

Mobile Phone Policy



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On behalf of:	

Introduction and Aims

At Green Ridge Primary Academy, 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, governors, 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:

- Health and Safety
- Anti-bullying
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Internet Acceptable Use
- Digital and Online Safety
- Staff Code of Conduct

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 or handbag) during class time – but not upon their person (e.g. in a pocket).
- 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 classrooms.
- It is also 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 and can have their phone 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 sharing images.
- Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and iPad.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher.

During the school hours of 8.40am-3.15pm, staff may only use a mobile phone in the designated 'mobile phone safe zones' in the school which consist of:

- office/administration areas;
- staffroom; and
- staff kitchenette (nursery).

Staff and Governors should note that children can still enter the office/administration areas, staffroom and staff workroom and so care must be taken within these areas to ensure that:

- Phones/technologies are kept out of sight of pupils, and stored safely (to prevent access);
- Staff do not use mobile technology and their phones if a child is present, but with no other adult present as a witness;
- Phones/technologies remain locked so that pupils cannot access; and
- Staff are aware of the potential of any allegation made against them, for improper use of their phone/technology (e.g. appearing to take photos of children through windows, or inadvertently displaying inappropriate content on their phones in front of children).

The above applies to all aspects of the school, including out of hours provision run and managed by the school (e.g. afterschool clubs and clubs run by staff).

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:

- The school's designated trip mobile phone is taken on all-offsite visits which can be used for communication if required.
- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).
- Mobile phones should not be used to contact parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office or via the trip mobile phone.
- Where parents are accompanying trips, they are informed not to contact other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip 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. 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 phones at school or on trips (except for Year Five and Six, see below).

If in the rare event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school:

- the parent must discuss the issue first with their child's teacher.
- the phone must be handed in, switched off, to the class teacher first thing in the morning and collected from them by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk).

- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.

When permission has been sought from the Headteacher for children in Year Five and Six who walk home on their own in readiness for secondary school, children may bring a mobile phone into school under the following strict conditions:

- The child **regularly** walks home on their own.
- A letter of permission is signed by the parent and given to the Headteacher.
- the phone must be handed in, switched off, to the class teacher first thing in the morning and collected from them by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk).
- The school accepts no liability for the loss/damage of any personal equipment whilst on school premises.
- The camera on the phone is never used by a child to take photographs or video of another child which is then published on the internet (especially a Social Networking site)

Should Parents/Carers need to contact pupils in an emergency, or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures: via the school office, tel. no. 01296 326320 or email admin@greenridgeacademy.co.uk

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using, or in the possession of a mobile phone, the phone will be taken from the child and returned only to the parent, guardian or carer.

The right to bring mobile phones onto school premises will be revoked if a pupil fails to adhere to school policy.

If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and serious action will be taken according to the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a teacher and Parent, Guardian or Carer.

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' - refer to Anti-Bullying Policy.

Educational Visits

In addition, mobile phones/recording equipment are not to be used by pupils during educational visits. This includes phone calls/texts to parents/guardians. No child will be allowed to take a mobile phone on a Residential Visit. If a pupil needs to contact home, this will be arranged through the lead teacher on the visit via the school office.

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, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones.

Parents and Visitors

Parents and visitors who come into the building to help/support will be asked to turn phones off and place them away out of reach when volunteering in classrooms and attending assemblies so that there is no disruption to the school's program or possible allegation of improper use. For

parents/visitors, all personal belongings will be left in one of the safe zones in the school (e.g. administration areas, staffroom, or staff workroom).

Notwithstanding this, we accept that there may be some parents/guardians who wish to use their mobile phone camera facility to take photographs of their child while performing in special assemblies or events. This will be kept under review by the Governors, and parents and carers are alerted at all public events that they may only take pictures for their own personal use of their own child, and if the pictures do contain pictures of other children, they are not for display on the internet or social media without the express prior consent of those children's parents/carers.

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.

Summary

The school will treat breaches of this policy as they would treat any other breach of school rules or staff discipline policy.

Appendix 1:



MOBILE PHONE USAGE AGREEMENT

I have read the Green Ridge Primary Academy Mobile Phone policy.

I agree to follow the rules outlined in this policy. I understand that if I violate these rules, then my phone may be confiscated and further sanctions may follow.

Pupil Name.....

Pupil Signature.....

As the parent or legal guardian of the above signed pupil, I have read the Green Ridge Primary Academy Mobile Phone policy and give permission for my son/daughter to bring his/her phone into school. I understand that sanctions may be applied to my child including having his/her phone confiscated should improper use occur.

Parent/Guardian/Carer Name.....

Parent/Guardian/Carer Signature.....

Date