

WHITEHILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL

"...putting children first..."



MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Date reviewed: September 2021

Reviewed by: Headteacher

Ratified by Governors: September 2021

Mobile Phone Policy

This policy outlines the acceptable use of mobile phones at Whitehills Primary in the context of safeguarding, underpinned by our statement of vision and values which permeates everything we do and say. At Whitehills we recognise the vulnerability of our children and the potential for exploitation and abuse through the inappropriate use of mobile phones. We take steps to ensure that our safeguarding procedures are all-encompassing and robust.

Aims

The policy aims to:

- Ensure that there is clear and shared understanding of and adherence to its principles by all stakeholders and visitors and any contractors
- Raise the awareness of all staff (including students on placement, volunteers and those from Supply Agencies) of the crucial role of safeguarding in all areas of school life
- Alert staff members to the potential for predatory behaviour in a range of contexts through various means and ensure increased vigilance
- Secure an environment in which children (and their families) are protected from the risk of images being recorded and used/stored for inappropriate purposes

Key principles which underpin this policy

- Every child has a right to be valued as an individual and treated with dignity and respect
- The safeguarding of children is of paramount importance
- All children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm
- Every staff member is accountable for the safeguarding of our children

Mobile phones – Staff - acceptable use

At Whitehills we recognise that mobile phones play an important part in the lives of a significant majority of adults and, when used as they are intended, can bring substantial benefits. We also acknowledge that there is a risk that they can be used for the taking, storing and using of images inappropriately in a way that denies children's right to dignity, privacy and respect and satiates a desire to exploit. They also have the potential to distract staff from their work with children.

Staff members (including volunteers and students on placement) may bring mobile phones onto the school site on the understanding that the device:

- is used only in the staffroom, outside of the school gate, or (in exceptional circumstances) in office spaces and the staff room
- is stored in a designated place away from children (or pedestal drawer or cupboard)
- only used during break times and at either end of the school day

When off-site, designated members of the group will have a mobile phone available for emergency contact with the school, with each other or with the emergency services. In this context, phones will not be used to make or receive personal calls.

Personal mobile phones must not be used to take photos of children except in very exceptional circumstances when permission from a senior leader must be sought and granted in advance and the image erased as soon as possible.

The above information is shared with new staff members as part of the induction process.

Mobile phones – acceptable use - Visitors (including parents, professionals, contractors)

- Visitors may bring mobile phones on to the school site but are asked to switch them off and place them out-of-sight until they leave the building and have exited the school gate. This is done as part of the meet-and-greet process in a way that makes clear our safeguarding priorities
- Agency supply staff will be asked to store their phones away from children (in classroom cupboards)
- Visitors waiting briefly in reception – e.g. to collect a child – may keep phones to hand but they must be stored out of sight and not used
- Visitors attending courses/meetings in the meeting rooms may use their phones once inside those rooms. On leaving, phones must be switched off and kept out-of-sight until outside of the school gate
- Visitors found to be using their phones in contravention of this guidance will initially be reminded of the policy and ultimately asked to leave
- Notices around school are available for staff to share with visitors. This ensures that the message is consistent and unequivocal
- Where possible, all visitors are made aware of the mobile phone policy in advance either through written or verbal communication (e.g. for parents this may be in 'New Starter' documentation, school newsletters, letters inviting parents to annual review meetings, mailings, emails, etc.)
- If contractors are required to have their mobile phone to hand in order to convey live information to their line manager or head office, they will seek prior permission to do so in advance and will be accompanied around the site
- The use of personal mobiles to take photographs of the site (internal or external e.g. corridors, classrooms, central areas, swimming pool, etc.) of children or of staff is **strictly prohibited** unless in consultation and prior agreement with school leaders
- Parents may use their phones to take pictures /videos of their own children for purposes such as class assemblies with permission of the senior leaders. However, these must not be uploaded to any social media sites. Photos and videos may be shared on the school Facebook page with prior permission of the parents

Mobile phones – children - acceptable use

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are permitted to bring a mobile phone to school, to support safety issues if they come into school independently. All mobile phones should be named/made distinguishable and handed into their class teacher at the beginning of the day and collected at the end of the day.

If parents want their children to bring a phone it is on the understanding that they agree with the following limitations on use, namely:

- Mobile phones must be switched off at all times during the school day and must remain off once the child is on school premises
- It is not permitted to film or take photographs of anyone on the school grounds
- The school will not be held responsible for the security of a mobile phone brought into school unless they are handed in to the class teacher
- Content of the mobile phone will be shown to a teacher if requested
- On arrival and departure of the school site, children should not have their mobile phones visible

Misuse of phones

Parents are notified that appropriate action will be taken against those who are in breach of the acceptable use guidelines following the school's behaviour policy.

In the case of misuse, the phone will be confiscated and only returned to a parent who will be required to visit the school by appointment to collect the phone.

Parents will need to complete a consent form prior to their child bring a mobile phone into school.

Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff members to exercise vigilance at all times and to raise concerns as soon as possible, either directly with the person who is contravening expectations or by reporting the incident to a senior leader as soon as possible after the event.

Senior leaders will investigate the detail surrounding reported incidents and take action accordingly. If a staff member is found to have contravened policy expectations, the matter will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.



Whitehills Primary School

Mobile Phone Consent Form

2021-2022

Dear Parent/Carer

In accordance with our mobile phone policy, if your child is bringing in a mobile phone to school on a regular basis, please sign the form below to give permission for your child to do this and remind them of our school policy.

- Your child needs to bring their phone to the class teacher first thing in the morning and have it turned off
- Once on the grounds of the school your child should not be using their phone
- **The school bears no responsibility for the loss or damage to the mobile phone**
- Your child's phone should be appropriately marked so they can recognise it
- Should your child be using their phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw the privilege and they will no longer bring their phone into school

Yours sincerely,

Mrs James
Headteacher

MOBILE PHONE CONSENT FORM

I/We give permission for our child _____ of class _____ to bring in their mobile phone.

I/We have read the policy and understand its implications.

Signed: _____

Date: _____