

## Policy for the Use of Mobile Phones at Mersey Park Primary School



### **Aim**

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

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones on site. This includes practitioners, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

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. 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.

In order to protect the staff and pupils at Mersey Park Primary School the following policy guidelines are offered for the use of mobile communication technology.

Mersey Park Primary School accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance.

Permission to have a mobile phone at school while under the school's supervision is only granted under the strict adherence to the guidelines listed in this policy. It is up to parents / pupils / staff to ensure that these are understood and followed through.

Parents, pupils and staff must understand that Mersey Park Primary School accepts no responsibility for replacing mobile devices that are lost, stolen or damaged whilst on the school premises or on school sponsored functions.

### **Acceptable Use by children:**

- Pupils should not have their mobile phone in the classroom, these should be kept in the school office ensuring that the mobile phone is not used during the school day.
- The main use of the mobile phone should be to support a child's safety when travelling to and from school.
- A mobile phone will give the pupil telephone access to their parents outside of school times.

### **Unacceptable Use by children:**

- Mobile phones should not be used by pupils in school
- It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a phone to menace, harass or offend another person.
- Pupils with mobile phones must not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messaging, taking / sending photos or objectionable images and phone calls.

Pupils who fail to comply with this policy may have any of the following consequences:

- If mobile phones are found in school and have not been left in the school office they will be confiscated until the end of the school day.
- Repeated infringements may result in the pupil not being allowed to bring the mobile into school.
- If the mobile phone was to be inappropriately used eg, bullying, causing offence, harassment etc. the police may be informed.

### **Acceptable use by adults in school:**

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.

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.

Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, phones must be switched off/or put on silent and calls and texts must not be taken or made during work time.

Practitioners are not permitted, in any circumstance to use their phones for taking, recording or sharing images.

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

Parents, visitors and contractors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones in any area where there are children present. 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.

On off-site trips, including residential, all accompanying adult helpers are permitted to have their mobile phones, but use is limited to agreed off duty times away from the children.

Under no circumstances 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.

### **Emergency contact**

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 the volume of their phone switched on. 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.

Such use will be for an agreed limited period only, until any concerns or issues leading to the exceptional circumstance request have been resolved. It is ensured at all times that the landline telephone remains connected and operational, except in circumstances beyond control. This means that it is available for emergency/urgent contact

### **Work mobile**

The use of a designated work mobile is promoted as it is:

- an essential part of the emergency toolkit which is taken on off-site trips.
- an effective communication aid, enabling text, email messages and calls to be made and received.
- a back-up facility should problems be experienced with the landline – or where contact needs to be made outside of work hours.

Specific staff may be allocated a work mobile as necessary dependent upon their role.

Effective security measures are in place to safeguard against any potential misuse. Only authorised individuals have access to the work mobile



## Policy for the Use of Mobile Phones by pupils at Mersey Park Primary School



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Parent / Guardian Permission

I have read and understand the Use of Mobile Phones Policy by Pupils at Mersey Park Primary School.

I give permission for my child to carry a mobile phone to school and understand that it must then be handed in to the office during the school day.

Parent Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Student Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

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