

Mobile Phone Policy for Staff and Pupils

Introduction and Aims

At Boundary Oak 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 acceptable 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, proprietors, 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 Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policies
- Staff Code of Conduct
- E Safety policies

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
- 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. Emergency contact should be made via the school office and/or via landlines located in each Faculty or by walkie-talkies where provided. If you are in a location where communication is not possible (e.g. fields, woods, astro) and you do not have a walkie-talkie then staff should carry mobile phones for emergency use only.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (eg in a drawer, handbag) during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (eg classroom, corridor, playground).

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- Use of phones (including 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.
- Staff must security protect access to their phone.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Headteacher and office staff aware of this so messages can be relayed promptly. On weekends or holidays, when the office is not usually manned, they may have their phone available in case of needing to receive an emergency call. If possible the phone should still be on silent.
- 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, ipads or school phones.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher.

Mobile Phones for work related purposes

We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on off-site 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.
- 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.

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:-

Day Pupils

- Day pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips.
- Year 9 and above are allowed to bring a mobile phone to school but they must leave it, turned off, at reception and collect it at the end of the school day. Whilst we will endeavour to look after these phones in safe storage the school takes no responsibility for any accidental loss or damage to mobile phones brought into school.
- If in the rare event of a Year 8 or below parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school:-
 - The parent must discuss the issue first with the Headteacher and receive approval
 - If agreed the phone must be handed into the School Office switched off first thing in the morning and collected from the office by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk).
- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- Unauthorised use of mobile phone during the school day will be deemed to be blue behaviour, escalating to red for subsequent infringements.

Boarders:

Children who board and wish to bring their mobile phones to school may do so if they wish, but there are some rules and reminders, which must be observed. Boarders failing to observe the rules will be asked to leave their phones and electronic equipment at home.

- Everything must be clearly named.

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- They may be used during quiet time in the Boarding house, but must be handed in to the duty staff immediately afterwards for safe keeping in the houseparents’ flat.
- They are not allowed to be taken into school or school trips during the day. If they are they will be confiscated.
- Sanctions for misuse will be the same as for day pupils listed above.
- The school can accept no responsibility for loss or damage.

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others then the Headteacher 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, Proprietors, Advisers and Contractors

All Volunteers, Visitors, Proprietors, Advisers and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises.

On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones.

Parents

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while on school premises, 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 do allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones – **but insist that parents do not publish images (eg on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.** Parents/carers are reminded of this at the start of every school performance, on sports day, etc and will receive written reminder in the Newsletter at the start of the academic year.

Dissemination

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

The impact of this policy on staff workload has been considered.

Written	Date	Head/SMT approved	Proprietor Approved	Next Review Date
JP	Sep 16	HK	JP	Sep 18