



## **Policy for Use of Mobile Phones in School Petersfield Church of England (Aided) Primary School**

Version	Review of 2017 policy
Policy Type	Standards
Discussed by staff	Sept 20
Approved by the Headteachers	Nov 20
Adopted by the FGB	Nov 2020
Next Review	2023

Petersfield School recognises that parents may wish their children to have mobile phones for use in cases of emergency. While mobile phones and personal communication devices are commonplace in today's society, it is recognised that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and are potentially targets for theft and bullying. The Governing Body has, therefore, adopted the following policy which will be rigorously enforced.

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

Most mobile phones now offer Internet and email access, alongside messaging, camera, video and sound recording. Mobile phones alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance; however there also associated risks. Safeguarding of children within the school is paramount.

The launch on the NHS Test and Trace App, which is available for those aged sixteen or over to download, has reinforced the need for school's to have a clear policy in place with regards to staff, pupil and visitor use of mobile phones.

Mobile phones should not be generally be used on school premises

### **School staff:**

Staff may wish to have their personal mobile phones at work for use in case of emergencies, however there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to areas and times when there are no children present, or likely to be present.

- The school expects staff to lead by example. Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, mobile phones should be switched off or on silent and left in a safe place during lesson times.
- Members of staff should keep phones locked away, in a drawer or bag and should only be looked at or used during break times without the permission of the Headteachers.
- Staff should not contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone in or out of school time, or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, a school telephone should be used. This is unless teachers are having to work from home during the coronavirus pandemic, or in an emergency, and would need to contact parents/children to check on their wellbeing – in this instant, staff would need to precede any phone call with a blocking system so their phone number is not shared with parents/carers.
- Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate
- Staff are not permitted to take photos or videos of pupils. If photos or videos are being taken as part of the school curriculum or for a professional capacity, the school equipment will be used for this unless agreed by the Headteacher in specific emergency circumstances.
- Staff should not allow themselves to be photographed by a pupil(s).
- In circumstances such as outings and off site visits, staff will agree with their Line Manager the appropriate use of personal mobile phones in the event of an emergency.
- Whilst school staff are able to download the NHS Test and Trace App to their personal devices to support contact tracing, there is no need for personal devices to remain switched on or to be carried upon the staff

<sup>1</sup> There has been a court case where a person has received a custodial sentence for showing someone a video on a mobile phone, which caused them distress. Parents and students should be aware that such incidents are likely to be treated seriously by the courts.

member's person for the purposes of Test and Trace. Staff are advised to pause the app upon arrival at school and store their phone in the usual way. In the event of a school based contact of a staff member testing positive for Covid-19, existing school protocols would enable close contacts to be traced as guided by Public Health. This includes: staff members avoiding skin to skin contact with students; staff members avoiding congregating in areas where social distancing cannot be maintained like staff rooms; seating plans in place for all lessons being adhered to; children being organised into bubbles and contact between bubbles in kept to a minimum; timetabling of staff to work with specific bubbles or individuals being adhered to; staff members who teach across bubbles maintained a distance of 2m from pupils wherever possible all as per our risk assessment.

- This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff and the school. Any breach of school policy may result in disciplinary action against that member of staff.

#### **Pupils:**

- Pupils should only bring a phone to school in specific circumstances, agreed with the Headteachers in advance.
- If a pupil has a phone, it should be kept in the school office, it should be switched off and out of sight.
- Pupils who ignore this policy and use a mobile on school premises without permission will be required to hand over their phone to a member of staff and parents will be asked to collect it subsequently from the school office.
- Pupils are strongly discouraged from bringing camera phones into school because of their higher value.
- Pupils remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses.
- If a member of the staff of the school has any suspicion that a mobile phone has unsuitable material stored on it, pupils will be required to hand over the phone to a member of staff and parents will be asked to collect it from a senior member of staff. In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the phone will be handed over to the police for further investigation<sup>1</sup>. Parents will need to recover the phone from the police in such circumstances.
- Any failure to comply with the above guidelines may result in normal disciplinary action to be taken up to and including the consideration of permanent exclusion of the student concerned.
- The camera on the phone must never used by a child to take photographs or video of another child or staff. No such images can be published on the internet (especially a Social Networking site).
- Pupil under the age of 16 cannot download the NHS Test and Trace App so there is no need for any amendment to the above arrangements.

#### **Parents, visitors and contractors:**

- Parents, visitors and contractors should not to use their mobile phones at all on the school site. Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, visitors are asked to leave the premises to do so.
- Parents and adults in school should not use their phones and must not take images of any pupils except:
  - Where parents are watching an assembly or production and permission is given by the teacher in charge, images can be taken as long as the responsible person taking the images has signed the consent form or a form declaring the images are of their own child, for personal use and will not be shared on social networking sites.
  - Photos of children must not be taken without prior discussion with a member of the Senior Management Team and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Parent Information Pack and E-Safety Acceptable Use Agreement.
- Any individual bringing a personal device into the school must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.
- The School will not be displaying a QR code for the NHS Test and Trace programme, We continue to expect visitors not to use their phone on the school site including for the purposes of the NHS Test and Trace App as our own arrangements enable contact tracing.
- In the event of a school based contact of a visitor testing positive for Covid-19, existing school protocols would enable close contacts to be traced as guided by Public Health. As part of our Covid-19 risk assessment, visits to the school are limited to critical business only. In the event of a visitor coming on site they are required to observe social distancing, remaining at least 2m from pupils and staff at all times. If parents/carers need to come on site, this must be agreed in advance and the school's signing in/out arrangements would document this visit.
- In very unusual circumstances, such as a family emergency, pupils or staff should seek the Headteacher's permission to use their phone.

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**Inappropriate or illegal content:**

- Where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may be unsuitable and may constitute evidence relating to a criminal offence, the 'Allegations of Abuse' process will be followed (please refer to the school's 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy').
- Staff, students or volunteers remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses.

**Related Policies and guidance:**

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (September 2020)
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings (April 2020)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020)
- Guidance for schools and other establishments on the use of images (July 2019)
- Data Protection: A toolkit for schools, DfE, (August 2018)

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