

# Redmile Church of England Primary School



*“Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their lives.”  
(Proverbs 22:6)*

## Mobile Digital Technology Policy

### 1. 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. Phones now typically offer Internet and email access, alongside the 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. As with e-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.

### 2. Aim

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.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work related mobile phones on site. This includes practitioners, volunteers, committee members, parents, carers, visitors and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

### 4. Policy statement

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of 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, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. 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.

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## 5. Code of conduct

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

It is therefore ensured that all practitioners:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- are vigilant and alert to potential warning signs.
- know how to minimise risk.
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance.
- regarding acceptable use.
- are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours.
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

It is fully recognised that studies consistently indicate that imposing rigid regulations and/or 'bans' on the actions of others can be counterproductive, leading to a culture of suspicion, uncertainty and secrecy. The imposition of rigorous, inflexible rules is therefore avoided, unless the potential risks of not enforcing them far out-weigh the benefits. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting environment, which is agreed to by all Staff.

Formal proceedings will be taken if any member of staff or volunteer deliberately and knowingly violates the requirements of this policy.

## 6. Procedures

### 6.1 Personal mobiles

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile phones causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against potential misuse. In order to reduce the opportunity for those behaviours that could possibly cause upset, it is a requirement that staff, governors and volunteers working with children and young people within the school setting:

- **MOBILE PHONES SHOULD NOT BE SEEN IN ANY AREA ON THE SCHOOL WHERE THERE ARE CHILDREN PRESENT.**
- **limit their use of personal mobile technologies to *necessary* communication only during specified breaks during the school day: at Redmile C of E Primary School this refers to the LUNCH BREAK only\***
- \*Exceptions to this are midday supervisors and staff on lunch duty who **SHOULD NOT** use personal mobile technologies during the lunch break at all
- Ensure that any emergency call to you should be made via the school office on 01949 842249
- Understand that personal technologies **must not** be used to take photographs or videos of school-related activities, unless you have prior permission from the Executive Head teacher for an exceptional circumstance (e.g. a school trip and the school camera fails; if this happened, all images must be transferred on to the school hard drive immediately upon return to school and erased from personal device with a witness to observe)
- Understand that personal mobile technologies **MUST BE SET TO SILENT** during the working day and should not be heard making any noise at all in any area of the school premises; this includes in classrooms, corridors, playgrounds, kitchen and offices
- Take action if you are sent inappropriate material, e.g. images or videos, and **report it immediately**

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- Understand that the school will accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal mobile technologies and that the school will not tolerate any time used to fix or retrieve any such item during the working day

**Parents, 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. Any individual bringing a personal device into the setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

## 6.2 Work mobile

The use of a designated work mobile is promoted as it is:

- an essential part of the emergency toolkit which is taken on off-site trips.
- an effective communication aid, enabling text, email messages and calls to be made and received.
- a back-up facility should problems be experienced with the landline – or where contact needs to be made outside of work hours. Effective security measures are in place to safeguard against any potential misuse. Only authorised individuals have access to the work mobile, which is password protected, and stored securely when not in use.
- Personal calls are not permitted to be made on the work mobile, other than in agreed exceptional circumstances. Contact or calls can be made via the work mobile in the event of an emergency. All calls are logged. The work mobile is clearly labelled as such, and additional features such as cameras are disabled or not available/used.
- It is the responsibility of the Office staff to ensure the school mobile phone is fully charged and it is the responsibility of the teacher who will be in charge during the off-site activity, to ensure that this has been done in good time.

## 6.3 Driving

If any member of staff is required to drive in a working capacity, and has responsibility for the work mobile, the phone must be switched off whilst driving. It is strongly recommended that practitioners follow the same procedures regarding their own personal mobile phones. 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.

## 6.4 Safe storage

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

## 6.5 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. Staff, therefore, in agreed exceptional circumstances (with the Executive Head teacher) are permitted to keep the volume of their phone switched on. This is to enhance their own wellbeing 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

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available for emergency/urgent contact at all times. The reliance on an answer phone is avoided except for times outside of the setting operating hours or should children be taken off the premises on a trip. The answer phone is always checked promptly on opening or return.

**7. Authorisation and review**

**Agreed by:** .....

**Authorised signatory:** .....

**Date:** .....

**Date of review** .....