



# **Pentrebane Primary School**

# **Mobile Communication Policy**

**(MARCH 2024)**



**Mobile Communication** is the use of technology that allows us to communicate with others in different locations without the use of any physical connection. For the purposes of this policy Mobile Communication Devices refers to mobile phones and smart watches.

### **Introduction and Aims**

At Pentrebane Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Communication 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 communication technologies are effective communication devices.

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile communication technologies 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 communication devices on site. This includes staff, volunteers, governors, 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 on the Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children in 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 in 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 communication devices within the setting, which is agreed to by all users:

### **Personal Mobile Communication Devices - Staff**

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. Wherever possible, emergency contact should be made via the school office but is understood that this is not always possible.
- Staff should have their mobile communication devices on silent or switched off during class time.
- Mobile communication devices should not be used in a space where children are present (e.g. classroom, playground).
- Use of mobile communication devices (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 staff security protect access to functions of their mobile communication devices.



- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Headteacher aware of this and can have their mobile communication devices nearby in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile communication devices, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images.
- Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and i pads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile communication devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher.

### **Mobile Communication Devices for work related purposes**

We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities. However, staff should ensure that:

- Use of mobile communication devices on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).
- Mobile communication devices should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office.
- 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 Mobile Communication Devices - Pupils**

We recognise that mobile communication devices 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 communication devices at school or on trips
- If in the rare event of a parent wishing for their 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 mobile communication devices must be handed in, switched off, to the office first thing in the morning and collected from the office by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk). They will be kept in the school safe.
- Mobile communication devices brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.

Where mobile communication devices are used 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, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile communication devices 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**

Parents are requested not to use their mobile communication devices while in school. Phones should be on silent and out of sight.

We do however allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports days 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 Communication 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.

Mrs E. Prescott  
Headteacher

Mr D. Corp  
Chair of Governors



## Personal Mobile Communication Devices – Pupils

We recognise that mobile communication devices 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. Therefore:

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile communication devices at school or on trips.
- It is not permitted for pupils to use mobile communication devices during the school day.
- If in the rare event of a parent wishing for their child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school:
  - the parent must complete the form below.
  - the mobile communication devices must be handed in, switched off, to the office first thing in the morning and collected from the office by the child at home time. They will be kept in the school safe.
- mobile communication devices brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- The school cannot accept responsibility for the loss of any mobile communication device that is not handed in to the office.

If you wish your child to bring their mobile communication devices into school, please would you complete the form below giving your consent.

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Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

I give consent for my child \_\_\_\_\_ to bring their mobile communication device into school and believe them to have a genuine reason to need it in school. I understand and have read our school policy on mobile communication devices in school.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_