



## **EYFS Mobile Phone and Camera Policy**

### **Introduction**

Mobile phone technology has advanced significantly over the last few years and continues to evolve. Wireless connections in particular have extended the capabilities of mobile phones, enabling access to a wide range of new content and service globally. Many phones now offer internet and email access, alongside the most standard functions of messaging, cameras, video and sound recording.

Mobile phones, alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance, however there are also associated risks. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe. As with e-safety issues generally, risks to children and young people can be broadly categorised under the headings of content, contact and conduct and managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

### **Aim**

The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines.

This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools-which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work related mobile phones on site. This includes practitioners, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors, and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

### **Policy statement**

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

It is also recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working 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 all.

It is appreciated that it can be very 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 working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

Designated 'mobile free' areas are situated within the setting, and signs to this effect are displayed throughout. In Nursery, Staff will keep their mobile phones in a designated place away from children. They can use them at break times when not in the presence of children. On arrival all visitors are informed about the mobile phone policy and asked to refrain from using their phones, or having them out during their visit to the EYFS area of the school.

'Mobile free' areas are those which are considered to be the most vulnerable and sensitive and include

- Changing area
- Toilets
- Bathrooms
- Swimming Pool

A zero tolerance policy is in place with regards the use of personal mobiles by any individual in these areas.

## **Procedures**

### **Personal mobiles**

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile phones causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted against potential misuse. In the interest of equality, and to further promote safety, the guidance applies to any individual who has a mobile phone on site, including children, parents and visitors, as detailed below:

Staff are permitted to have their mobile phones. There is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to allocated lunch and or tea breaks.

**Parents, visitors and contractors** are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones in the setting and especially not in the 'mobile free' areas. Should phone calls and or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children in order to avoid unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others.

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

### **Emergency contact and CPOMs access**

It is recognised that mobile phones provide direct contact to others, and at times provide a necessary reassurance due to their ease of access particularly at stressful times. In agreed exceptional circumstances Practitioners may keep their phone on their person to enhance their own well being and peace of mind, to reduce stress and worry and to enable them to concentrate more effectively on their work. Such use will be for a limited period only, until concerns or issues leading to the exceptional circumstance request have been resolved. A member of staff may also have their mobile phone for emergency use when visiting the Welly Boot Camp and other areas of the school site.

It is ensured that the landline telephone remains connected and operational, except in circumstances beyond control. This means that it is available for emergency/urgent contact at all times. The reliance of an answer phone is avoided except for times outside of the setting operating hours or should children be taken off the premises. The answer phone is always checked promptly on opening or return. This is the responsibility of the main school. The landline is only accessed by request from the school.

Mobile phones may be used for the CPOMs authenticator app within the EYFS setting but not within a 'Mobile Free' area.

### **Cameras (ipads)**

Photography within the EYFS setting is restricted to the extent that only the St John's School EYFS ipads can be used and those images are only downloaded onto school computers or sent to school email addresses.