



# **FLASH LEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY**

## **MOBILE PHONE POLICY**

Approved by: Headteacher

Date: June 2023

To be reviewed: June 2024

## **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. Many 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.

## **Aim**

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

## **Scope**

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

## **Policy statement**

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.

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.

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.

It is therefore ensured that all practitioners:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- are vigilant and alert to potential warning signs.
- 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.

### **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.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and locked away during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground, corridor).
- Use of phones (inc. receiving and sending texts) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas and staff room.
- Staff should not have the facility to access work e-mails on private mobile phones.
- It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions of their phone.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Headteacher aware of this and can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- 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 Headteacher.

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

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

- The lead person for any off-site activity should take with them a school mobile phone.
- Personal mobile use on these occasions is also appropriate and professional (however will never include taking photographs of children).
- Personal mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made using the school mobile phone or 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.

### **School owned mobile phones – at the discretion of the Headteacher**

For certain roles and responsibilities it is essential for individuals to be provided with a mobile phone, however it is imperative that the member of staff:

- Bring the device to school each day and keep the device with you, or within your sight, at all times.

- Transport the device safely using the cover and carry case, if necessary, issued with the device.
- Not permit any other individual to use the device without your supervision, unless agreed by the headteacher.
- Take responsibility for any other individual using the device.
- Lock the device screen when not in use with a passcode.
- Only use devices for educational purposes.
- Only use apps that are GDPR-compliant and from reputable sources.
- Ensure that any personal data is stored in line with the GDPR.
- Obtain permission prior to accessing learning materials from unapproved sources.
- Not search for, view, download, upload or transmit any explicit or inappropriate material when using the internet.
- Not share any passwords with pupils, staff or third parties unless permission has been sought from the headteacher.
- Not use your device to take images or videos of pupils, staff or parents unless permission has been granted from the headteacher.
- Not use your device to send any inappropriate messages, images or recordings.
- Ensure that your device does not contain inappropriate or illegal content.
- Allow the e-safety officer to monitor your usage of your device, such as internet access, and understand the consequences if you breach the terms of this agreement.

### **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 not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips
- If in the rare event of a 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 their child's teacher.
  - the phone must be handed in, switched off, to the main office first thing in the morning and collected from them by the child at home time (the phone will be stored in a safe, however it 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.

### **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.

On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones and that they must be switched off and stored in a safe place throughout the visit. If visiting EYFS all mobile phones must be locked in the school safe.

If anyone is seen using their mobile phone to make a call or to take photographic images they will be challenged by children or staff.

## Parents

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school events, 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 to drop off or collect their child/ren is *courteous* and *appropriate* to the school environment. Whilst inside school they will be asked to follow the school policy and switch off and store their mobile phones safely.

**We do not allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones. This is to ensure the safety of all children and prevent their images being shared via social media.**

## 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 office and website.

Please read this policy in conjunction with

- Early Years Foundation Policy/ Early Years Safeguarding Policy/ Voyage Mobile phone Policy.