

# Staff, Parents and Visitors Mobile Phone Policy

*This Policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, anyone working on behalf of Gretton School, pupils, parents/carers, external agencies, visitors and members of the public.*

## **Introduction and Aims**

At Gretton School the welfare and well-being of our students is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone 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 phones are effective communication tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones 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.

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, committee members, 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.

Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag or pocket) during class time. Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground). Use of phones (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 classroom. It is also

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paramount that staff security protect access to functions of their phone. Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Headteacher or member of the SLT aware of this and can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call. Staff or visitors are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, 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. Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher.

## Mobile Phones for work related purposes

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

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children). Mobile phones are permitted to make contact with school during trips, the school office will then contact parents if necessary.
- 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 Mobiles

Visitors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone 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** - While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as essential means of communication at all times. We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment. We also allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day 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.

**Dissemination** - The mobile phone 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.