**Mobile Devices Policy**

**Blakehill Primary School**



**Together We Can**

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| **Headteacher** | **Chair of Governors** | **Review Dates** |
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|  |  | Last Review: March 2024 |
| Lisa Keighley | Philip Cavalier-Lumley | Next Review: March 2025 |

**1. Policy**

Mobile devices include: phones, smart phones, tablets, smart watches, chromebooks, ipads and similar products capable of taking photos, recording video, sending/receiving/publishing images/video/text messages and receiving/displaying notifications.

Blakehill Primary School respects the fact that staff and visitors may bring their personal mobile devices to school, however, it prohibits the use of such devices when working with children or when on outings. This is to ensure the safety and welfare of our children. Carers / parent helpers, volunteers and visitors are all included in the above.

**Policy statement**

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile devices that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. These devices can also inadvertently or purposely expose children to inappropriate images, language and behaviour.

It is also recognised that they can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

When mobile devices are misused it can impact 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 all.

It is appreciated that it can be very 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 devices is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities.

Our aim is to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of our staff and children is our high priority and to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to take any images and/or video and misuse the device’s functions in any other way.

Designated ‘device free’ areas within the setting are:

* Changing areas – (classrooms whilst children are changing for activities)
* Toilets

A zero-tolerance policy is in place with regards to the use of personal or school devices by any individual in these areas.

**2. Purpose**

The purpose of the *Mobile Devices Policy* is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines.

This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile devices are effective communication tools - **which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.**

**3. Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals who have access/use of personal and/or school mobile devices on site, such as staff, volunteers, children, young people, parents/ carers, visitors and community users.

This list is not exhaustive.

**4. Principles**

At Blakehill Primary School we embrace technology and new media products to help our children not only learn effectively but to celebrate and promote our achievements and success. However, we should never lose sight that this technology and new media can have an instant and long lasting detrimental effect on individuals when misused.

**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.

It is therefore ensured that all Staff, Student Teachers and Volunteers:

* have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse
* are vigilant and alert to potential warning signs
* 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 and/or ‘bans’ on the actions of others can be counterproductive, leading to a culture of suspicion, uncertainty and secrecy.

The imposition of rigorous, inflexible rules is therefore avoided, unless the potential risks of not enforcing them far out-weigh the benefits. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile devices within the setting environment, which is agreed to by all practitioners.

**5. Responsibilities**

**Governing Body**

The Governing Body has

* delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel, visitors and contractors to the school are aware of this policy and comply with this policy
* responsibility for the review and evaluation of this policy.

**Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible to ensure this policy is adhered to by all and updated when necessary.

* monitor the effectiveness of this policy
* Periodically report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

**Staff members**

Staff members are responsible for complying with this policy and reporting anyone who is not complying with this policy to the Headteacher or Governing Body.

**6. Procedures**

The following must be adhered:

**Personal mobile devices**

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile devices causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against potential misuse.

The guidance applies to all individuals who have access/use of a mobile device whilst on site or on as school outing, including children, parents and visitors, as detailed below:

Staff, Student Teachers and Volunteers are permitted to have their mobile devices about their person; however there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to allocated lunch and/or breaks.

Other than in exceptional circumstances and agreed with the Headteacher, devices must be put into an inoperable mode such as ‘aeroplane’ mode or switched off and calls, texts, social media activity and/or emails must not be received or made during lesson time.

Staff, Student Teachers and Volunteers are not permitted to use their devices for taking, recording or sharing images and ‘mobile free’ areas must be observed at all times.

It is recognised that staff may find the use of a mobile device to be the only method of taking photographs at events such as sporting events and educational visits, however, this must be authorised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) before the event. Staff must transfer the images to the school intranet as soon as is practical after the event and delete the images from their personal mobile device.

Staff, Student Teachers and Volunteers are not permitted to use their own personal devices for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside of the school setting unless authorised by the Headteacher.

**Parents / Carers and Contractors**

Parents/carers, visitors and contractors must not use their mobile devices in any of the designated mobile free areas.

Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children in order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others.

Parents / carers are only allowed to take images or make recordings under agreed circumstances such as Parent Assemblies or concerts. It must be stressed during these occasions by SLT that the images should only be for personal use and that unless they have the permission of other parents / carers, images of their children should not be shared on social media.

**Work mobile devices**

The use of a designated work mobile device is promoted as it is:

* an essential part of the emergency toolkit which is taken on off-site trips.
* an effective communication aid, enabling text, email messages and calls to be made and received.
* a back-up facility should problems be experienced with the landline – or where contact needs to be made outside of work hours.

Effective security measures are in place to safeguard against any potential misuse. Only authorised individuals have access to the work mobile device, stored securely when not in use.

Personal calls are not permitted to be made on the work mobile device, other than in agreed exceptional circumstances. Contact or calls can be made via the work mobile device in the event of an emergency. All calls are logged.

**Safe storage**

A designated safe and secure area for staff to store their personal belongings during the working day is available (School Office). Staff have the option to store their mobile devices in this area, should they choose. This however is not a mandatory requirement.

Staff leave their belongings in safe storage at their own risk. No liability for loss and damages is accepted.

As well as safeguarding children and avoiding any unnecessary disruptions during the day, this procedure also aims to protect staff against any unfounded allegations.

**Emergency contact**

It is recognised that mobile devices provide direct contact to others, and at times provide a necessary reassurance due to their ease of access, particularly at stressful times.

Staff, in exceptional circumstances, are permitted to keep the volume of their phone switched on after agreement from the Headteacher. This is to enhance staff well-being.

Such use will be for an agreed limited period only, until any concerns or issues leading to the exceptional circumstance request have been resolved.

It is ensured at all times that the landline telephone remains connected and operational. This means that it is available for emergency contact at all times.

The reliance on an answer phone is avoided and only used in exceptional circumstances. If used, the answer phone is always checked promptly on opening or return.

**The use of mobile devices by pupils**

* Children should not bring mobile devices to school. This may be necessary on occasion by parental request in order to ensure the safety of the child before or after school. However in these circumstances mobile devices should be handed in at the beginning of the school day, stored in a secure place and returned at the end of the school day. They should not be used in school under any circumstances
* Mobile devices must not be taken on any school visit, trip or residential
* Cameras should not be brought to school by children / pupils unless authorised by an educational visit group leader
* If the group leader allows cameras to be taken on a school visit or residential they must ensure that they are used sensibly and for the sole purpose for which they were intended. They should not be used to take photographs of other children and, if in residential, should not be allowed in bedrooms or dormitories.

**7. Monitoring and Review**

This policy is reviewed every twelve months to ensure that it stays relevant and reflects the needs of both staff and children.

**8. Distribution**

This policy will be available on the school website and from the School Business Manager.

**9. Contacts**

Please contact a member of the Governing body or the Headteacher if you require support or guidance on this policy.

**10. Cross Referencing**

This policy refers to the following other school policies:

*Safeguarding Policy*

*Media and Photo Policy*

*Anti-bullying Policy*

*Data Protection Policy*

*Acceptable Use Policy*