

ST JAMES' RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

This policy has the School's Motto at its heart.

Faith in action,

Growing together,

Walking in the footsteps of Christ

Introduction and Aims

At St James' RC 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, committee members, 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 Children Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

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 or receive calls or 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 out of sight (e.g. in a drawer or a bag) during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space when children are present.
- 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.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative) then staff should give the school telephone number to the relative persons involved and the office staff will bring the message to class.
- In the case of a Medical Mobile Phone – please see the care plan of the child. They must only be used to contact parents/check medical applications.

Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Head Teacher.

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 following all policies.
- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office.
- Staff should always aim to take photographs and videos using school equipment such as cameras and ipads. However, in the **rare instance** that a personal device is used the photographs must be immediately emailed to school and then deleted as soon as possible. Prior permission will be given for this by the Head Teacher and documented in the back of the E-Safety Incident Log.

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 mainly through the use of social media and messaging apps. Therefore:

Pupils are **not permitted** to have mobile phones that can access the internet at school or on trips.

If the parent of a Year 6 child, who walks to or from school alone, wishes them to have a mobile phone:

- The parent needs to sign the permission form that is available in the office,
- The phone must be handed in, switched off, and given to the office first thing in the morning and collected from the office by the child at the end of the day (the phone is left at the owner's own risk).
- The phone must not have the capability to access the internet.
- The phone must not be used to send messages or call **anywhere** on the school premises. This includes the school grounds.

Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned **to a parent** at the end of the day.

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the head teacher 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' - refer to Anti-Bullying Policy.

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.

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, for example on the school playground. We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment. **When working as a volunteer at school all parents are expected to follow the phone policy as it relates to staff.**

Where parent volunteers are **accompanying** trips or volunteering in school they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip/visit or to use their phone to take photographs of children. This includes trips out of school and also volunteer helping (e.g. cooking, reading, Forest School.)

When attending school events as a spectator we allow parents to photograph or video events such as shows or sports day 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 and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents via the school office and website.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be updated in line with any new developments in the school and/or any new government guidance.

It was last reviewed in: September 2018

It will next be reviewed in: September 2021

This statement of policy was approved by the Governing Body at their meeting on:-

Date: _____

Signed:

_____ (Chairperson)

_____ (Head teacher)