



PensMeadowSchool

Living, Growing, Learning

Acceptable Use of Mobile Technology Policy

MARCH 2023

NEXT REVIEW DATE: MARCH 2024

Staff Responsible: Deputy Headteacher
PENS MEADOW SCHOOL

Disclaimer

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This guidance applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile technology on site. This includes practitioners, volunteers, Governors, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and community users. **This list is not exhaustive.**

Introduction

This policy outlines the acceptable use of mobile phones/iPads/Android Tablets and other mobile technology at Pens Meadow School in the context of safeguarding, underpinned by our statement of vision and values which permeates everything we do and say. At Pens Meadow School we recognise the vulnerability of our children and the potential for exploitation and abuse through the inappropriate use of mobile technology. 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 of by all stakeholders and visitors (including transport staff, contractors, kitchen staff, and cleaners).
- 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.
- Make sure that children receive the undivided attention of adults at all time.

Key principles which underpin this policy

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

Mobile Phones – Staff – Acceptable Use

At Pens Meadow School we recognise that mobile technology plays 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 satisfies 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 technology onto the school site on the understanding that the device

- Is used only in the staffroom, outside of the school gate/premises, or where children are not present in office spaces.
- Is stored safely and securely away from children.
- Only used during break times and at either end of the school day.
- Is not used as a point of contact by relatives, friends, child's school, GP, etc., during the school day. *(Staff must ensure that all potential contacts have the school landline numbers so that initial contact is made directly to the school office).*
- 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 school phones will not be used to make or receive personal calls.
- Personal mobile phones must not be used to take photos of children.
- School staff should not use a personal mobile phone, even outside of the school day, to exchange information with parents.
- The above information is shared with new staff members as part of the induction process.

Mobile Phones – Visitors (including parents, professionals, contractors)

- Visitors may bring mobile phones on to the school site but, when visiting the main school, 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 staff will be asked to store their phones away safely and securely.
- 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 meetings in the school may use their phones once inside the meeting room. On leaving, phones must be switched off and kept out-of-sight until outside of the school gate.
- Transport staff as well as any other visitors who support transport to and from school must not use their mobile devices when they are within the school perimeter. This covers all the areas within the building and the area in front of the building i.e. parking bays as well as during the wait in a queue to drop off or pick up children.
- Visitors found to be using their phones in contravention of this guidance will initially be reminded of the policy and ultimately may be asked to leave.
- Signs are placed around the school re mobile phones use.
- 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, etc.) of children or of staff is strictly prohibited.

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, the matter may be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

Related Documentation

Safeguarding Policy

Online Safety policy

DfES Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2022)

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018, updated - 1.07.2022)