

Introduction

At Robert Peel Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phones in School Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools. Please note: this policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices.

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 contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

Aims

Our aim is 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.

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting, which is agreed to by all users:

Personal Mobiles - Staff

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, cupboard or handbag) during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in any space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground).
- Use of phones (including receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in the staff room.
- It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions on their phone.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative) staff should make the Head Teacher aware of this so they can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to take photographs or record school images on their mobile phones, for example: photographing or recording children performing. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and ipads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Head Teacher.

Mobile Phones for work related purposes. We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities. However staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).
- Where parents are accompanying school visits, they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the visit or use their phone to take photographs of children.



Personal Mobiles - Pupils

We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others if used inappropriately. Older pupils may begin to walk to or from school on their own and for safety reasons parents/carers may want their child to have a mobile phone with them on this journey. For this purpose, older pupils are allowed to bring a mobile phone into school at the discretion of their parents. It is not advisable for pupils to bring expensive mobile phones into school. Parents/carers who wish for their child to bring a mobile phone into school, are requested to give permission using the school's parentmail system.

Phones should be switched off completely before entering the playground and handed to the teacher as soon as the child enters their classroom. Children are not to use their phones on the school premises before or after school. All of the Year 5 and 6 teachers have a place where phones are kept safely during the school day and will be returned to the children at the end of the school day. However, we cannot be held responsible for any child's phone whilst it is being held in school.

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises. On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones.

Parents/Carers

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as essential means of communication at all times. We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile phones whilst in the school playground is courteous and appropriate to the school environment (including not using a mobile phone/ texting whilst talking to school staff). During events such as Open Mornings, when the children are working in class, the school's mobile phones policy will apply as it would to staff and contractors.

We may allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones – but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children.