Mobile Phone Policy

Approval Date: October 2019

Review Date: October 2027

Headteacher: ……

Mobile Phone Policy

Introduction and Aims

At Three Bridges Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils 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.

Scope
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 and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying & Friendship 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 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 phones within the setting, which is agreed to by all users.

Personal Mobiles – Staff

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children.
- Emergency contact should be made via the school office.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag) during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (e.g. 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 classrooms.
- It is advised 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 aware of this so that their phone can be available in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children, or share images.
- Legitimate recordings and photographs must always 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 may be used to make direct contact with parents during school visits – However ideally, all relevant communications should be made via the school office.
- Where parents are accompanying visits they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the visit or use their phone to take photographs of children.

Personal Mobiles – Pupils

We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure, particularly for Year 5/6 children who walk home alone. However, it is also recognised that mobile phones can prove a distraction in school, especially if a child is able to access inappropriate material on their smart phone. In addition to this, mobile phones can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others, which the school is keen to address. Therefore:

- Pupils are not permitted to use their mobile phones on school premises or on off-site visits. If brought into school, they must be stored in the child's school bag at their own risk.
- If a parent/carer wishes for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school, the attached permission form must be completed by the parent /carer.
- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated. An appointment must be made to collect the mobile phone from the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

Where mobile phones 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' – please refer to Anti-Bullying & Friendship Policy.

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy **as it relates to staff** whilst on the premises.

On arrival, office staff will inform visitors of our expectations around the use of mobile phones.

Parents

We ask parents not to use mobile phones on our premises. We ask this to help keep every child safe in school. As we cannot guarantee that photos are not being taken on a mobile phone, we ask parents not to use their mobiles at any time on the school premises. Staff will remind parents of our school policy should a parent be seen to be using their phone on the school premises.

We do allow parents and carers to photograph or video school events, such as class assemblies or sports day, using their mobile phones. However, as a school we remind parents not to publish images/videos (e.g. on social networking sites) that may 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 phone policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents and via the school office and website.

Appendix

- Parent Consent – child to bring mobile phone into school

Previous Mobile Phone Policy Approved March 2018