

Godstone Primary & Nursery School



Mobile Phone Policy

REVIEW DATE: March 2020

REVIEWED BY: Headteacher

NEXT REVIEW: June 2022

Head Teacher: Candida Jarrott-Chase

Chair of Governors: Linda Waghorn

Introduction and Aims

At Godstone Primary and Nursery 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.

Mobile phones and personally-owned devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner. The schools accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, 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:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children in Schools

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 and high regard for the safeguarding of all pupils.

Our aim is therefore that all practitioners:

- Are aware of the need to protect children from harm.
- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- Know how to minimise risk.
- Are vigilant and alert to potential warning signs of misuse.
- 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 calls / answer calls/ respond to texts when in contact with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office if possible.

- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag or locker) during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (e.g. 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 in case of theft or loss.
- 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 not use their own personal phones for contacting children, parents and carers within or outside of the setting in a professional capacity. Staff must never give their personal mobile phone number to pupils or parents and must never store parents or pupil's telephone numbers on their mobile phone as this allows the possibility of inappropriate contact.
- Staff should not use their mobile phones to access the internet for research during lesson time or when the children are present. Any research required for learning should be done via school laptops and iPads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher.

The school premises manager may be required to use his mobile phone during the school day whilst on site to fulfill his role. He will endeavor to ensure that he takes calls in spaces where children are not present.

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 telephone calls or to send text messages to parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office during normal working hours. There is a specific school mobile phone to take on trips for this communication. In exceptional circumstances, and only when there is no other option (such as the school-owned device), a member of staff may opt to use their mobile phone to contact a parent/carer but must input 141 before dialing the number for confidentiality purposes.
- 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.

Therefore:

- Pupils in year 6 may bring a mobile phone to school. The phone must be handed in, switched off, to the teacher first thing in the morning and collected from them by the child at the end of the school day.
- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones on school trips.

In line with our online safety policy, children are taught about only sharing their mobile telephone number with trusted friends and family member and about respectful usage online. Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the headteacher 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

Whilst we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school, 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. We also allow parents to photograph or video school events such as assemblies 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.

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.

If a member of staff breaches the school policy then disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Links with other policies

This Mobile Phone Policy is linked to our:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- Online Safety policy
- Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children in Schools
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy