



Mobile Phone and Camera Policy

Reviewed: May 2023

Next review: May 2025

Policy history:

June 2023	Policy reviewed and updated	Steph Watson, Acting Principal
May 2022	Renamed to Mobile Phone and Camera Policy Added reference to smartwatches	James Bancroft (Principal)
September 2021	Specifics added to state that phones must not be used in the Early Years area during school hours Clarity on how to keep phones out of sight	James Bancroft (Principal)
May 2021	Amendment to fire wardens having mobile phones on their person at all time and being able to use a phone in a first aid emergency	James Bancroft (Principal)
November 2020	Amendment to children's use of phones Removal of addendum	James Bancroft (Principal)
May 2020	Addendum added for use of phones during re-opening period after lockdown	James Bancroft (Principal)
May 2019	Policy updated using Leighton Academy model	James Bancroft (Principal)
March 2017	Policy written	James Bancroft (Acting Principal)

This policy was reviewed by the Local Advisory Board in Summer 1 2023.



Mobile Phones and Digital Cameras

Wistaston Church Lane Academy recognises that one of the key ways to support children's development, and engage parents in children's learning, is through photographs that record their children's activities and achievements. We also acknowledge the importance of mobile phones for communication purposes. Important as these technologies are, it is critical that they are used responsibly. This policy aims to ensure that.

This policy applies to the use of any film and electronic photographic equipment. This will include mobile phones and portable gaming devices with in-built cameras as well as other forms of digital technology and resources for storing and printing images. The policy applies to all colleagues and volunteers, and covers both indoor and outdoor areas.

The Data Protection Act 1998 affects the official use of photography by educational settings, as an image of a child is considered to be personal data.

The principal is responsible for ensuring the acceptable, safe use and storage of all camera technology and images within the school. This includes the management, implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.

Written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014): Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: Child Protection [3.4]*. *Guidance from Cheshire East SCIES Team has also been used in writing this policy.*

The School notes the following Ofsted advice

Mobile phones may be used in school, as long as their use is appropriate. The use of a mobile phone must not detract from the quality of supervision and care of children.

If inspectors observe, or become aware of, staff using a mobile phone for non-essential purposes they will consider drawing this to the attention of the manager, supervisor or registered provider. They will also consider if the staff member was meeting the needs of the children, when using the telephone, and consider the impact on inspection judgements, including setting an action.

Staff use of mobile phones and digital cameras

Wistaston Church Lane Academy allows colleagues to bring in personal mobile phones for their own use.

- Staff members must not use their personal equipment including mobile phones to take images of pupils at or on behalf of the school unless specifically agreed by the Principal or Vice Principal. The Principal, Vice Principal and members of the Leadership Team are the only members of staff permitted to use a personal device to take photos/videos of pupils for use on the school Twitter, Facebook, website and social media accounts. The photo/video must be deleted when uploaded. Staff members must use school devices to post to social media.
- Mobile phones must not be used during contact time with children. They should be turned off or set to silent. **They should be kept out of sight of children at all times (for instance, keeping a phone in a back pocket is not acceptable).**
- **Phones must not be used anywhere in the Early Years areas during school hours.**
- Mobile phones should have a passcode that only the user knows.
- Mobile phone calls may be taken or made during staff breaks or in colleagues' own time; personal calls must not be taken or made in areas where children are present.



- With prior agreement from a member of the Leadership Team only, if colleagues have a personal emergency they are able to use a school phone or make a personal call from their mobile in a room or area with no children present. Appropriate arrangements may need to be made, including class cover.
- Staff must give the school telephone number to their next of kin, in case it is necessary for the staff member to be contacted, in an emergency, during session hours.
- Staff members must not take photographs of bruising or injuries on a child for child protection concerns. A 'Body Map' must be used to record factual observations.
- It is recommended that anyone who is lone working has a phone with them in case of an emergency.
- Fire Wardens should have a phone with them which can be used to communicate in an emergency. Fire Wardens can link their phone to the sign in system in order to access visitor records.
- In the event of a first aid emergency, staff members can use a mobile phone to call the emergency services or liaise with colleagues.

School Visits

When used appropriately, the benefits of all adults accompanying a school visit taking a personal mobile phone in order to safeguard pupils through effective communication far outweigh the risks.

The following arrangements must apply, and the Visit Leader must ensure all adults are aware:

- Colleagues should only use a phone for appropriate work-related reasons, i.e. ensuring safety of pupils through communication, or for calling emergency services.
- Phones must not be a distraction from keeping children safe. Use of phones should be professional and personal use of phones is not allowed when supervising children.
- All other rules above, including those regarding photography, apply.

For communication with other colleagues or to request help or assistance during the school day, walkie-talkies should be used.

Parents and volunteers must also follow these rules.

