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**Woodfall Primary and Nursery School**

**Use of Mobile/Smart Phones at School**

**Policy**

**February 2023**

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| **In Consultation with** |
| **Date Agreed** | **Name** | **Position** |
| **13.3.23** | Helen Hough | Headteacher |
|  |  |  |
|  | Duncan Haworth | Chair of Governors |
| **Date for Review: March 2025** |  |  |

**Use of Mobile Phones Policy**

At Woodfall Primary and Nursery School we are committed to ensuring the safety of children

in our care. We recognise that mobile phones in the school have a role to play for the purpose of communication, but we are aware that casual or inappropriate use of mobile phones could pose a risk to children and adults.

The enhanced functions of many mobile phones are of most concern and are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

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 everyone.

It can be 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. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and visitors.

Please note that for the purposes of this policy, the term ‘mobile phone’ also covers any electronic device with the capacity to be used as a form of communication, either through the device itself or any applications stored on the device e.g. smart watches.

**Staff Personal Mobile Phones**

* Staff must not carry personal mobile phones while working. This protects staff from being distracted from their work and from allegations of inappropriate use. Phones must be safely stored in a cupboard or in staff bags.
* If staff have a break time during their working hours, they may use their mobile phones during these times in the staff room or an office where children are not present.
* In an emergency, staff needing to make a personal call during a lesson or whilst on duty should first obtain agreement from their line manager, to ensure that adequate cover has been put in place and make the call in an area not used by children.
* Staff must give the school telephone number to their next of kin in case it is necessary for the staff member to be contacted, in an emergency, during working hours.
* A personal mobile phone may be taken on school trips in accordance with guidance – see ‘The Use of Mobile Phones on Trips’ section below.
* Camera or video functions on personal mobile phones must not be used by staff to take images of children under any circumstances. They must use the device given to them by the school eg ipad.
* Staff are not required to make work calls on their own phones, either mobile or landline, however, in exceptional circumstances, if this should be necessary then they are advised to use the prefix 141 before dialling the recipient’s number to ensure their own number is protected.
* Staff must never store parents’, carers’ or children’s telephone numbers on their mobile phones and staff must never give their private mobile number to parents, carers or children.
* Failure by staff to comply with the mobile phone policy guidelines will result in disciplinary action.

**Children**

* Only children who walk to and from school without an accompanying adult may carry a mobile phone for safety.
* In these cases, children may bring a mobile phone onto the school grounds but must deposit it with the class teacher at the start of the day and collect it at the end of the day. Mobile phones must be switched off whilst in school. The class teacher will store the phone in the classroom cupboard. Whilst the school will take every reasonable care, it accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure mobile phones are properly insured.
* Parents and carers need to be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to pupils having a mobile phone in terms of personal safety there are also some associated risks such as potential for theft, bullying and inappropriate contact, including grooming by unsuitable persons.
* We would also like to alert parents and carers to the risks that using a mobile phone has while walking to and from school. Children who are concentrating on using their phone can have reduced general safety awareness which may result in road accidents and/or injury if a child is not paying attention to their surroundings.
* It is recommended that pupils’ phones are security marked and password protected.
* Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones into any other areas of the school. Any mobile phones discovered to have been brought into the school and not handed in to the class teacher will be confiscated immediately. Parents or carers will be asked to collect the mobile phone from the school office.
* Children are not allowed to carry mobile phones on any school visits or at school discos.
* If a member of the staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone brought into school by a pupil has unsuitable material stored on it, the pupil will be required to hand over the phone immediately to a member of staff and parents or carers will be asked to collect it from a member of the senior leadership team.
* In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile phone may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the phone will be handed over to the school’s safeguarding lead or to the head teacher for further investigation and the parent or carer asked to collect it from them.

**Visitors, Parents and Carers**

* We ask all parents not to use mobile phones whilst on school premises.

This includes all uses including, texting and photographing.

* Visitors and supply staff are not allowed to use mobile phones on the school grounds and phones must be kept in their bags. Mobile phones can be used in the staff room.
* If a visitor, parent or carer is seen using their mobile phone, they will be asked politely to turn it off/desist from using it/remove it from children’s view. It is recognised that many parents and carers use their mobile phone as a camera/video device to record their child at special performances e.g. class assemblies, concerts, etc. On these occasions the use of a phone is permitted for photographing/videoing only; images should only be taken by parents and carers if they include their own child and that the use of these images is for their own personal use and must not be uploaded for any internet use including Facebook or any other social networking sites or used in any form of publication unless they are solely of their own child.
* The school and centre recognise that children may inadvertently be included in photographs by another parent; the school, therefore, are obliged to warn parents and carers of the legal and safeguarding risks of publishing such photographs on any platform. The placing of any photographs of children on social media is dangerous and parents may be in breach of the Data Protection Act if they upload photos of other children without the explicit consent of that child’s parents.

**The Use of Mobile Phones on School Visits**

* Carrying mobile phones on trips can help to ensure safety for all members of the school or centre party. However, it is important that the following guidance is adhered to in order to keep children safe and protect staff and volunteers from accusations of inappropriate use:
* Members of staff and volunteers may carry their own, personal mobile phones within the following guidelines:
* Personal phones should only be used to contact staff members or volunteers on the trip, the campus or emergency services. If possible, these calls should be made away from children.
* Personal phones should not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of a trip. This means that personal calls or texts should not be made or accepted. On residential trips this will apply while the member of staff or volunteer is on duty.
* If it becomes necessary for a member of staff or volunteer to make a personal call or text, then the party leader or another member of staff should be informed and take responsibility for the pupils in the group while the call or text is made away from sight and sound of any pupils.
* Personal mobile phones must not be used under any circumstances to take photographs or videos of pupils. Volunteers are acting role models for the duration of the trip and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including their own child, using a mobile phone or any other mobile device, e.g. camera or tablet, without the express permission of the party leader.
* Volunteers may be asked to take photographs of their group using a school device – this must be passed back to the party leader at the end of the trip.
* The party leader may ask volunteers to provide them with their mobile phone number for the duration of the trip so that they can be contacted in case of emergency. The party leader undertakes to ensure that these numbers are not held on any mobile device or in any written form after the end of the trip.
* It is advised that if the party leader has to contact anyone during the trip they do so by pre-dialling 141 (some mobile providers use a different prefix – staff are advised to check this with their provider) before the number so that their own number remains protected.

Initial information indicating that bullying may be taking place via the use of platforms accessible via the Internet will be investigated by a member of the school senior leadership team.

In the event of information being shared that a child is the subject of bullying via the use of platforms accessible via the Internet, then the information will be investigated according to our Anti-Bullying Policy and our Safeguarding Policy and on a case by case basis.

Approved by Governors: 13.3.23

**Appendix**

(please complete the google form which requires the information below)

Permission Form (please click on link)

Parent /Guardian Permission

I have read and understand the Use of Mobile Phones Policy by Pupils at Woodfall Primary and Nursery School

I give permission for my child to carry a mobile phone to and from school, if they are

walking unaccompanied by an adult.

I understand that it must then be turned off and

handed in to the classteacher during the school day.

Child’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_