

Mobile Phone Policy for staff, visitors/parents, volunteers and pupils 2021-22

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy, E-Safety Policy, Expectations for Learning Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Acceptable Use Policies and Staff Code of Conduct.

Introduction

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.

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

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones on site. This includes Alexandra Park Junior School staff, Governors, children, parents/carers and visitors.

Camera Mobile Phones

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 e.g. Images of pupils/staff to other mobile phone users or email addresses or social media resulting in bullying or harassment.

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.

When mobiles phones are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

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.

Staff policy

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

- outside of their directed, teaching time (unless teaching a lesson outside of school and need to contact the office or Senior Leader)
- discreet and appropriate **e.g. not in the presence of pupils**

Mobile phones should be turned to silent or switched off and stored in a safe place during lesson times e.g. handbags/cupboards and not seen on teacher's desks. The school cannot take responsibility for items that are lost or stolen. SLT mobiles are visible on desks in case of emergency use.

If staff needed to contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile they should ensure that the numbers blocked. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil/parent, they should use the school telephone in the office.

Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate. If this happened this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher following safeguarding procedures and the school code of conduct.

With regard to camera phones, a member of staff should never use their phone to photograph a pupil(s) or allow themselves to be photographed by pupils, as stated in the Acceptable Use Policy (staff and visitors) and the E-Safety Policy. This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff, the school and the Local Authority. Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy and the school Code of Conduct is likely to result in the enforcement of the Whistleblowing policy and associated procedures.

Parent, Visitors or Volunteers Policy

Adults either in school, on the school grounds e.g. the playground, or accompanying children on school trips should not use their cameras or mobile phone cameras to take pictures of pupils unless it is at a public event, such as, Sports day, Assemblies or the Summer Fair and only of their own children. Parents are reminded to not add photos of a group of pupils onto any social media sites. Parents/adults, visitors or volunteers in school should only use their mobile phone within the confines of the school office or staff room. Site staff can use their mobiles to make calls and accept calls but personal cameras and mobile phone cameras should never be used to take pictures of children.

If parents who accompany children on a school trip are asked by the teacher to take photos as a record of the educational visit, they will be issued with a school camera. Parents accompanying children on school trips should not use their mobile cameras to take pictures of children.

Pupil Policy

While we fully acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision, Alexandra Park Junior School discourages pupils bringing mobile phones in all year groups, unless parents have discussed issues personally with the Headteacher - J.Seabright.

If a child needs to bring a phone into school (agreed with the parent/carer and Headteacher) the phone must be left in the school office at the start of the day (from 8.30 a.m.) and collected at the end of the day. Phones should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone. Parents are advised that Alexandra Park Junior School accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into school or on to the school grounds.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone, the phone will be confiscated from the pupil, handed to a member of the office team who will record the name of the pupil and attach it to the phone. The mobile phone will be stored by the school office. The pupil may collect the phone at the end of the school day. Parents will be informed of inappropriate use and pupils will be reminded of the school policy and practice.

If this practice continues more than three times, then the school will confiscate the phone until an appropriate adult collects the phone from a senior teacher.

If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to our Behaviour policy.

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. (Please see more guidance on sexting in our Safeguarding policy).

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 should talk to their children about the appropriate use of text messages as they can often be used to bully pupils.

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.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed as required but at least annually.

September 2021

