



WILBURTON C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONE USE

Last Reviewed: Spring 2023

Next Review: Spring 2024

At Wilburton Church of England Primary School our responsibility to safeguard 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** (including but not limited to mobile phones, smart watches and tablets).

Scope and Purpose

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes employees, governors, volunteers and others associated with the school (referred to in this document as school representatives) children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

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. Please remember, you are ambassadors for the school at all times and unacceptable use of mobile technology WILL reflect upon the school. Keep your personal and professional lives separate. School representatives must act professionally at all times and must not, through their actions or inactions, bring the school into disrepute.

At Wilburton Church of England Primary School it is our aim that all school representatives:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse
- understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use and the requirements of confidentiality to safeguard children
- know how to minimise risk
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations
- are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly

Employees should be aware that the use of mobile phones and devices in a manner contrary to this policy may result in disciplinary action.

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust (*Acceptable Use*) 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
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer or handbag) during class time
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (e.g. classroom, corridors or 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 for staff security, they protect access to the 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 available on silent in case of having to receive an emergency call. The school office should be the first point of contact for staff relatives to reach staff members in an emergency if possible
- 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
- Support staff, e.g. caretaker, who operate across the whole site may use their mobile phone as a direct contact with offsite contractors, but should endeavour to use the phone away from where children are present in line with other staff protocols
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher
- The Headteacher or member of staff designated may carry their mobile phone in their pocket if there is a concern about a child walking off site.

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
- Mobile phones should not be used as an alternative to a school camera and never used taking photographs of children. In exceptional circumstances a phone may be used to record moving or still images if an emergency requires a record of events. E.g. best practice in first aid if a child is having a sustained fit. These will be removed from the device at the earliest appropriate opportunity.
- Staff may not use their mobile phones to contact parents except in the interest of a child's safety when off site and/or out of office hours according to agreed protocol. Staff may use their mobile phones to contact parents for safeguarding and wellbeing checks if the staff member is working from home. In this circumstance, the staff member must dial 141 before the number to prevent their own number from being shared.
- The school mobile will generally be used in most circumstances when on a school trip however.
- Where parents are accompanying school trips they are acting as a school representative therefore should follow the same code of conduct as staff. Therefore they should make no contact with parents/carers of children other than their own (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs. Private and personal use of their phone should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present

Personal Mobile Phones / Devices – 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 dissuaded from bringing mobile phones to school.

- 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).
- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips.
- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned to the person collecting the child at the end of the day.

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, 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, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our *Mobile Phones and Devices Policy* as it relates to school representatives whilst on the premises.

Any individual bringing a personal device into the school must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

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 recognise that parents and carers will wish to take photos and videos of their children at school events such as concerts, shows and sports events for personal use, such as to add to their family photo albums. We must be mindful to ensure that Data Protection legislation is not contravened and in order to safeguard the welfare of young people within school **we insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own without their consent**. Visitors can expect that the school may provide written guidance beforehand and/or may make an announcement before events as a reminder of this guidance.

Other Related Policies

This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy with signed agreement

Guidance documents include:

- *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for adults who work with children and young people.*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education.*
- *Guidance on Issues of Confidentiality.*
- *Guidance on Use of Photographic Image and Videos of Children in School.*