

Rotherhithe Primary School Handheld Device Policy, including mobile 'phones

This policy sets out what is 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' use of mobile phone and handheld devices by the whole school community (students, staff and visitors) while they are at School or undertaking school activities away from school.

This applies to all individuals who have access to personal and/or work-related handheld devices within the broadest context of the setting. It includes children and young people, parents and carers, practitioners, managers, volunteers, students, governors, visitors, contractors and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

It is to be recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many handheld devices that will give the most cause for concern; and which should be considered the most susceptible to potential misuse. Examples of misuse include the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

It must be understood that should handheld devices be misused, there will be a negative impact on an individual's safety, dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not to be considered exclusive to children and young people, so the needs and vulnerabilities of all must be respected and protected.

Mobile phones and handheld devices can also cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and are often to be considered intrusive when used in the company of others.

The purpose of this policy is to prevent unacceptable use of mobile phones, camera-phones and other hand held devices by the school community, and thereby to protect the School's staff and students from undesirable materials, filming, intimidation or harassment.

General issues

- Designated 'mobile use free' areas are situated across the setting, and signs to this effect are to be displayed throughout. The areas which should be considered most vulnerable include: toilets, bathrooms and in some settings - sleep areas and changing areas.
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- All visitors are requested to keep their phones on silent.
- The recording, taking and sharing of images, video and audio on any mobile phone is to be avoided; except where it has been explicitly agreed otherwise by the Executive Headteacher or Head of School. Such authorised use is to be monitored and recorded. All mobile phone use is to be open to scrutiny and the Executive Headteacher and Head of School are to be able to withdraw or restrict authorisation for use at any time if it is to be deemed necessary.
- The School reserves the right to search the content of any mobile or handheld devices on the school premises where there is a reasonable suspicion that it may contain undesirable material, including those which promote pornography, violence or bullying. Staff mobiles or hand held devices may be searched at any time as part of routine monitoring.
- Where parents or students need to contact each other during the school day, they should do so only through the School's telephone. Staff may use their phones during break times. If a staff member is expecting a personal call they may seek specific permissions from the headteacher, head of school or their phase leader to use their phone at other than their break times.
- Mobile phones and personally-owned devices will not be used in any way during lessons or formal school time. They should be switched off or silent at all times.
- Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.
- The Bluetooth and sharing functions of a device should be switched off at all times and not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones.
- No images or videos should be taken on mobile phones or personally-owned mobile devices .

Students' use of personal devices

- The School strongly advises that student mobile phones and devices should not be brought into school.
- The School accepts that there may be particular circumstances in which a parent wishes their child to have a mobile phone for their own safety.
- Pupil mobile phones which are brought into school must be handed to the office for safe keeping. Pupils who are seen to be in possession of a mobile phone at school will be instructed to hand over the phone to a member of the Senior Leadership Team (it will be returned not to the child but to a responsible adult on the same day).
- If a student needs to contact his or her parents or carers, they will be taken to the office where a member of staff will use a school phone. Parents are advised to contact the school office when a message needs to be communicated to their child.
- Students should protect their phone numbers and communication codes/ID's (such as BBM Pin) by only giving them to trusted friends and family members. Students will be instructed in safe and appropriate use of devices and will be made aware of boundaries and consequences.
- Students will be provided with devices to use in specific learning activities under the supervision of a member of staff if required. Such devices will be set up so that only those features required for the activity will be enabled.

Staff use of personal devices

- Staff are not permitted to use their own mobile phones or devices for contacting children, young people or their families within or outside of the setting in a professional capacity.
- Staff will be issued with a school phone where contact with students, parents or carers is required.
- Staff devices should use encryption and Advanced password where available. CHECK WITH RYAN
- Staff will be provided handheld devices as the school deems necessary in order to deliver the majority of your role, personal devices should never be used as part of teaching and learning.
- Mobile Phones and personally-owned devices will be switched off or switched to 'silent' mode. Bluetooth and other communication systems should be 'hidden' or switched off and mobile phones or personally-owned devices will not be used during periods unless permission has been granted by a member of the senior leadership team in emergency circumstances.
- Personal mobile devices should NEVER automatically synchronise with any school endorsed system (except email), particularly where images from personal devices can be uploaded to school network spaces (such as Dropbox etc)
- If email has been set-up on a 'phone or mobile device, then it should always be password protected. The password should be robust i.e not a factory setting and where possible comply with the password policy (see Appendix X).
- Staff should not use personally-owned devices, such as mobile phones or cameras, to take photos or videos of students and will only use work-provided equipment for this purpose.
- If a member of staff breaches the school policy then disciplinary action may be taken.
- Where staff members are required to use a mobile phone for school duties, for instance in case of emergency during off-site activities, or for contacting students or parents, then a school mobile phone will be provided and used. In an emergency where a staff member doesn't have access to a school-owned device, they should use their own device and hide (by inputting 141) their own mobile number for confidentiality purposes.