

The Good Shepherd Primary Catholic Voluntary Academy



Social Media and the Use of Mobile Phones Policy

Mission Statement

**Our mission is to develop our children with active and creative minds,
a sense of understanding and compassion for others and
the courage to act on their Catholic beliefs.**

**In our school community we celebrate our faith and we work together to
achieve our personal potential by trying to live like Jesus and become the
person that he wants us to be.**

Ratified On:	November 2018
Review Date:	November 2019
Chair of Governor's signature:	Mrs R Burke
Headteacher's signature:	Mrs M.H.B.Williams

Social Media and Mobile Phone Policy

Ephesians 4:29

When you talk, do not say harmful things. But say what people need-words that will help others become stronger. Then what you say will help those who listen to you.

Rationale

The Good Shepherd Primary Catholic Academy is committed to ensuring the safety of children in its care. We recognise the importance of mobile phones in school for communication purposes, but are aware that casual or inappropriate use of mobile phones in the school 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.

When mobile phones are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

It is appreciated that 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 and all electronic communication devices is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and visitors.

Please note that for the purposes 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.

Staff Personal Mobile Phones

Staff must not carry personal mobile phones while working. This protects staff from being distracted from their work and from allegations of inappropriate use. Phones must be safely stored out of sight of children and should be on **silent** so that they cannot be heard by children.

Smartwatches are not to be worn by staff in school.

If staff have a break time during their working hours, they may use their mobile phones during these times, but this must not be in an area where children are present.

In an emergency, staff needing to make a personal call during a lesson or whilst on duty should first obtain agreement from the Headteacher (Deputy Headteacher if Headteacher is

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off-site), ensure that adequate cover has been put in place and make the call in an area not used by children.

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 school working hours. The Office must also have each staff members next of kin contact details should these be needed.

A personal mobile phone may be taken on school journey outings in accordance with guidance – see ‘The Use of Mobile Phones on School Trips’ section below. Alternatively, they should take the school mobile phone available from the School Office.

Camera or video functions on personal mobile phones must not be used in the school by staff to take images of children under any circumstances.

Staff should not be required to make work calls on their own phones, either mobile or landline, however, if this should be necessary then they are advised to check their provider to obtain the relevant prefix to use before dialling the recipient’s number to ensure their own number is protected.

Failure by staff to comply with the **Social Media and the Use of Mobile Phones Policy** could result in disciplinary action.

Children

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, children may bring a mobile phone onto the school premises but must deposit it with the school office at the start of the day and collect it from the office at the end of the day. This can only be done following a written request made by the Parent/ Carer to the Headteacher.

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.

Mobile phones deposited in the office by children will be kept safely in a locked cupboard. 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 pupil’s phones are security marked and password protected.

Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones, or any other electronic communication devices into any areas of the school. This includes Smart watches.

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

Children are not allowed to carry mobile phones on any school trips.

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.

Visitors and Parents/Carers

A notice displayed in the foyer advises visitors and parents/carers that mobile phones are not to be used in any areas of the school. This includes making phone calls, receiving phone calls, texting and photographing.

This includes the use of cameras of any kind during any school performance, Collective Worship or presentations. 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.

School Mobile Phones

The school has one mobile phone registered for school use. This should be used if available on school trips and outings. If unavailable a personal mobile phone may be taken on school journey outings in accordance with guidance – see 'The Use of Mobile Phones on School Trips' section below.

The Caretaker's Mobile Phone

It is the Caretaker's responsibility to ensure that this phone is kept safely on his/her person at all times and is only used for school business whilst on the premises.

The Caretaker will only use his mobile phone for making or receiving calls regarding school business and must not be used for personal calls whilst on the premises.

The Caretaker should not use his mobile phone for photographs or videoing at any time.

The Caretaker will make every possible effort to ensure that this phone is not used when pupils are present, however, it must be recognised that this may not always be possible.

The Use of Mobile Phones on School Trips

The school recognises that the use of mobile phones on school trips can be beneficial in ensuring safety for all members of the school party. However, it is important that the

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following guidance is adhered to in order to keep children safe and protect staff and volunteers from accusations of inappropriate use.

The party leader should carry the school mobile phone for use in contacting other staff members or volunteers on the trip, contacting the school or contacting the emergency services. If the office mobile phone is unavailable (e.g. if another trip is on the same day) then the party leader should follow the advice below for staff use of personal mobile phones.

Members of staff and volunteers may carry their own, personal mobile phones within the following guidelines:

- Personal phones should only be used to contact staff members or volunteers on the trip, the school or emergency services. If possible, these calls should be made away from pupils
- Personal phones should not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of a day trip. This means that personal calls or texts should not be made or accepted. On residential trips this will apply while the member of staff or volunteer is on duty. Staff and volunteers should ensure that next of kin are provided with the school number so that in an emergency the school is contacted and will make contact with the relevant person through the party leader
- If it becomes necessary for a member of staff or volunteer to make a personal call or text, then the party leader or another member of staff should be informed and take responsibility for the pupils in the group while the call or text is made away from sight and sound of any pupils
- Mobile phones must not be used under any circumstance to take photographs or videos of pupils. Volunteers are acting as staff members for the duration of the trip and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including their own child, using a mobile phone or any other mobile device, e.g. cameras or iPads, without the express permission of the party leader. Volunteers may be asked to take photographs of their group using a school camera – this must be passed back to the party leader at the end of the trip
- The party leader may ask volunteers to provide them with their mobile phone number for the duration of the trip so that they can be contacted in case of emergency. The party leader undertakes to ensure that these numbers are not held on any mobile device or in any written form after the end of the trip
- It is advised that if the party leader is using his/her own mobile phone, then if they need to contact anyone during the trip, they do so by pre-dialling 141 (some mobile providers use a different prefix – staff are advised to check this with their provider) before the number so that their own number remains protected

Appendix 1 provides guidance for volunteers on school trips.

The use of Social Media

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many youngsters. We recognise that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits to be reaped. This document gives clarity to the way in which social media may be used by pupils and school staff at The Good Shepherd Primary Catholic Academy.

There are five key areas

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- Use of social networking sites by pupils within school
- Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity
- Creation of network accounts by staff for use in education
- Comments posted by parents/carers
- Dealing with incidents of online bullying

The use of social networking sites by pupils within school

Social network sites should never be accessed/used within school by pupils.

Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity

It is possible that a high proportion of staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them **to protect their professional reputation** by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

The following guidelines should be used by all staff

- Staff must never add pupils as friends into their personal accounts
- Staff must not post pictures of school events without the Headteacher's consent
- Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times
- Staff need to use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher's Standards
- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality
- Staff must not post negative comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including Governors
- Staff should read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People'

Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Headteacher in the first instance or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

Creation of network accounts by staff for use in education

All social media services must be approved by the Headteacher in advance of any educational work being undertaken.

Comments posted by parents/carers

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of school communication include the Prospectus, the website, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion.

- Parents are not expected to post any pictures, from school events, of pupils from school other than their own children on social networking sites
- Parents should make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites

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- Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community

Dealing with incidents of online bullying

The schools E-Safety and/or Anti Bullying Policy makes sanctions regarding bullying, using new technologies, very clear.

Page 5 of 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools' (DFE document available on the DFE website) indicates that the school can take action against incidents that happen outside school if it:

- i. Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- ii. Poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public
- iii. Could adversely affect the reputation of the school

Use of social networking sites to harass, bully or intimidate would be covered by this irrespective of when/where the post was made.

Safeguarding of Children

Children in school sometimes have their photographs taken to provide evidence of their achievements for their development records. Under the Data Protection Act 2018 schools must seek parental consent to take photographs and use video recorders. The school's digital cameras must not leave the school setting (unless on an educational visit). Photographs are printed in the setting by staff and images are then removed from the camera memory.

Thank you for your support and co-operation to ensure the safety of all the pupils

Equality Statement

We have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of safeguarding and in respect of pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

The curriculum is inclusive and facilitates the needs of all children regardless of their age, size, mobility, gender, ethnicity and ability. Our planning aims to foster an appreciation of each other's cultures and beliefs along with the promotion of a healthy and positive self-image. This is linked to the school's role as a Christian community, Special Education Needs and Inclusion.

Review

The Headteacher and staff will review this policy annually. Any suggested amendments will be presented to the Governing Body.

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Appendix 1 Guidance for Volunteers on School Trips

Use of mobile phones - guidance for volunteers on school trips

Thank you for volunteering to help on our school trip. During the trip, you are acting as a member of staff with regard to the safety and well-being of the children in your group and we therefore ask that you follow the guidelines below in accordance with the school's mobile phone policy.

- Personal phones should only be used to contact staff members or volunteers on the trip, the school or emergency services. If possible, these calls should be made away from pupils
- Personal phones must not be used for any purpose other than school business for the duration of a day trip. On residential trips, this will apply while the member of staff or volunteer is on duty. This means that personal calls or texts must not be made or accepted. Staff and volunteers should ensure that next of kin are provided with the school number so that in an emergency the school is contacted and will make contact with the relevant person through the party leader
- If it becomes necessary for a member of staff or volunteer to make a personal call, then the party leader or another member of staff should be informed and take responsibility for the pupils in the group while the call or text is made away from sight and sound of any pupils
- Mobile phones must not be used under any circumstance to take photographs or videos of pupils. Volunteers are acting as staff members for the duration of the trip and therefore must not take photos or videos of any pupils, including their own child, using a mobile phone or any other mobile device, e.g. cameras or ipads, without the express permission of the party leader. Volunteers may be asked to take photographs of their group using a school camera – this must be passed back to the party leader at the end of the trip
- The party leader may ask volunteers to provide them with their mobile phone number for the duration of the trip so that they can be contacted in case of emergency. The party leader undertakes to ensure that these numbers are not held on any mobile device or in any written form after the end of the trip
- It is advised that if the party leader is using his/her own mobile phone, then if they need to contact anyone during the trip, they do so by pre-dialling 141 (some mobile providers use a different prefix – staff are advised to check this with their provider) before the number so that their own number remains protected
- If you have any questions regarding these guidelines please speak to the party leader