Mobile Phone Policy

St Luke's Primary School

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Contents

1. Introduction and aims 3
2. Roles and responsibilities 3
3. Use of mobile phones by staff 3
4. Use of mobile phones by pupils 5
5. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors 5
6. Loss, theft or damage 6
7. Monitoring and review 6
8. Appendix 1: [acceptable use agreement] for pupils ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
9. Appendix 2: Permission form for pupils to use mobile phones during lessons ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
10. Appendix 3: Permission form allowing a pupil to bring their phone to school ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
11. Appendix 4: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors 6

1. Introduction and aims

At St Luke's Primary School we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our pupils, parents/carers and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for pupils, staff, parents/carers and volunteers
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour (Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy, Behaviour and Discipline Policy, Acceptable Use Policies)

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:

- Risks to child protection
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Staff

All staff (including teachers, support staff and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Volunteers, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school, must alert a member of staff if they witness, or are aware of, a breach of this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and pupils accountable for its implementation.

3. Use of mobile phones by staff

3.1 Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, while children are present (except in an emergency situation e.g. a member of SLT being contacted on their mobile phone when away from their desk). Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staffroom).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members
- Emergency telephone medical appointments where a set appointment time is not given

The headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 020 72533880 as a point of emergency contact.

Staff working in the Early Years should not have their phone or any personal device with internet connection/ camera e.g. a smart watch, in the classroom or outdoor environment at any time when children are present. Phones should be left in a locker situated in the corridor by the staff room. Phones are only permitted in the classroom when children are not present e.g. during the lunch period when children are outside or before/ after school/ nursery.

3.2 Data protection

Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information, including entering such data into generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT and Google Bard).

More detailed guidance on data protection can be found in the school's Data Protection Policy, Cybersecurity Policy, Acceptable Use Policies and Online Safety Policy.

3.3 Safeguarding

Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to parents/carers or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.

Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents/carers or pupils.

More information can be found in the school's Staff Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use Policies and Online Safety Policy.

Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment except in exceptional circumstances and with the explicit permission of the headteacher e.g. failure of school technology on a school trip.

Staff may use their mobile phone to upload information to Class Dojo or Google Classroom as long as this does not contain photographs or recordings of children or personal data.

3.4 Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils or anything else which could identify a pupil (except in exceptional circumstances, see above)
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents/carers. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

3.5 Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes. This includes the Site Manager and our Extended Day Lead Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet

- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

3.6 Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

See the school's staff disciplinary policy for more information.

4. Use of mobile phones by pupil

We discourage children from bringing mobile phones and other devices to school. Where children do bring mobile phones and other devices with internet connectivity e.g, smart watches to school these must be:

- Switched off
- Handed to the class teacher on arrival at school who will return the device at the end of the school day.
- Pupils must adhere to the school's Home School Agreement and acceptable use policy for mobile phone use.

Mobile phones are never left in the classroom. The box containing mobile phones is handed to the school office.

4.1 Sanctions

If a pupil is in breach of this policy their phone or other device will be confiscated and returned to the child or their parent/ carer at the end of the school day.

Staff also have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The DfE guidance allows you to search a pupil's phone if you have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury. More information on this can be found in the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs, disibility or sexual orientation
- Online bullying
- Sharing of pornographic images

5. Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, volunteers and visitors

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event (such as a school fair school concert or production, or of their own child)

- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in lessons, or when working with pupils

Parents/carers, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school. This information is included in the school safeguarding leaflet.

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents/carers
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

Parents/carers or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above.

Parents/carers must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

6. Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled with their name and are handed to the class teacher on arrival at school.

Pupils must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.

Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a secure location.

Lost phones should be returned to the school office. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

7. Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of pupils' education, behaviour and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will take into account:

- Feedback from parents/carers and pupils
- Feedback from teachers
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents
- Relevant advice from the Department for Education, the local authority or other relevant organisations

11. Appendix 1: Template mobile phone information slip for visitors

Use of mobile phones in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staff room (visitors/ volunteers) or the reception areas (parents/carers)
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils (unless it is your own child), or staff
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils

The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds.

A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

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