

# Policy on the Use of Mobile Devices within School

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## 1. Introduction and Aims

At Great Tew Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of this Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear, robust and acceptable mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile devices are effective communication tools.

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile devices 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. The definition of mobile communication devices includes, but is not restricted to, phones, laptops, tablets and cameras. All of these devices will be referred to as ‘mobile devices’ throughout this policy.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile devices on site. This includes staff, volunteers, governors, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

## 3. 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
- Avoid possible breaches of Data Protection Laws
- 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.

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 devices within the setting, which is agreed to by all users.

#### 4. Personal Devices – Staff

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office, or by other arrangement with the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances.
- Staff should have their mobile devices on silent or switched off and out of sight (eg in a drawer, handbag) during class time.
- Mobile devices should not be used in a space where children are present (eg classroom, playground).
- Use of mobile devices (including 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 devices.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Headteacher and office aware of this so messages can be relayed promptly.
- Staff are not permitted to use recording, video or audio, equipment on their mobile 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 ipads *unless the Headteacher has given express permission for an authorized member of staff to use their own photographic/editing tools and both parties have read and signed the attached letter of authorization. (See page 4)*
- Staff must report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher.
- Designated 'mobile/camera free' areas are identified within the setting and signs to this effect are to be displayed throughout. These areas must include:
  - Changing areas
  - Toilets

#### 5. Mobile Devices for work related purposes

We recognise that mobile devices, particularly phones, provide a useful means of communication on off-site activities. However, staff should ensure that:-

- Work/and or personal mobile phones are switched off whilst driving
- Mobile device use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children)
- Mobile 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 mobile device to take photographs of children.

## 6. Personal Mobile Devices – Pupils

We recognise that mobile 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 devices at school or on trips.
- If in the rare event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile device to school to contact the parent after school:-
  - The parent must discuss the issue first with the Headteacher
  - If agreed the device must be handed into the School Office switched off first thing in the morning and collected from the office by the child at home time (the device is left at the owner's own risk).
- Mobile devices brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.

Where mobile devices are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others then the Headteacher 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'.

## 7. Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile device 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 devices.

## 8. Parents

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile devices while on school premises, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their devices as an essential means of communication at all times.

We, therefore, ask that parents' usage of mobile devices, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment.

We do allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile devices – **but insist that parents do not publish images (eg on social networking sites) that include anybody except their own children.** Parents/carers are reminded of this at the start of every school performance, prior to sports day, etc and will receive a written reminder in the Newsletter at the start of the academic year.

## 9. Dissemination

The mobile device 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.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Headteacher Chair of Governors

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Authorization for Staff Member to Use Own Photographic /Recording /Editing Equipment (including mobile phones/cameras and other recording devices) as referred to in Great Tew Mobile Device Policy**

Permission is hereby given for \_\_\_\_\_ to use their own photographic/editing equipment for the completion of a project authorized by the Headteacher. On the completion of the project ALL images and recordings will be deleted from the individual's personal equipment. Under no circumstances should any image containing children be uploaded to social media.

Description of Project:

Staff Member:

*Signed* \_\_\_\_\_

*Printed* \_\_\_\_\_

Headteacher:

*Signed* \_\_\_\_\_

*Printed* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date:* \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_