



DURANTS SCHOOL – POLICY DOCUMENT

Mobile Phone Use

November 2020

Reviewed & updated: November 2020 (Karly Barker)

Next review date: November 2023

1. Introduction

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 are also associated risks. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe. As with e-safety issues generally, risks to children and young people can be broadly categorised under the headings of content, contact and conduct and managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

2. Aim

The aim of the Mobile Phone 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 phones 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 to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, governors, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and community users.

4. Policy statement

4.1 It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

4.2 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 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.

5. Code of conduct

5.1 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.

5.2 It is therefore ensured 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.

5.3 It is fully recognised that studies consistently indicate that imposing rigid regulations and/or 'bans' on the actions of others can be counterproductive, leading to a culture of suspicion, uncertainty and secrecy.

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5.4 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 phones within the setting environment, which is agreed to by all practitioners.

6. Personal Mobiles

- Employees are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during work time. (excluding break times/lunch times)
- Staff should ensure that mobile phones are turned off or on silent at all times while on school premises. They should be kept in secured place (e.g. cupboard, filing cabinet, locker) and not be left on display.
- In the event that an employee has a particular reason, for a specified period of time they may request via the Head Teacher that they leave their phone on during working hours.
- 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.
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (e.g. classroom, playground).
- Staff may take their mobile phones on out and about sessions as long as their number is correctly recorded on the class risk assessment. This is for emergency purposes only and are not permitted to use them for personal calls, take photographs or any recordings.

7. Pupil Use

- Pupils may bring a mobile phone into school if they wish. This must be collected by the class teacher, switched off and returned to them at home time. The above rules apply for pupils, they are not permitted to use their phones during lesson time, not allowed to take photographs or make recordings of any kind.

8. Smart Watches

- If staff wear a smart watch, we ask where possible for this to be disconnected from their phone.
- If disconnection is not possible then staff must adhere to the rest of the policy which includes not answering calls or texts. The use of camera and recording technology via the watch is prohibited.
- Pupils are prohibited from wearing smart watches in school.

9. Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

- All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy whilst on the premises.

10. Parents/Carers

10.1 Parents/carers can only use mobile phones for urgent communication when on the school premises and it is made clear to parents that we would prefer them not to use their phones at all while at school.

10.2 However, we allow parents to use phones to photograph or video school events such as shows and sports day. We insist that parents do not publish any images (e.g. on Facebook) that include children other than their own.

The mobile phone policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction and will be included in our safeguarding protocol.