

MONKTON INFANTS SCHOOL



Aiming High!

Mobile Phone Policy

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Mobile phones, alongside other forms of technology have changed the way and speed in which we communicate in a positive way; however, they do bring associated risks. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe. As with e-safety issues generally, risks to children and young people can be broadly categorised under the headings of content, contact and conduct and managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools - which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones on site. This includes practitioners, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

POLICY STATEMENT

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

It is also recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

When mobiles phones are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence, there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile phones is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

Monkton Infants School is a 'mobile-free zone' and a zero-tolerance policy is in place with regards to the use of personal or work-related mobiles by any individuals while there are children present.

Mobile phones can only be used on school premises during the school day in the following circumstances:

- By staff / visitors during meetings for work purposes
- By staff in classrooms / offices during break times when no children are present
- By contractors for work purposes in the presence of a member of staff
- In an emergency situation
- By visitors / parents for urgent personal reasons – but they must exit the school premises while doing so.

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.

It is therefore ensured that all practitioners:

- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- Are vigilant and alert to potential warning signs.
- 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.

PROCEDURES

Personal Mobiles

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile phones causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against potential misuse.

In the interests of equality, and to further promote safety, the guidance applies to any individual who has a mobile phone on site, including children, parents and visitors, as detailed below:

- **Practitioners** are NOT permitted to have their mobile phones about their person during their working hours; use is limited to allocated lunch/break times.

Monkton Infants School

- Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, phones must be switched off and calls and texts must not be taken or made during lesson time.
- Practitioners are not permitted, in any circumstance to use their phones for taking, recording or sharing images and 'mobile free' areas must be observed at all times.
- Practitioners are not permitted to take calls in the staffroom or toilet, and they should use their classroom to make private calls during lunch/break times.
- Practitioners are not permitted to use their own personal phones for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside of the setting.
- **Parents** are not permitted to use their mobile phones anywhere on the school site. Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken, they must leave the school premises to do so.
- **Visitors and contractors** are only permitted to use their mobile phones for work purposes and not in the presence of children unless accompanied by a member of staff.
- Under no circumstances is **any** individual permitted to take images or make recordings on a mobile phone. Any individual bringing a personal device into the setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

SAFE STORAGE

A designated safe and secure area for practitioners to store their personal belongings during the working day is available. Practitioners have the **option** to store their mobile phones in this area, should they choose. This however is not a mandatory requirement.

Practitioners leave their belongings in safe storage at their own risk. It is therefore recommended that phones are security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damages is accepted.

As well as safeguarding children and avoiding any unnecessary disruptions during the day, this procedure also aims to protect staff against any unfounded allegations.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

It is recognised that mobile phones provide direct contact to others, and at times provide a necessary reassurance due to their ease of access, particularly at stressful times. Practitioners, therefore, in agreed exceptional circumstances are permitted to keep the volume of their phone switched on. This is to enhance their own well-being and peace of mind, to reduce stress and worry and to enable them

Monkton Infants School

to concentrate more effectively on their work. Such use will be for an agreed limited period only, until any concerns or issues leading to the exceptional circumstance request have been resolved.

It is ensured at all times that the landline telephone remains connected and operational, except in circumstances beyond control. This means that it is available for emergency/urgent contact at all times. The reliance on an answer phone is avoided and only used in exceptional circumstances. If used, the answer phone is always checked promptly on opening or return.

PUPIL USE OF MOBILE PHONES POLICY

Monkton Infants is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This policy has due regard to the following ethos:

At Monkton Infants School we will continuously strive to ensure that everyone in our school is treated with respect and dignity. Each person in our school will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential with positive regard to gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, faith, sexuality or disability. This school will provide an inclusive curriculum, which will meet the needs of all its pupils from a variety of backgrounds.

Due to the age of our children, they are not permitted to bring mobile phones into school. If a child is found to have a mobile phone in their possession, their classteacher will retain the phone in a safe place until the end of the school day when it will then be handed directly to the child's parent/carer.

STAFF POLICY AGREEMENT

I understand that I am responsible for my actions in and out of school:

- I have read and understand the above Mobile Phone Policy and agree to follow the procedures within to ensure the safety of staff, pupils and other parents and visitors to the school site.
- I understand that if I fail to comply with this Mobile Phone Policy, I could be subject to disciplinary action. This could include a warning, a suspension, referral to Governors and / or the Local Authority and in the event of illegal activities the involvement of the police.

Full Name: _____ **Position:** _____

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____