

Saints and Scholars Integrated Primary and Nursery School



MOBILE PHONE USE POLICY

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SAINTS AND SCHOLARS INTEGRATED PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

MOBILE PHONE USE POLICY

The use of mobile phones at Saints and Scholars Integrated Primary and Nursery School follows the recommendations from the Education Authority.

At Saints and Scholars Integrated Primary and Nursery School we are committed to ensuring the safety of children in our care. We recognise that mobile phones in the school have a role to play for the purpose of communication and we fully acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone to school, however we are aware that casual or inappropriate use of mobile phones in school could pose a risk to children and adults. Our school discourages pupils from bringing mobile phones to school and we are advocates of the '[Smartphone Free Childhood](#)' movement.

The enhanced functions of many mobile phones are of most concern and are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. Mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the school day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

When mobile 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 everyone.

It can be 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 school day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

This policy refers to all staff, pupils, volunteers and visitors.

Please note that for the purposes of this policy, the term 'mobile phone' also covers any electronic devices (including smart watches) with the capability to be used as a form of communication, either through the device itself or any applications stored on the device.

STAFF PERSONAL MOBILE PHONES

- Staff must not carry personal mobile phones while working. This protects staff from being distracted from their work and from allegations of inappropriate use. Phones must be safely stored, out of sight of the children, by all staff members.

- If staff have a break time during their working hours, they may use their mobile phones during these times in the staff room or an office where children are not present.
- In an emergency, staff needing to make a personal call during a lesson or whilst on duty should first obtain agreement from the Principal, ensure that adequate cover has been put in place and make the call in an area not used by children.
- Staff must give the school office phone number to their next of kin in case it is necessary for the staff member to be contacted, in an emergency, during working hours.
- A personal mobile phone may be taken on school trips in accordance with guidance- see 'The Use of Mobile Phones on Trips' section below.
- Camera or video functions on personal mobile phones must not be used by staff to take images of children under any circumstances. Teachers' iPads must be used for this purpose.
- Staff are not required to make work calls on their own phones, either mobile or landline, however, in exceptional circumstances, if this should be necessary then they are advised to use the prefix 141 before dialling the recipient's number to ensure their own number is protected.
- Staff must never store parents', carers' or children's telephone numbers on their mobile phones and staff must never give their private number to parents, carers or children. An exception to this rule would be for members of staff who are also parents of the school or staff members who are representatives on the Board of Governors or the Parents' Council. All communication about school business should be done following the usual school procedures.
- Failure by staff to comply with the mobile phone policy guidelines could result in disciplinary action.
- Staff who use a mobile phone to manage a medical condition effectively are allowed to have a mobile phone in class. The Principal and Class Teacher should be made aware if this is the case.

CHILDREN

- Children who walk to and from school without an accompanying adult may carry a mobile phone for safety. In these cases, children may bring a mobile phone to school but must deposit it with the school office at the start of the school day and collect it from the office at the end of the day.
- Parents and carers need to be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to pupils having mobile phones in terms of personal safety there are also some associated risks such as potential for theft, bullying and inappropriate contact, including grooming by unsuitable persons.
- We would also like to alert parents and carers to the risks that using a mobile phone has while walking to and from school. Children who are concentrating on their phone can have reduced general safety awareness which may result in road accidents and/or injury if a child is not paying attention to their surroundings.

- Mobile phones deposited in the office by children will be kept safely in a locked cupboard. Whilst the school will take every reasonable care, it accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure mobile phones are properly insured. It is recommended that pupils' phones are security marked and password protected.
- Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones into any other areas of the school.
- Any mobile devices discovered to have been brought into the school and not handed in to the office will be confiscated immediately. Parents or carers will be asked to collect the mobile phone from the school office.
- Children are not allowed to carry mobile phones on any school trips.
- If a member of staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone brought into school by a pupil has unsuitable material stored on it, the pupil will be required to hand over the phone immediately to a member of staff and parents or carers will be required to collect it from a member of the senior leadership team.
- Children who use a mobile phone to manage a medical condition effectively are allowed to have a mobile phone in class. The Principal and Class Teacher should be made aware if this is the case.

VISITORS, PARENTS AND CARERS

- Notices are displayed in the school advising visitors, parents and carers that mobile phones are not to be used.
- We ask all parents not to use mobile phones in the school from 9am until 3pm. This includes all uses including texting and photographing.
- Visitors are not allowed to use mobile phones on the school grounds and these should be kept in their bags. Mobile phones can be used in the staff room.
- If a visitor, parent or carer is seen using their mobile phone, they will be asked politely to turn it off/ desist from using it/ remove it from children's view.
- It is recognised that many parents and carers use their mobile phone as a camera/ video device to record their child at special performances e.g. class assemblies, concerts etc. On these occasions, the use of a phone is permitted for photographing and videoing only. Images should only be taken by parents and carers if they include their own child and that the use of these images is for their own person use and must not be uploaded for any internet use including Facebook or any other social networking sites or used in any form of publication unless they are solely of their own child.
- The school recognise that children may inadvertently be included in photographs by another parent; the school, therefore, are obliged to warn parents and carers of the legal and safeguarding risks of publishing such photographs on any platform. The placing of any photographs of children on social media is dangerous and parents may be in breach of the Data Protection Act if they upload photos of other children without the explicit consent of that child's parents.

