



Mobile Phone Policy

Introduction and Aims

At Highcliffe Primary 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, governors, children, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Staff and Governor Codes of Conduct

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 to delivering the best outcomes for children.

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 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/e-mails during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office. Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative) then staff should make the Headteacher aware of this and suitable arrangements will be made.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag or pocket) during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground).
- Use of phones (inc. 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.
- It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions of their phone.
- 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.
- Personal mobiles should not be used to contact parents/carers.
- 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 offsite 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 of the reasons for staff using mobile phones (as above) and are asked 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

There are national concerns regarding “cyber-bullying” – the inappropriate use of mobile phones, the internet, e-mail and social networking sites. We teach children about e-safety as part of the curriculum, but a recommended element of school e-safety is for mobile phones not to be brought to school.

We do realise that, occasionally, there may be a request for a phone to be brought in an emergency situation, in which case we ask that parents contact school, and that the phone is handed in to the school office. However, we ask that this is not expected to be a standard practice.

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors, Contractors and any other adults

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.

Parents

Whilst we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones on the school site, 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. Upon signing in to the building, parents and carers will be asked to switch their phones off or onto silent, and to leave them out of sight of children.

We allow parents to photograph or video school events such as performances or sports days using their mobile phones – **but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.**

Dissemination

The mobile phone policy will be shared with staff, governors and volunteers as part of their induction. The policy will be shared with any adult entering the building upon signing in. It will also be available to parents via the school office and website.