



Seabridge Primary School

Mobile Phone Policy (including use of own devices)

Reference should also be made to the Safeguarding policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, the Online Safety Policy and the Social Media policy.

Seabridge Primary School is committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of the pupils in our care. The aim of the Mobile Phone policy is to recognise and guide the appropriate use of such technology through the establishment of clear user guidelines, recognising that the incorrect or inappropriate use of mobile phones and other personal devices could pose a risk to children and adults.

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

For the purpose of this policy, the term 'mobile phone' also covers any electronic device with the capacity to be used as a form of communication, either through the device itself or any applications stored on the device.

As 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 limited, regardless of their capabilities.

This policy is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable use of mobile phones. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy, staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the pupils/students and the academy.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers (including Academy Councillors) and visitors as well as staff onsite through external contracts.

Code of Conduct

The Staff Code of Conduct provides clear reference to the use of mobile phones.

Our aim is to ensure that adults in our setting:

- 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 to the SLT promptly.

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 Mobile Phones

Mobile phones and personally-owned devices may not be used during lessons or formal academy time, except in the case of emergencies or exceptional circumstances, e.g. an acutely ill relative. In such circumstances, a member of the Senior Leadership Team should always be made aware of the need to have access to a mobile phone, and this would be very rare. It is important that family members are aware of the school telephone number so that they can get in touch with adults on site should an emergency arise.

Mobile phones should be switched off (or silent) at all times.

Mobile phones and personal devices are not permitted to be used in certain areas within the academy site such as classrooms, corridors, the playground and field or in the vicinity of children. The only areas where mobile phones can be used are in offices, the staffroom and in classrooms or corridors before and after school, providing there are no children in the vicinity. They should not be used in classrooms during breaktimes.

Personal mobile phones must not be used at any time to take recordings or photographs of children; recording and photographs taken for school purposes must be taken on a school-owned device.

Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices brought in to the academy are the responsibility of the device owner. The Shaw Education Trust accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices. Mobile phones should be kept securely and out of sight, and security settings must be applied to limit access if misplaced.

Mobile Phones for Work Related Purposes

Staff must ensure that:

Personal mobile phones are not used to contact parents during school trips - all relevant communications should be made via the school office - unless there is an urgent or emergency situation and is in the best interest for the welfare of the pupil/s.

Where parents are accompanying classes on educational visits they are informed by the group leader not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children, including their own child, including in the event of an emergency.

Pupils

This only applies to those children walking to and from school without an adult in Years 5 and 6.

The school recognises that children who walk to and from school without an accompanying adult may carry a mobile phone for safety. In these cases, parents must request permission from the school and complete the relevant form.

Once this has been received, children may bring a mobile phone onto the school premises, but it must be turned off before entering the school site and deposited in the mobile phone box within each class which will then be stored securely until the end of the day. Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones into any other areas of the school.

Pupils are not allowed to use their phones whilst on school premises at any time. If a pupil is found to have done so, their phone will be confiscated and contact will be made with parents / carers.

For all other events such as fayres and discos, which are held out of the usual school hours, we ask that if there is a necessity to be brought in that they are turned off and handed in at the start of the event.

Any mobile phones discovered to have been brought into the school and not handed in will be confiscated immediately. Parents will be asked to collect the mobile phone from the school office.

Whilst the school will take every reasonable care, it accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure mobile phones are properly insured. It is recommended that pupils' phones are security marked and password protected.

Parents should be aware that whilst there are obvious benefits to pupils having a mobile phone in terms of personal safety there are also some associated risks such as potential for theft, bullying and inappropriate contact, including grooming by unsuitable persons.

We would also like to alert parents/carers to the risks that using a mobile phone has while walking to and from school. Children who are concentrating on using their phone can have reduced general safety awareness which may result in road accidents and/or injury if a child is not paying attention to their surroundings.

If a member of the staff has any suspicion that a mobile phone brought into school by a pupil has unsuitable material stored on it, the pupil will be required to hand over the phone immediately to a member of staff and parents will be asked to collect it from a member of the SLT.

In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the mobile phone may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence the phone will be handed over to the school's DSL or Headteacher for further investigation and the parent/carer asked to collect it from them. In certain cases the police will be informed.

Visitors and Parents/Carers

The school displays a notice advising visitors and parents/carers about our procedures for mobile phones. Flyers are also available in the main entrance alongside the sign in device. If a visitor or parent/carer is seen using their mobile phone, they will be asked politely to turn it off/desist from using it/remove it from children's view.

It is recognised that many parents/carers use their mobile phone as a camera/video device to record their child at special performances in school e.g. class assemblies, concerts, etc. On these occasions the use of a phone will be permitted for photographing/videoing only; a member of staff will always remind parents/carers before a performance that images should only be taken if they include their own child and that these images must not be uploaded for any internet use, including Facebook or any other social networking sites/platforms or used in any form of publication unless they are solely of their own child.

The school recognises that children may inadvertently be included in photographs by another parent; the school, therefore, is obliged to warn parents of the legal and safeguarding risks of publishing such photographs on any platform. The placing of any photographs of children on social media is dangerous and parents may be in breach of the Data Protection Act if they upload photos of other children without the explicit consent of that child's parents.

Use of own devices to process data linked to school processes and policies

This section applies in particular to the use of own devices to access school data and information, for example Dojo, emails and online data and assessment platforms. **Where practicable, the school-provided laptop should be used to access such data and information.**

Permitting individuals to use their own devices to process personal data held by the school gives rise to a number of questions the school must answer to continue to comply with its data protection obligations.

It is important to remember that the school must remain in control of the personal data for which they are responsible, regardless of the ownership of the device used to carry out the processing.

The underlying feature is that the user owns, maintains and supports the device. This means that the school will have significantly less control over the device than it would have over a school owned and provided device.

The security of the data is therefore a primary concern. In such cases, the school will need to assess:

- what type of data is held;
- where data may be stored;
- how it is transferred;
- potential for data leakage;
- blurring of personal and business use;
- the device's security capacities;
- what to do if the person who owns the device leaves their employment;
- how to deal with the loss, theft, failure and support of a device.

Individuals who use their own devices to process data held by the school must take appropriate technical and organisational measures against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.

This includes:

- Use a strong password / 2 factor authentication to secure the device used;
- Ensure that access to the device is locked or data automatically deleted if an incorrect password is input too many times;
- Ensure that the device automatically locks if inactive for a period of time;
- Make sure users know exactly which data might be automatically or remotely deleted and under which circumstances;
- Maintain a clear separation between the personal data processed on behalf of the data controller and that processed for the device owner's own purposes, for example, by using different apps for business and personal use

The use of own devices to process data held by the school generally involves the transfer of data between the personal device and the school's corporate system. The transfer process can present risks, particularly where it involves a large volume of sensitive information.

The loss or theft of the device is a major risk factor given the relatively weak control that the school has on the device. Theft or loss of the device is to be reported immediately to the Headteacher. It is crucial that as data controller the school ensures that all processing for personal data is under the school's control and remains in compliance with data protection regulations, particularly in the event of a security breach. Therefore, individuals who use their own devices to process data held by the school must agree to the stipulations contained in this policy.

Approved by:

Signature:
Print: SALLY SANDERS
Title: Headteacher

Date: 21.08.2024

Signature:
Print
Title

Date:

Date of review: September 2025