Haynes Lower School
& Nursery

Mobile Phone Policy

Policy Review:

This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

Reviewed	**September 2023**
Next Review	**September 2026**

Introduction and Aims

At Haynes Lower 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 Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children within the 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. 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/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground). **All** mobile phones should be out of sight and reach, in a staff cupboard during school hours.

- Use of phones (inc. receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present, in office areas, staff room.
- 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 Head Teacher aware of this and can leave their phone with the School Office Manager in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- Staff are able to use their phone to take a photo of a child / children to evidence a school event or learning ensuring it is appropriate and professional. These photos must be downloaded to the school IT equipment and then the images must be deleted by the staff member with another staff member present.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Head Teacher.

Off-site

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, unless in exceptional medical circumstances. Where possible, all relevant communications should be made via the school office. Where the school office is closed eg when on residential trips, the visit leader (member of staff) will be the person responsible, should parents be contacted eg in exceptional medical circumstances
- 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 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 school office first thing in the morning and collected from them by the parent/carer at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk). Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and parents / carers will be phoned to ask to come and collect the mobile phone from school immediately.

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'.

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers including parent 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 asked to leave their phone with the School Office Manager.

Parents

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school eg for presentations and Collective Worship, 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 school 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. Please refer to Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children in Schools.

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.