



Mobile Phone Policy

Audience:	School and academy staff, Local Governing Bodies
Adopted:	November 2020
Other related policies / procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy • Equality Policy • Anti-Bullying Policy • Positive Behaviour Management Policy • E-Safety Policy • PREVENT Strategy & Duty Guidance HM Gov • Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE 2019 • Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct Policy • Working Together to Safeguard Children HM Gov 2018 • Intimate Care Policy
Owner	Crofty Safeguarding Lead
Policy / procedure model	MAT policy: all Crofty schools use this policy Lanner School

Introduction

Mobile phone technology has advanced significantly over the last few years - and it continues to evolve. Wireless connections in particular have extended the capabilities of mobile phones, enabling access to a wide range of new content and services globally. Many

phones now offer Internet and email access, alongside the most often standard functions of messaging, camera, video and sound recording.

Mobile phones, alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance; however there are also associated risks.

Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe. As with online safety issues generally, risks to children and young people can be broadly categorised under the headings of content, contact and conduct and managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

Aim

All Crofty Schools are 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.

The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools - which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, governors, children, young people, parents/carers, community users and volunteers. This list is not exhaustive and covers both indoor and outdoor areas. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Policy statement

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 mobiles 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. The use of all mobile phones 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.

Designated 'mobile free' areas within the setting are

- Changing areas
- toilets

A zero-tolerance policy is in place with regards to the use of personal or work-related mobiles by any individual in these areas.

Procedures

Personal mobiles

In the interests of equality, and to further promote safety, the guidance applies to any individual who has a mobile phone on site, including children, contractors, parents and visitors, as detailed below:

Practitioners

- Staff are permitted to have their mobile phones about their person on silent; however there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to allocated lunch and/or tea breaks.
- Mobile phones should not be used in the presence of pupils even if this is within a staff break time; the staff room, offices, classroom cupboards or the school reception are all suitable places to make and receive calls during a break if there are no children present.
- Practitioners are not permitted, in any circumstance to use their phones for taking, recording or sharing images and 'mobile free' areas must be observed at all times.
- Practitioners are ONLY permitted to use their own personal phones for contacting parents and carers within or outside of the setting for the purposes of school related work e.g. parent/teacher meetings by phone, COVID wellbeing calls etc. When making the call the staff member will ensure their own personal number is withheld and not disclosed.
- If staff have a break time during their working hours, they may use their mobile phones during these times, in an agreed area not used by children e.g. in the office / staff room.
- 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
- Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, phones must be switched off and calls and texts must not be taken or made during lesson time.
- A mobile phone will be taken on whole-group outings in accordance with guidance. The Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage states that providers should take contact telephone numbers and a mobile phone on outings. Where a school mobile phone is available this should be taken rather than the member of staff's personal phone for school use.

School Trips and Visits

Staff are permitted to use their personal phones to make and receive calls to the school or emergency services in the event of an emergency.

Contact with parents of pupils should ideally be made through the school, direct contact should be avoided unless it has not been possible to contact the school and it is an emergency.

Children

- Children may bring mobile phones into school in circumstances agreed with the class teacher.
- The child's phone will be held by the class teacher during the school day and given back at the end of the school day as the child leaves.
- The school will accept no responsibility for damage to, or loss of, a mobile phone.

Parents, visitors and contractors

- The school will display a notice advising visitors and parents/carers that mobile phones are not to be used in the setting,
- Parents/carers/visitors and contractors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones in any of the designated mobile free areas. Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children in order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others.
- Individuals are only permitted to take images or make recordings on a mobile phone where this has been previously registered – see Use of Images policy.
- Any individual bringing a personal device into the setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

Driving

If any practitioner is required to drive in a working capacity the school phone and/or their personal phone must be switched off whilst driving.

Under no circumstances should practitioners drive whilst taking a phone call. This also applies to hands free and wireless connections, which are considered a distraction rather than a safer alternative.

Safe storage

A designated safe and secure area for practitioners to store their personal belongings during the working day is available. Practitioners have the **option** to store their mobile phones in this area, should they choose. This however is not a mandatory requirement.

Practitioners leave their belongings in safe storage at their own risk. It is therefore recommended that phones are security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damages is accepted.

As well as safeguarding children and avoiding any unnecessary disruptions during the day, this procedure also aims to protect staff against any unfounded allegations.

Emergency contact

It is recognised that mobile phones provide direct contact to others, and at times provide a necessary reassurance due to their ease of access, particularly at stressful times.

Practitioners, therefore, in agreed exceptional circumstances are permitted to keep the volume of their phone switched on. This is to enhance their own well-being and peace of mind, to reduce stress and worry and to enable them to concentrate more effectively on their work.

Such use will be for an agreed limited period only, until any concerns or issues leading to the exceptional circumstance request have been resolved.

It is ensured at all times that the landline telephone remains connected and operational, except in circumstances beyond control. This means that it is available for emergency/urgent contact at all times.