on the school premises. Parents are advised that the school accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones that are brought into school or school grounds.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone on the school premises, the phone will be taken from the pupil, handed to a senior member of staff or a member of the office team who will store it until the end of the school day. If this practice is repeated, then the school will confiscate the phone until an appropriate adult is able to collect the phone from the senior member of staff. If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a senior teacher.

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.

We ask that parents talk to their children about the appropriate use of text messages as they can often be used to bully pupils. The policy supports the Health & Safety, Anti bullying, Child Protection, Safeguarding and Internet/E-safety policies.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed as required but at least every two years.

Agreed on: 14th February 2018

To be reviewed February 2020



Dear Parent/Carer

In accordance with our 2018 mobile phone policy, if your Year 6 child is bringing in a mobile phone to school on a regular basis, please could you sign the form below to confirm that you and your child have read our policy.

Please let us know why you feel it is necessary for your child to bring their phone to school.

Please sign to confirm that you understand that:

- Your child's phone needs to be switched off before entering the school premises.
- Phones will be handed to the class teacher for safekeeping during the school day – they may not be kept in children's bags.
- The school bears no responsibility for the loss or damage to a mobile phone.
- Should your child be found using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring their phone into school.

With thanks,
Louise Ballard

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MOBILE PHONE PARENTAL CONSENT

I/we give permission for our child (name) to bring a mobile phone into school. I/we feel it is necessary to do so because:

We have read the policy and understand its implications.

SignedPrint name..... Date.....

PLEASE RETURN PERMISSION SLIP TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER.

THANK YOU.