Children's use of mobile phones and digital devices

Whilst we understand that some children have mobile phones, we actively discourage them from using their phones on the school site. Pupils should not be bringing mobile phones and own devices into school. However, with agreement between parents and class teachers, we allow pupils in Years Five and Six only to bring a mobile phone into school as long as there is a necessary reason for doing so. Parents/carers must complete a consent form which the teacher should countersign to confirm that the reason has been agreed. They must be given into the class teacher on arrival. The phone will be locked away in a secure locker. Children must not use their mobile phone to take photographs or videos of any kind whilst on the school site. The school does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to mobile phones brought to the school by the children.

Digital devices must not be taken on school visits.

Parents' use of mobile phones

The school has a list of pupils who are not allowed to be photographed and therefore are able to manage the sharing of photos via school blogs and social media. Parents and visitors do not know which children can and cannot be photographed. Therefore, they must always seek permission from the school before taking photos. Parents and all other



visitors must not use their mobile phone – or any other device - to take photographs of pupils other than their own without express permission of the child's parent. At school events, during the introduction, guests will be told whether photos are allowed to be taken. Also, parents may be made aware of staff members' wishes to not be photographed. All photos taken must be for personal use only and that it is illegal to sell or distribute recordings without permission from the school. If parents wish to upload pictures of their child to social media, they must obscure the faces of all other children.

Parents may make and receive phone calls on the school site, but not in the school building when in the presence of children. They may be requested to turn off phones at school events.

Contractors and Visitors' use of mobile phones

Contractors and visitors do not have permission to take photos of any child or members of staff. They may use their phones to make and receive calls related to their work as long as they are not supervising pupils. Similarly, contractors and visitors may use their phones to take work-related photos only. Any calls must be made away from the children.

Use of Images and Video Recordings by the School

General Guidance

- Images or videos that include children will be selected carefully when used online.
- Children's full names will not be used on the website or social media in association with photographs or videos.
- The school will not include any personal information in association with photographs or videos.
- The school will only use images of children who are suitably dressed.
- Staff will receive information regarding the safe and appropriate use of images as part of their safeguarding training and responsibilities.
- All members of staff (including volunteers) will ensure that all images are available for scrutiny and will be able to justify any images in their possession.
- Careful consideration will be given before involving very young or vulnerable children when taking photos or recordings, who may be unable to question why or how activities are taking place.
- The school will discuss the use of images with children in an age appropriate way.
- Parents and carers will indicate their permission regarding images of their child. Every effort will be made to ensure photos are not taken in error.
- Images will not be taken of any child against their wishes. A child's right not to be photographed is to be respected.
- Photography is not permitted in sensitive areas such as changing rooms, toilets, swimming areas, bedrooms and dormitories on residential.
- Photographs will be disposed of should they no longer be required.

Parental Consent

- Written permission from parents and carers will be obtained before images/videos of children are electronically published by the setting.
- Written parental consent will be sought to take and use photographs off-site for marketing and training purposes.
- Written consent from parents will be kept by the setting where children's images are used for publicity purposes.
- Parental permission will be sought on entry to the school.



- Parents can change their mind about photo permission at any point.
- A record of all consent details will be kept securely on file and distributed to class teachers at the start of the academic year and/or when changes are made.
- Parents should recognize that mistakes might be made and in such instances every effort will be made to remove images as soon as possible.
- If colleagues are in doubt about whether we have permission to photograph a particular child, then it is best to not take the photo.

Storage of Images and Recordings

- Images will not be kept for longer than is to be considered necessary.
- The principal reserves the right to view any images taken and/or to withdraw or modify a member of staff's authorization to take or make images at any time.
- Any memory stick, CD or storage device containing images of children to be taken off-site for further work should be suitably encrypted.

Press Photography

Where a press photographer is to be invited to celebrate an event, every effort will be made to ensure the newspaper's requirements can be met. A written agreement will be sought from parents and carers. Only agreed amounts of personal information, e.g. first names only, can be published along with images and videos.

- The identity of any press representative will be verified, and access will only be permitted where the event is planned and where press photographers are specifically invited to attend.
- No authorization will be given to unscheduled visits by the press under any circumstances. Every effort will be made to ensure the press abide by any specific guidelines should they be requested.
- No responsibility or liability, however can be claimed for situations beyond reasonable control, and where the setting is considered to have acted in good faith.

Professional Photographers

Professional photographers who are engaged to record any events will be prepared to work according to the school's Digital Safety policy.

- Photographers will sign an agreement which ensures compliance with the Data Protection Act and that images will only be used for a specific purpose, subject to parental consent.
- Photographers will not have unsupervised access to children and young people.

Smartwatches

Staff members may wear smartwatches whilst working. However, notifications should be turned off when teaching to reduce distractions.

See also: **Safeguarding Children Policy and Digital Safety Policy.**