



# Mobile Phone Policy - September 2016

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## Introduction and Aims

At Godmanchester Community 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:

- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff ICT usage agreement
- Pupil ICT usage agreement

## 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 or pocket) during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground).
- Use of phones (including 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 Head of School 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 ipads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to
- the Head of School.

## **Mobile Phones for work related purposes**

We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on offsite/outside 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 should not be used to make contact with parents during school
- trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office ( unless in emergency out of school hours).
- 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 – 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
- Phones must be handed in, switched off, to their class teacher first thing in the morning and collected from them by the child at home time (the phone will be kept securely at the school office during the day but is left at the owner's own risk).

## 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

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.**

Policy Details	Date	Signature and Name
Policy approved by Senior Management:	September 2016	Claire Wood
Policy approved by Senior Governor	September 2016	Roger Coxhead
Date of next review:	September 2018	

### **Policy Section: Section 1B – School Management Policies (Pupils)**

Policy reference: GCA 1B/ 10 MP