- Parents, visitors or volunteers who use a mobile phone to manage a medical condition effectively are allowed to have a mobile phone in class. The Principal and Class Teacher should be made aware if this is the case.

SCHOOL MOBILE PHONES

- A school mobile phone is issued to our bus supervisor and can be used on school trips also. This phone will only be used for school-related communication and work.

THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES ON SCHOOL TRIPS

Carrying mobile phones on trips can help to ensure safety for all members of the school. However, it is important that the following guidance is adhered to in order to keep children safe and protect staff and volunteers from accusations of inappropriate use:

- The trip leader should carry the school mobile phone for use in contacting other staff members or volunteers on the trip, contacting the school or contacting the emergency services. If the school mobile phone is unavailable (e.g. if another trip is on the same day) then the party leader should follow the advice below for staff use of personal mobile phones.
- Members of staff and volunteers may carry their own, personal mobile phones within the following guidelines:
 - Personal phones should only be used to contact staff members or volunteers on the trip, the school or emergency services. If possible, these calls should be made away from children.
 - Personal phones should not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of a trip. This means that personal calls or texts should not be made or accepted. On residential trips this will apply while the member of staff or volunteer is on duty. Staff and volunteers should ensure that next of kin are provided with the school office number so that in an emergency the campus is contacted and will make contact with the relevant person through the trip leader.
 - If it becomes necessary for a member of staff or volunteer to make a personal call or text, then the trip leader or another member of staff should be informed and take responsibility for the pupils in the group while the call or text is made away from sight and sound of any pupils.
 - Personal mobile phones must not be used under any circumstances to take photographs or videos of pupils. Volunteers are acting role models for the duration of the trip and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including their own child, using a mobile phone or any other mobile device, e.g. camera or tablet, without the express permission of the trip leader. Volunteers may be asked to take photographs of their group using a school device – this must be passed back to the trip leader at the end of the trip.
 - The trip leader may ask volunteers to provide them with their mobile phone number for the duration of the trip so that they can be contacted in case of

emergency. The trip leader undertakes to ensure that these numbers or not held on any mobile device or in any written form after the end of the trip.

- It is advised that if the trip leader is using his or her own mobile phone, then if they need to contact anyone during the trip they do so by pre-dialling 141 (some mobile providers use a different prefix – staff are advised to check this with their provider) before the number so that their own number remains protected.

Appendix 1 provides guidance for volunteers on trips.

Appendix 1 Use of mobile phones - guidance for volunteers on school trips

Thank you for volunteering to help on our trip. During the trip we ask that you follow the guidelines below in accordance with the school's mobile phone policy:

- Personal phones should only be used to contact staff members or volunteers on the trip, the school or emergency services. If possible these calls should be made away from pupils.
- Personal phones must not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of a day trip. On residential trips this will apply while the member of staff or volunteer is on duty. This means that personal calls or texts must not be made or accepted. Staff and volunteers should ensure that next of kin are provided with the school number so that in an emergency the school is contacted and will make contact with the relevant person through the trip leader.
- If it becomes necessary for a member of staff or volunteer to make a personal call, then the trip leader or another member of staff should be informed and take responsibility for the pupils in the group while the call or text is made away from sight and sound of any pupils.
- Personal mobile phones must not be used under any circumstance to take photographs or videos of pupils. Volunteers are asked to set an example for the duration of the trip and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including their own child, using a mobile phone or any other mobile device, e.g. cameras or iPads, without the express permission of the trip leader. Volunteers may be asked to take photographs of their group using a school device – this must be passed back to the trip leader at the end of the trip.
- The trip leader may ask volunteers to provide them with their mobile phone number for the duration of the trip so that they can be contacted in case of emergency. The trip leader undertakes to ensure that these numbers are not held on any mobile device or in any written form after the end of the trip.
- It is advised that if the trip leader is using her or his own mobile phone, then if they need to contact anyone during the trip they do so by pre-dialling 141 (some mobile providers use a different prefix – volunteers are advised to check this with their provider) before the number so that their own number remains protected.
- If you have any questions regarding these guidelines please speak to the trip leader.
- Thank you for your support and co-operation to ensure the safety of all the pupils.