



USE OF MOBILE DEVICES ON EDUCATIONAL VISITS

(Taken from Lancashire County Council Guidelines)

The modern day mobile phone is no longer just a handset, a camera, a video and sound recorder. As a 'smart phone' they can have many other functions – internet access, GPS, Satellite navigation, a mini console, music storage device, radio and many more. Statistics state that over 50% of mobile phone handsets owned in the UK are of smart phone type.

Supervising staff have a duty of care for the welfare and safety of all children/young people taking part in any Educational/Off Site visit. For risk management purposes, best practice is for staff to carry a mobile phone as part of their 'plan to be safe' and their agreed emergency procedures, giving consideration to failing technology, the life of a battery and signal strength.

To continue with best practice, pupils will not be permitted to carry a mobile 'phone on any St Mary's Educational Visits. The reasons for this decision most notably include:

- The issues surrounding mobile phones and their use/abuse to make video clips and photographic images.
- Noise pollution and disturbance during activities and in public places.
- The danger of pupils or young people, in the event of an accident or incident, making an instant response call to family or friends without first checking with the visit leader or accompanying staff. There have been several cases of parents worrying unnecessarily after receiving inaccurate information or emotive telephone calls. Media implications also exist with this scenario.
- The increased cost of outgoing **and** incoming mobile phone calls, text messages and multi-media messages when outside of the UK.
- The risk of loss or damage and the subsequent upset and distraction caused.
- Some activities may well be compromised, from a safety point of view, if staff or participants mobile phones are switched 'on' during activities.
- An expectation of a call not received or returned, creating unnecessary anxiety.

Pupils must make alternative plans for cameras, music and entertainment as they are not permitted to carry any device which is able to connect to the internet.

In the event of a pupil suffering an illness, accident or injury the Visit Leader will make direct contact with the relevant parent / carers and so it should be assumed that 'no news is good news'. For this reason it is imperative that the Visit Leader possesses the correct contact numbers for all parents/carers. **Responsibility lies directly with parent / carers to inform school of any changes to telephone numbers.**

Should a pupil become home sick whilst on an Educational Visit, they must see the Visit Leader immediately. The Visit Leader will work through how they feel and if their professional judgement deems a phone call home to be necessary, the pupil may use the school mobile phone.

Parent / carers will be informed via text and email of estimated return to school times.

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Please sign and return this document providing your consent to adhere to this agreement. Any parent/carer or pupil refusing to sign and adhere to this agreement will be unable to accompany the Educational Visit. Any pupil breaking the rules outlined above, whilst on an Educational Visit, will be reprimanded and their attendance on future school Educational Visits will be in jeopardy.

I understand the terms outlined above and my son / daughter _____ (name) promises to abide by them. I also understand the consequences of breaking the rules outlined in this policy.

Signed: _____ (Parent / Carer) _____ (Pupil)