



MOBILE PHONE – ACCEPTABLE USE

MISSION STATEMENT: St. Mary's strives to become a lively Christian community based on mutual love and respect, to educate young people to meet the challenges of life confidently, to develop their personal talents to the full and to live out the values of Christ and His Gospel.

Linked to: Anti-Bullying Policy, Ant-Discrimination Policy, Child Protection Policy – Allegations of Abuse, Disaster Management Policy, Discipline Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Expectations of Behaviour Policy, Grievance Procedure, Health & Safety Policy, ICT Policy, Playground Supervision Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Staff Disciplinary Procedure, Whistleblowing Procedure

PURPOSE

The widespread ownership of mobile phones requires that school administrators, teachers, pupils, parents, carers and volunteers take the necessary steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at school. This policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones and any similar devices (ipods, MP3, MP4 players) can be clearly identified and addressed so that the benefits that mobiles provide (such as increased safety) can be maintained.

At St. Mary's it is recognised and accepted that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives the parents/carers reassurance that they can, if absolutely necessary, contact their child urgently. Excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities may well require that a pupil has a mobile phone to remain contactable.

At Charlton House pupils are discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school. If a child does bring a phone to school it will be confiscated immediately by a teacher, placed in the office and handed back to their parents/carers at the end of the school day. There is no need for a child of primary age to bring a mobile phone to school unless permission is sought from the Head.

The school does recognise the importance of emerging technologies present in mobile phones e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, blogging, messaging, MP3 and MP4 playback etc. In the future, particularly at St. Mary's, teachers may wish to utilise these functions to aid teaching and learning, so pupils may have the opportunity to use their mobile phones in the classroom. However, this would not be without parental consent and the expressed permission and supervision of the teacher.

PUPIL RESPONSIBILITIES (at St. Mary's)

It is the responsibility of the pupils who bring mobile devices to school to abide by the guidelines set out in this policy.

- Parents/carers should be aware if their child has a mobile device in school and give permission for them to be carrying one.
- Pupils are responsible for keeping the school informed of their current mobile phone number.
- Mobile phones are only to be used in the event of an emergency and with the permission of a member of staff.
- Pupils are advised to use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other pupils, or if stolen). Passwords/pin numbers must be kept confidential.
- Phones must be switched off/on silent and out of view during school hours. They must not be used for making calls, sending SMS messages (texting), surfing the internet, checking the time, taking photos, making videos, using any other inbuilt application or as a calculator during lesson times or between lessons unless express permission is given by the teacher.
- Mobile phones cannot under any circumstances be taken into examination rooms.
- Pupils must not use their phones or MP3 players to broadcast music and headphones must not be worn during or between lessons.
- Pupils must ensure that any file stored on their phone **does not contain material that:**
 - displays images of violence, injury or death
 - is pornographic in nature or abusive
 - promotes intolerance, and/or discrimination on grounds of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age
 - relates to criminal activity e.g. buying and selling drugs
 - relates to unlawful activity e.g. breach of copyright
 - may generate a security risk to the school or cause offence

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT IN VERY SERIOUS CASES THE POLICE MAY BE CONTACTED

- Pupils must not use mobile phones to bully or threaten, in particular taking videos or pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate another pupil.
- Mobile phones are not to be used or taken into changing rooms or toilets or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment to their fellow pupils, staff or visitors to the school.

- Cyber-bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

Pupils must acknowledge that it is a privilege to be permitted to bring mobile phones to school and failure to comply with these guidelines may lead to a curtailment of this privilege. Action may be taken by staff to confiscate any mobile phone if necessary and arrangements be made for its return at the end of the school day.

The school does not accept any responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of a mobile phone whether in school or whilst travelling to and from school.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The safety of children is paramount. Casual or inappropriate use of mobile phones by staff may pose a risk, if staff are distracted from caring for children. It is the responsibility of staff who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines set out in this policy.

- Mobile phone communication should be used sparingly and only when deemed necessary. Not during lesson times unless there is an emergency.
- Mobile phones should be on silent/buzz and kept out of sight.
- Nursery staff must keep their mobile phones in their bags and leave their bags secured in the kitchen area. Phones must not be used without consulting the Nursery manager.
- No staff member is to use a mobile phone to take photographs or make videos of any pupils.
- Staff must ensure that any file stored on their phone **does not contain material that:**
 - displays images of violence, injury or death
 - is pornographic in nature or abusive
 - promotes intolerance, and/or discrimination on grounds of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age
 - relates to criminal activity e.g. buying and selling drugs
 - relates to unlawful activity e.g. breach of copyright
 - may generate a security risk to the school or cause offence
- Staff should not give out their home telephone number or their mobile phone number to pupils unless there is a legitimate reason to do so and permission has been given by the Head.
- Staff should not enter into instant messaging (texting) with pupils.

- Staff should not use their mobile phones to communicate with pupils via social networking sites unless permission has been sought from the Head and parental consent has been given.
- Staff should take their mobile phone on school trips as an emergency precaution. The school must be kept informed of their current mobile phone contact number.

Any staff found to be in breach of this policy may face disciplinary action in accordance with the school discipline procedure. In certain circumstances, breach of this policy may be considered gross misconduct resulting in termination of employment. Staff must report all suspected breaches of this policy to the Headteacher.

The school does not accept any responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of a mobile phone whether in school or whilst travelling to and from school.

VISITOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Visitors will be briefed on entry about the appropriate use of mobile phones. They will be asked to use mobile phones sparingly and only when deemed necessary.

NO VISITOR IS TO USE A MOBILE PHONE TO TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS OR MAKE VIDEOS OF PUPILS.

Reviewed:

May 2011/ AF	A m e n d e d 08/2011/DO				