

Mobile Phone Policy

Hasland Junior School

Introduction and Aims

At Hasland Junior 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 applied 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
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings.

Code of Conduct

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff 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 properly.

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 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.
- 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 (e.g. classroom, playground).
- 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.
- 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. Due to the building not getting a good mobile signal it may be better to pass on the school telephone number and then alert the office staff who will then make sure that if a call is received they will contact the staff member immediately.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment of 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 on off-site activities. However staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use of these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).
- Where parents are accompanying trip's 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 teacher first thing in the morning and collected from them by the child at home time (the phone 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.

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

While 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 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.

Hasland Junior School

Preventing misuse by staff of mobile phones in school

Key Points:

- Mobile phones can be misused by both staff and pupils
- They can become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils and teachers

1. Introduction

- Our school has a clear policy that pupils bringing mobiles phones into school is not allowed, and this policy makes explicit reference to camera mobile phones
- This policy provides guidance on the appropriate use of personal mobile phones by members of staff, including the potential consequences of misuse.

2. Key points to be included in the policy

- Staff use of mobile phones during the school day should be limited
- Mobile phones should be switched off and left in a safe place during lesson times. Staff should only use mobile phones in designated areas. The designated area is the staff room. If a private call needs to be made then a request for a room can be made to the Headteacher or school office. Staff should not send and receive texts in classrooms or use camera phones at any time.
- Staff should never contact students from their personal mobile phone, or give their mobile phone number to students. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a parent, a school telephone should be used.
- Staff should never store parents or pupil's telephone numbers on their mobile phone, as this allows the possibility of inappropriate contact.
- Staff should never send to, or accept from anyone, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.

3. Camera technology

- There is the potential for camera mobile phones to be misused in schools. They can become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils and teachers.
- With regard to camera mobile phones, a member of staff should never use their own phone to photograph a student(s), or allow themselves to be photographed by a student(s).

4. Consequences of contravening this policy

- Staff should understand that failure to comply with the policy is likely to result in disciplinary action, or in certain circumstances, a child protection allegation. The latter might involve suspension from work pending a Police investigation. Any offence of this nature involving a student is likely to be viewed as a serious disciplinary offence up to and including dismissal.

